

INSPECTION REPORT

SEVENOAKS PRIMARY SCHOOL

Sevenoaks

LEA area: Kent

Unique reference number: 118551

Headteacher: Mr A Duffy

Reporting inspector: Mr J Bald
17932

Dates of inspection: 20 – 23 May 2002

Inspection number: 195247

Full inspection carried out under section 10 of the School Inspections Act 1996

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INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Type of school: Infant and junior school

School category: Community

Age range of pupils: 4 to 11

Gender of pupils: Mixed

School address: Bradbourne Park Road
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Appropriate authority: The governing body

Name of chair of governors: Mr P H Thompson

Date of previous inspection: June 1997

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17932	John Bald	Registered inspector	English as an additional language	The school's results and pupils' achievements How well are the pupils taught? How well is the school led and managed?
			Modern foreign languages	
11414	Ann Bennett	Lay inspector		Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development. How well does the school care for its pupils? How well does the school work in partnership with parents?
23056	Teresa Manzi	Team inspector	Special educational needs	
			Science	
			Art and design	
			Design and technology	
10367	Norma Myers	Team inspector	Mathematics	How good are the curricular and other opportunities offered to pupils?
			Geography	
			History	
17522	Nigel Stiles	Team inspector	English	
			Physical education	
			Race, equality and inclusion	
10270	Sandra Teacher	Team inspector	Foundation stage	
			Information and communication technology	
			Religious education	

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PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Sevenoaks Primary School is a large school, with 390 pupils aged four to eleven. Almost all are white, with a very small number from minority ethnic backgrounds. An above-average proportion have English as an additional language, though few are in the early stages of learning English. The proportion of pupils with special educational needs is broadly average, and a small number have significant behavioural difficulties. The standards reached by pupils joining the school are average, though pupils who join from other schools have often reached below average standards. The economic circumstances of the community served by the school are above average.

HOW GOOD THE SCHOOL IS

Sevenoaks Primary School provides good education and has some outstanding features. Standards in Year 6 are above average, and provision for pupils' personal development is very good. The overall quality of teaching is good. The school is led and managed well, and provides good value for money.

What the school does well

- Standards in Year 6 are above average, and well above average in English and mathematics.
- Teaching in Years 3 to 6 is very good, and a significant proportion is excellent.
- Management and leadership are good, with some outstanding features.
- There is excellent provision for special educational needs, and all pupils are included in the school's life and work.
- Teaching assistants make a very good contribution to learning throughout the school.
- There is an excellent range of opportunities for learning beyond the classroom.
- There is a very good partnership with parents.
- Pupils move on to secondary education as well-balanced young people with a love of learning.

What could be improved

- Standards, teaching and learning in Years 1 and 2.
- The use of time during the school day.
- Marking and assessment in some subjects and classes.

The areas for improvement will form the basis of the governors' action plan.

HOW THE SCHOOL HAS IMPROVED SINCE ITS LAST INSPECTION

When the school was last inspected, in June 1997, teaching, standards and learning were good, provision for pupils' personal development was very good, and the school was very well led and managed. There were some weaknesses in the reception classes. Since that time, the school has maintained and sometimes raised standards in Year 6, and has developed excellent arrangements to include pupils from minority ethnic backgrounds and those with behavioural difficulties. Provision in the reception classes has improved, and is satisfactory. On the other hand, standards in Year 2 were average, with good features, at the time of the last inspection, and are now below average, with well below average standards in writing. The school has begun to tackle this problem, but much more remains to be done. The commitment and teamwork of the headteacher, staff and governors place the school in a very good position to take the necessary action and to build on the pattern of rising standards now established in Years 3 to 6.

STANDARDS

The table shows the standards achieved by pupils at the end of Year 6 based on average point scores in National Curriculum tests.

Performance in:	compared with			
	all schools			similar schools
	1999	2000	2001	2001
English	B	B	A	A
mathematics	A	A	B	A
science	B	C	D	C

Key	
well above average	A
above average	B
average	C
below average	D
well below average	E

The standard of Year 6 work seen during the inspection was well above average in English and mathematics. Pupils in Year 6 reach average standards in science and information and communication technology, and the range of their skills in using computers has been significantly extended since the last inspection. Standards in Year 6 are above average to well above average in most other subjects, with strengths in design and technology, music, art and design and physical education, including dance and swimming. Pupils in Year 6 achieve well, and are skilled in applying their knowledge and learning skills across subjects.

Pupils reach average standards in the reception class. However, 2001 National Curriculum test results for Year 2 were well below average in reading, writing and mathematics. Work seen during the inspection was slightly better than this, but standards are still below average, and well below average in writing. Year 2 standards in science are below average, but standards in other subjects in Year 2 are broadly average, and good in design and technology. Too few pupils are reaching above average standards in Year 2, and, overall, pupils are achieving less than they should be.

By Year 6, pupils from minority ethnic backgrounds, those with special educational needs, and pupils with English as an additional language make very good progress, and the achievement of pupils with special educational needs is often excellent. Test results in Year 6 have kept pace with the national pattern of improvement since the last inspection, but there has been a significant fall in standards in Year 2. The school has suitable targets for raising standards further, both in Year 2 and in subjects where standards are average in Year 6, and has a good plan of action to do this.

PUPILS' ATTITUDES AND VALUES

Aspect	Comment
Attitudes to the school	Very good overall, and excellent among the older pupils.
Behaviour, in and out of classrooms	Good. Very good among older pupils but some poor behaviour in Year 2. Pupils play well together at break and lunchtime.

Personal development and relationships	Very good. Pupils develop into mature, confident and responsible young people. Working relationships are often excellent.
Attendance	Well above average, and pupils often arrive early.

Pupils complete homework well, and take part in all activities with enthusiasm. The personal development of pupils with behavioural difficulties is exceptionally good. Racial harmony is excellent. The pupil committee is well organised and effective. Pupils appreciate what their teachers do for them.

TEACHING AND LEARNING

Teaching of pupils in:	Reception	Years 1 – 2	Years 3 – 6
Quality of teaching	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Very good

Inspectors make judgements about teaching in the range: excellent; very good; good; satisfactory; unsatisfactory; poor; very poor. 'Satisfactory' means that the teaching is adequate and strengths outweigh weaknesses.

Teaching in the reception classes gives pupils a sound start to school and has good features. Teaching in Years 1 and 2 is satisfactory in most lessons, but has weaknesses in planning for the second half of lessons, in managing pupils in Year 2, and in marking. As a result, pupils in Year 2 are not yet reaching the standards they should. The teaching in Years 3 to 6 has outstanding features, and brings about an immediate improvement in learning. Teachers know their subjects very well, expect and plan for high standards, and inspire pupils to learn.

The teaching of English and mathematics, including the skills of literacy and numeracy, is very good in Years 3 to 6. There is a significant proportion of excellent teaching, including exceptional teaching of multiplication in Year 3. In Years 1 and 2, teaching in these subjects presents too little challenge to higher-attaining pupils, and gives pupils too few opportunities to write their own texts.

There is good teaching in additional classes for higher-attaining pupils and those who need extra help. This enables the school to meet the needs of all pupils very well by the end of Year 6, and includes exceptional provision for pupils with behavioural difficulties. Across the school, teaching assistants make a very good contribution to teaching and learning, and teaching in extra-curricular activities is of a very high standard. Teachers in Years 3 to 6 make very good use of homework, and develop habits of learning that prepare pupils very well for secondary education.

OTHER ASPECTS OF THE SCHOOL

Aspect	Comment
The quality and range of the curriculum	Good overall. Very good in Years 3 to 6, but weaknesses in planning in Years 1 and 2. Satisfactory in the reception class.
Provision for pupils with special educational needs	Excellent. Provision is very well organised and meets the needs of all pupils very well in the course of their school career. Provision for the teaching of pupils with behavioural difficulties is exceptional.

Provision for pupils with English as an additional language	Very good. The school provides sensitive and very effective teaching, with very good use of specialist teaching from outside the school. This enables these pupils to reach high standards by Year 6.
Provision for pupils' personal, including spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	Very good. Pupils have many opportunities to develop their understanding of the world and society, and to learn about their own and other cultures. The school carefully develops their sense of right and wrong, and helps them become mature, outgoing and responsible.
How well the school cares for its pupils	Very well. The school takes great care of pupils' well-being, and provides very effective guidance to older pupils.

Teachers work very hard to provide an excellent range of learning opportunities outside the classroom, and their commitment is much appreciated by pupils and parents. The school makes very good provision for swimming, and has a very good record in local sports. Computers are used effectively to support learning. Arrangements to promote racial harmony and to ensure that all pupils are included are exceptionally good. The school's partnership with parents is very good.

HOW WELL THE SCHOOL IS LED AND MANAGED

Aspect	Comment
Leadership and management by the headteacher and other key staff	Good overall. Very good in Years 3 to 6, in team building, in development planning and in establishing a commitment to high standards and inclusion.
How well the governors fulfil their responsibilities	Well. Governors are well organised and effective. They keep in close touch with the school and are fully involved in its direction.
The school's evaluation of its performance	Very good. The headteacher and governors analyse evidence closely, and have a very clear idea of the school's strengths and weaknesses.
The strategic use of resources	Very good. Resources are allocated flexibly and effectively to the school's educational priorities, for the benefit of all pupils.

The school has sufficient teachers and teaching assistants. The building provides adequate accommodation and is well maintained, with attractive displays of pupils' work. The grounds are excellent and well used. The school has a good collection of resources for learning.

The deputy headteacher makes a very effective contribution to management, and subject managers are well qualified. The introduction of new initiatives is very well planned, and there is a strong commitment among the staff to extending and improving all aspects of the school's work. The headteacher and governors have extensive arrangements to ensure that the school provides and obtains best value for money.

PARENTS' AND CARERS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

What pleases parents most	What parents would like to see improved
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• The school is well led and managed• Teaching is good• Children work hard and enjoy school• There are good activities outside lessons.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Homework• The quality of information for parents

The proportion of parents expressing positive views about the school has grown considerably since the last inspection, and is now very high. Inspectors strongly agreed with most of the positive comments, particularly in the school's work with older pupils and in the quality of activities outside lessons. However, they judged that much further improvement was needed in Years 1 and 2. Inspectors, and older pupils in discussions with them, judged that homework was of good overall quality. The inspection team considered the overall quality of information for parents to be very good.

PART B: COMMENTARY

HOW HIGH ARE STANDARDS?

The school's results and pupils' achievements

1. By the time they move on to secondary school, pupils have reached well above average standards in English and mathematics, and above to well above average standards in most other subjects. The results of National Curriculum tests in English in Year 6 have shown consistent improvement over recent years, and pupils' work during the inspection was significantly better than the most recent test results in mathematics. Teachers expect pupils to reach above-average standards in these subjects, and reflect this in their planning. Twenty pupils in Year 6 were entered for extension papers in the 2002 National Curriculum tests. In science, most pupils in Year 6 are reaching the nationally expected standard, but higher-attaining pupils are not consistently achieving more than this. However, pupils in Year 6 during the inspection were using their scientific knowledge and understanding well to evaluate the properties of materials they were using in their designs. The school is taking effective steps to address the more demanding aspects of the National Curriculum at an earlier stage. Standards in information and communication technology (ICT) are broadly average, but the range and quality of pupils' skills have kept pace with national developments.
2. Children in the reception class make steady progress across all of the nationally recommended areas of learning, and standards are broadly average by the time they start work on the National Curriculum. However, there is a significant fall in standards at the end of Year 2, where the results in the 2001 National Curriculum tests were well below average in reading, writing and mathematics. The school has taken action to improve these standards by monitoring teaching and providing additional teaching. This has reduced the number of pupils in Year 2 who are still in the very early stages of reading. However, standards in Year 2 are still well below average in writing, and below average in reading, mathematics and science. Effective co-ordination and teaching ensure that standards in design and technology are above average, but teaching and learning in Years 1 and 2 are still not good enough to bring pupils' overall achievements up to a satisfactory level. In particular, higher-attaining pupils are not reaching the above average standards of which they are capable.
3. From Year 3 onwards, there is a strong overall pattern of rising standards and achievement, and by Year 6 pupils' work shows many strengths. They read and write very well, with good understanding and vocabulary, and become confident in advanced number work. Pupils reach well above average standards in physical education, including swimming, and in music. Gifted and talented pupils do particularly well in these subjects, and benefit from the broad range of learning opportunities outside lessons. Standards are also well above average in art and design and in design and technology. In these subjects, pupils combine very good practical skills with a thoughtful approach to evaluating their work. Pupils reach above average standards in history and geography, and the range of work in both subjects contributes much to their understanding of world issues. Despite good teaching in some classes, standards in religious education are broadly average throughout the school.

4. Boys join the school with significantly lower standards for their age than girls, and a substantially higher proportion of boys have special educational needs. These learning difficulties result in boys reaching lower standards than girls in English, though not in mathematics and science. The school is addressing this issue energetically through the provision of additional teaching, beginning in Year 1, but boys' achievement is still affected by the weaknesses in teaching, particularly of writing, in Years 1 and 2. Over the course of their school career, pupils with special educational needs make excellent progress, and many reach standards at or close to those expected for their age. The progress made by pupils with behavioural difficulties is exceptional, and their inclusion in lessons without disturbance to the work of others is an outstanding professional achievement on the part of their teachers and teaching assistants. Pupils from minority ethnic backgrounds and those with English as an additional language learn very effectively, and many reach high standards by Year 6.
5. In view of the standards reached by pupils joining the school, these standards represent good achievement by Year 6. The school has demanding but realistic targets for further improvement, and is increasing its emphasis on targets for pupils to reach standards above those expected for their age. There has been good improvement in overall standards and achievement in Year 6 since the last inspection. On the other hand, standards in Year 2 have shown a significant fall, and the steps taken to raise them so far have been only partially successful. The school has detailed plans for further action, including the redeployment of teachers with particular skills in teaching this age group.

Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development

6. This area was a major strength at the time of the last inspection, and the school is very effectively building on this success. In the course of their school career, pupils grow into very well balanced young people who love learning. All of the older pupils enjoy school: they arrive with enthusiasm, often shortly after eight o'clock for extra lessons or clubs, and leave slowly at the end of the day. Many participate in a very wide range of activities before and after school, and undertake homework willingly, especially when they can see that this enables them to reach high standards. Pupils write their own newspaper, act as pupil committee representatives and house captains, and undertake duties as monitors, marshalling younger pupils. They look forward to enjoying these responsibilities and the privileges of being able to sit at picnic tables or on the wall to eat their packed lunches.
7. As pupils move through the school, they develop very good relationships with each other and with their teachers. Pupils know right from wrong and understand the school rules. Older pupils help the younger ones at lunchtime, playing with them and helping with their meals. Many sporting activities consolidate pupils' classroom ability to work as a team. At the recent sleepover for pupils in Years 5 and 6, parents, teachers and other staff had fun as they raised a substantial sum to buy lockers. Pupils had identified the need for lockers and had helped choose them on the basis of best value. There is excellent racial harmony among the pupils, and they support those of their peers who have special educational needs.
8. Pupils respect each other's work and performance. They behave very well around the school and at lunchtime. The school does all it can to avoid excluding pupils, and teachers work very hard and successfully to re-integrate pupils who have been excluded elsewhere. Pupils with behavioural difficulties often develop particularly positive attitudes to school, and show their appreciation of the opportunities it offers by, for example, working hard right to the end of an afternoon lesson, even when they are

tired. Much work is safely displayed on walls and in corridors, to be admired and talked about. Pupils were particularly attentive during a class assembly which helped develop their understanding of the world beyond their own surroundings.

9. The excellent attitudes of the oldest pupils are the result of careful, long-term work by the school. Children in the reception class have broadly average attitudes to work, and need a clear lead if they are to learn effectively. Their attitudes show satisfactory progress. However, there is a dip in pupils' attitudes in Years 1 and 2, when a significant minority do not listen to their teacher as they should, and misbehave when not working directly with an adult. These pupils' attitudes are not improved by much of the teaching they receive, as it does not demand enough of them. Outstanding teaching in Year 3, on the other hand, gives pupils experience of real success, and brings about an immediate improvement in attitudes and behaviour. From this year onwards, pupils focus on a common task, and are keen to take up a challenge, try something new, and learn from their mistakes. Pupils from the ages of seven to eleven feel that they are encouraged to do their best in lessons, and concentrate hard and behave very well in class almost all the time. They feel part of the school community, and perform tasks and duties very well. The development in attitudes between Year 3 and Year 6 is a major strength of the school.
10. Attendance is well above average, and there is very little unauthorised absence. Punctuality is very good overall, and only a very few pupils are late to school.

HOW WELL ARE PUPILS TAUGHT?

11. Teaching in Years 3 to 6 has shown good improvement since the last inspection, and its overall quality is now very good. Teachers expect all pupils, including those with special educational needs and behavioural difficulties, to work to the highest standard of which they are capable. They aim in their planning to enable pupils to reach above average and well above average standards from the beginning of Year 3, and this lays the foundation for advanced work in Year 6. There is very effective additional teaching, both for pupils who need extra help and for those who are capable of very high standards. This work has a strong emphasis on literacy and numeracy, both of which are taught very well in Years 3 to 6. The teaching of pupils who have serious behavioural difficulties is excellent. It enables them to achieve as much as possible and ensures that they are included in all activities without preventing others from learning. Homework is carefully built up as pupils move through the school, and is often very well matched to individual needs. By the time they reach Year 6, pupils concentrate well to the end of the school day, and learn very effectively.
12. There are several outstanding features in the teaching in Years 3 to 6. Exceptional teaching of multiplication in Year 3 promotes very quick and effective learning for all pupils, and allows gifted and talented pupils to develop exceptional levels of understanding for their age. Excellent teaching in Year 4 included the early introduction of the properties of different types of triangle and parallel lines, and in Year 6 enabled pupils to develop excellent understanding of geometry. The most successful English teaching includes excellent planning to develop the full range of pupils' skills, including speaking and listening and their understanding of meaning not directly stated in texts. There were further examples of excellent teaching in music, both in class and extra-curricular activities, in science in Years 5 and 6, on the solar system and on designing experiments to separate and analyse mixtures, in history, using the Internet to investigate Viking seamanship in Year 4, in art and design in Year 4, and in design and technology in Year 6.
13. In a quarter of lessons in Years 3 to 6, teaching is satisfactory. These lessons contain

a suitable range of activities, but teaching is less sharply focused on what pupils most need to learn, and the pace of work is sometimes too slow. In some lessons, teachers do not plan work to fit the time available. This leads to lessons either over-running or being cut short; during the inspection, it cut into the time allocated to ICT, religious education and music. Very occasionally, too little is demanded of higher-attaining pupils, and they do not learn enough. Overall, teaching in Years 3 to 6 is very good in English, mathematics, design and technology, art and design, physical education and music. It is good in all other subjects except for religious education, where it is satisfactory, with good features.

14. Teaching in Years 1 and 2 was satisfactory in most lessons seen during the inspection, with some good teaching in individual lessons. However, weaknesses in planning, and in the management of pupils in Year 2, prevent it from meeting the needs of pupils adequately over these two years. Teachers plan a sound range of activities for the first part of lessons, but most work in the second half is not matched closely enough to pupils' learning needs. Planning for writing does not give pupils enough practice in writing texts and stories for themselves. While there is good marking in one Year 1 class, most work is not marked effectively. At worst, ticks are placed beside significant errors. The management of most classes is satisfactory, but pupils in Year 2 are often allowed to talk while the teacher is talking, and as a result do not know what they have to do. They are too slow to do as the teacher asks them, and teachers do not apply the school's behaviour policy consistently or firmly enough.
15. The teaching of English and mathematics, including literacy and numeracy, has become more systematic recently, but still does not give enough scope and challenge to higher-attaining pupils. There are similar weaknesses in the teaching of science, and overall teaching in these three subjects requires substantial improvement in Years 1 and 2. By contrast, well-planned teaching in design and technology enables pupils to reach above-average standards by the end of Year 2. Teaching in Years 1 and 2 is satisfactory in religious education, music, history and geography. It is satisfactory in ICT, though teaching in some lessons relies too heavily on the unsupported work of the technician. It was not possible to observe physical education teaching fully in Years 1 and 2, but there was some unsatisfactory teaching in Year 2 due to weak management. The quality of teaching in Years 1 and 2 has declined since the last inspection, but the school has good plans to redress the balance from September.
16. The quality of teaching in the reception class is satisfactory. Planning for all lessons is based on current national guidelines, and ensures that pupils are offered a full range of learning experiences. Suitable assessment and tracking systems are in place, and teachers and other support staff know their pupils well. Teachers use the local environment well, and introduce the national strategies for literacy and numeracy effectively. However, activities are not always linked closely enough to the learning goals they are designed to promote, and this limits progress, particularly when children are working out of doors. Some adults do not make the most of opportunities to develop children's speaking and listening skills, and the pace of work in a minority of lessons is too slow. Good features include the range of activities for mathematics, provision for extending children's knowledge and understanding of the world, and the use of apparatus in the hall. The strengths in teaching for the reception class outweigh the points that need further development, and it has shown satisfactory improvement since the last inspection.
17. Throughout the school, teaching assistants make a very good contribution to learning. All bring very good knowledge and understanding to the work. They are well briefed by teachers, and provide a very good balance of challenge and support to lower-attaining

pupils. They work with great skill and patience to provide exceptional levels of support to pupils with learning difficulties. Parents and volunteers from the community help build pupils' confidence in reading, and their contribution to teaching and learning has recently been extended to foreign languages, and to work with journalism for higher-attaining pupils in English. Over the course of their school career, pupils with special educational needs receive excellent teaching which contributes both to learning and to personal development. Teachers adapt work and the management of classes very well to meet the needs of pupils from minority ethnic backgrounds, and there is very good provision for pupils with English as an additional language, who reach high standards by Year 6.

18. Over their seven years in the school, its teaching promotes good learning and achievement for the pupils. This learning is very good, and at times excellent, for the lowest-attaining pupils, for those with behavioural difficulties, and for all pupils in Years 3 to 6. The school has identified the most serious weaknesses in its teaching, although its action so far has brought about only limited improvement. There are good plans for further action from September.

HOW GOOD ARE THE CURRICULAR AND OTHER OPPORTUNITIES OFFERED TO PUPILS?

Learning opportunities

19. The overall quality of the curriculum and other learning opportunities is good. It has benefited from the high priority given by the headteacher, during his four terms in the school, to developing the range and quality of learning opportunities for all pupils. There are several outstanding features, notably in ensuring the inclusion of all pupils in the school's work, in special educational needs, in extra-curricular activities and clubs, and in the learning opportunities offered in Years 3 to 6. The curriculum for these pupils is very good, and prepares them very effectively for secondary education. On the other hand, despite some recent improvements, the curriculum in Years 1 and 2 is not meeting the needs of all of the pupils, particularly those capable of reaching above average standards. The school has put right the weaknesses identified during the last inspection in the curriculum for the reception classes. This is based on the most recent national guidelines, and is satisfactory.
20. The curriculum meets all legal requirements, although, very occasionally, the act of collective worship is omitted from an assembly. There is good provision for personal, social and health education, including sex education and learning about the effects of drugs. Parents are well informed about these arrangements. The science curriculum promotes knowledge and understanding of a healthy lifestyle, and there is very good provision for swimming.
21. The length of lessons during the day ranges from 15 to 75 minutes. Some teachers use both the long and short sessions very well, but some lessons in Years 1 and 2 are too long for pupils to sustain concentration. Sharp timekeeping is a feature of the school's best teaching, but in some classes lessons either over-run, taking time away from the next lesson, or else are cut short, leaving time to fill before the next break. This affects the quality of learning, especially in the afternoon.
22. The school's exceptionally strong commitment to inclusion and race equality runs throughout its work. The headteacher, subject manager for additional educational needs, teachers and teaching assistants take a strong personal interest in all pupils from minority ethnic backgrounds and in those with behavioural difficulties, and plan very effective support which ensures that all are included but do not disrupt the learning

of others. The school has adopted the revised Code of Practice for pupils with special educational needs. There has been some disruption to arrangements in parts of the school because of illness, but overall provision for these pupils is excellent. Teaching assistants are skilled and very well briefed, and their work is closely related to individual education plans which contain realistic, achievable and measurable targets. The school makes flexible arrangements to meet individual needs. For instance, a pupil in Year 3 has regular opportunities to work in the reception class, as this meets her academic and emotional needs. Pupils with English as an additional language receive a well-considered programme of support, and often reach above average standards by Year 6. The curriculum provides equally well for boys and girls.

23. The curriculum in Years 3 to 6 provides very well for literacy and number work, with exceptional provision for multiplication work in Year 3. Additional teaching is very well planned to provide early support to pupils who need it, both in lessons and in extra teaching sessions before and after school. These benefit higher-attaining pupils as well as those whose work is a little below average. The provision is imaginative, and involves an increasing range of community volunteers, including a newspaper editor. It ensures that gifted and talented pupils make very good progress in Years 3 to 6, although they are not systematically identified and stretched in Years 1 and 2. During the inspection, the curriculum was being extended to include a very good introduction to modern foreign languages, which promoted both enjoyable and accurate learning among the pupils, and benefited from very effective support from the local advisory service. Throughout Years 3 to 6, the curriculum is underpinned by very clear systems of assessment, marking and target setting, which teachers use to ensure that pupils are fully stretched. Good provision for ICT, including special software for pupils with special educational needs, is enabling pupils to reach nationally expected standards, and to use computers well in their learning.
24. The curriculum in Years 1 and 2 is focused too much on enabling pupils to reach average standards, and is not planned to allow higher-attaining pupils to achieve more. This reflects a weakness in planning, which does not use all of the information available from assessment procedures to match work to the needs of all pupils. This is most often seen in undemanding activities planned for the second half of lessons. Provision for writing does not give pupils in Years 1 and 2 enough opportunities to practise writing simple texts and stories themselves, and they spend too much time completing worksheets, often only with single words. Additional teaching through the Early Literacy Skills initiative is effective, but literacy provision in subjects other than English is not integrated closely enough with work in the literacy hour. The system of

planning in Year 2, in which one teacher takes responsibility for literacy and the other for numeracy, does not allow each teacher to match work to the needs of her own class.

25. Opportunities for learning outside lessons are excellent. There are over 30 activities weekly, all of very high quality, extending and enhancing the curriculum and making an outstanding contribution to personal development. Very nearly all pupils are involved, and some clubs, such as dance, have such a high level of participation that they make a substantial contribution to standards in Year 6. Pupils arrive early for additional teaching – for example in journalism – and they concentrate and practise hard to reach good standards in music. There are regular arts and book weeks, and the school receives visits from theatre groups, musicians, the police and fire services. The school is home to the Kent Music School, participates in the Sevenoaks Three Arts Festival and plays a very active part in the local sports association.
26. The school is working hard to extend its relationship with the community, which is now very good. An increasing number of volunteers work in the school, some helping with reading, others sharing specialist skills, and pupils from a nearby secondary school are helping with the introduction of modern foreign languages. The school has good links with other schools in the area, including nurseries and the wide range of secondary schools to which pupils move. Regular curriculum training sessions provide opportunities to discuss issues on moderation standards for subjects in the curriculum and to share good practice. Pupils in Year 6 approach the process of transfer to secondary schools, including tests and assessments, with maturity and confidence.

Personal development

27. The school makes very good provision for pupils to develop spiritually, morally, socially and culturally. All pupils are valued and included in activities. The school acts as a 'family' with all staff, including the caretaker, teacher assistants and midday assistants, contributing towards making pupils feel special. The school's ethos is very strong. The very good provision noted in the last inspection report has been maintained.
28. Well-planned assemblies give pupils opportunities to develop spiritually through prayer and reflection. A calm, peaceful atmosphere is created and pupils join in prayers respectfully. The achievements of the whole school and of individuals are celebrated. There are very special moments in some lessons that result from the quality of teaching. For example, in a Year 5 lesson, the teacher had prepared an excellent illustration of the comparative sizes of the sun, earth and moon. The pupils were amazed at how small the earth is when compared to the sun. Teachers of older pupils are especially good at listening to them. They value their contribution to lessons, and encourage pupils to think for themselves by asking questions and applying what they have already learned to new problems. Throughout the school, religious education and personal, social and health education (PSHE) lessons give pupils regular opportunities to consider different faiths and values, stressing the importance of respect and relationships. This improves pupils' understanding of their own and others' feelings and emotions. In Year 4, for example, the pupils discussed threats to friendship. They took part thoughtfully, making comments such as, 'I would feel hurt and take a few minutes to calm myself down'.

29. Very good provision is made for pupils' moral development, and this helps pupils to know right from wrong. Opportunities are provided in assemblies and PSHE lessons to hear about and discuss moral issues. Teachers are very good role models and encourage pupils in their relationships with one another and with adults. Good behaviour in the school is promoted through a system of school and classroom rules. Pupils are keen to be voted as representatives on the pupil committee as they know that this makes a difference; their views are listened to, and acted upon. For instance, there are now outside picnic areas, and pupils have raised a large amount of money to provide lockers. The school has a comment/concerns box where pupils can put their suggestions for improvement. These are discussed at pupil committee meetings. Questionnaires are given to pupils and the school takes appropriate action to meet requests. All pupils know about the discussions and decisions made by the committee, as time is given in assembly for members to report to the whole school and representatives are encouraged to discuss issues with their class. Pupils with special educational needs have been voted as representatives on this committee. Pupils of mixed race state that there is no bullying and that they know where they would go for help should this occur. They are confident in their teachers, and their parents appreciate the support they are given.
30. Provision for pupils' social development is very good. All are encouraged to work together in lessons and to share ideas and tasks when working. Older pupils acting as monitors, to ensure that all pupils behave appropriately, take this responsibility very seriously. Pupils are given choices – for example, of where to sit at lunchtime – and this helps to promote a happy, relaxed atmosphere. Pupils are given a good range of responsibilities both in classrooms and around the school. From the start of school, they are encouraged to be independent learners by choosing activities for the day. Visits to sites of educational interest and contact with a wide range of visitors to the school help develop pupils' social skills. Pupils learn sportsmanship both in lessons and through competition with other schools. The range of extra-curricular activities is excellent. As a result, most pupils are friendly and confident individuals. The older pupils, including those with special educational needs, were delighted to talk about the sleep-over in school where they enjoyed themselves, raised money, and were amazed at the stamina of the caretaker, who took them jogging very early in the morning.
31. Very good provision is made for pupils' cultural development. They are given good opportunities to appreciate their own cultural heritage and to understand the viewpoint of people from other cultures, for example by considering the issue of settlement from different points of view in English. Recent visitors have included parents from Japan and Ghana as well as a local clergyman who regularly takes assembly. In one assembly, Year 5 pupils travelled the world. They noted differences, and pupils were enthralled and saw that each country had special qualities. The pupils' prayer was to 'open our hearts and accept each other.' Pupils learn to respect other faiths in religious education lessons. They are well prepared for the range of cultures present in modern Britain.

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL CARE FOR ITS PUPILS?

32. Teachers, teaching assistants and all other adults in the school know the pupils very well and take very good care of their health and well-being. The school takes particular care to help pupils who have additional needs, whatever they may be. Pupils are valued and included, and special provision made so that each can get the most from their education. The school has enabled pupils excluded elsewhere to learn effectively and to participate fully in the community. It has made significant extensions to its

arrangements to care for pupils' health and well-being since the last inspection.

33. Senior staff support and lead their colleagues in providing very good personal and educational support for pupils. Before school and during lessons, there are booster classes for pupils who need to consolidate their grasp of basic skills, and additional, demanding teaching for the highest-attaining pupils. Pupils who have difficulty with social skills are invited to join a supervised lunchtime activities club. This contributes to their learning and social skills, and ensures that all pupils can enjoy their break. The quality of personal support for pupils with special educational needs is excellent, and is the outcome of very close co-operation between teachers and teaching assistants. There is some exceptional provision, particularly when teaching assistants have formed long-term relationships with pupils.
34. There are clear school rules and in-class schemes to promote good behaviour and reward effort. These are very successful in Years 3 to 6, both in recognising and in rewarding the very good behaviour of the majority of pupils, helping pupils with behavioural difficulties to behave better. Arrangements to promote good behaviour have a satisfactory impact in the reception classes, but are not effective enough in some classes in Years 1 and 2. Some misbehaviour, particularly in Year 2, is not tackled firmly enough, and learning is often interrupted by pupils talking while the teacher is talking, so that they do not know what they should be doing. The school has improved arrangements for promoting good behaviour at breaktime following consultation with pupils. These have included improving play arrangements for pupils in Year 6 as part of a major playground redevelopment. Plans for this have been displayed, and pupil committee members are kept updated on progress. Absences are monitored well, and parents are contacted on the first day of absence.
35. The school makes good provision for child protection and uses external support and advice wisely. It has recently added a medical room that allows pupils some privacy, and they receive a good level of care from the trained first-aiders. Health and safety matters are the responsibility of the headteacher, and risk assessments are being completed. Routine checks of the building and grounds are regularly carried out, though procedures could be set out more clearly in the school's health and safety policy.
36. The school has very good systems for assessing progress in English and mathematics. Subject managers and teachers use these very well to match work to pupils' needs and to raise standards. For example, a group of 20 pupils in Year 6 were encouraged to attempt very demanding extension papers in this year's National Curriculum tests, and exceptionally close tracking of progress in the learning of tables in Year 3 has contributed to planning very demanding extension work for the highest-attaining pupils. While these systems are also in place in Years 1 and 2, the information they provide is not used well enough to plan work that meets the needs of all pupils, and learning is further weakened in most classes by inadequate marking.
37. The use of assessment outside English and mathematics is not contributing as much as it should to learning throughout the school. There was good use during the inspection of assessment in design and technology, music and swimming, where each element of achievement was used as a springboard for the next. In some lessons, however, the focus of planning is directed more to the topic in hand than to the learning demands made of the pupils, and this leads some pupils, most often higher-attaining pupils, to achieve less than they could. The assessment of pupils with special educational needs is carried out to a very high standard, and includes skilled incorporation of evidence from specialists outside the school. The views of parents and pupils are fully considered and are reflected in pupils' targets. Progress towards targets

is accurately recorded; once they are met, pupils are either set further targets, or, if they no longer have a learning difficulty, are removed from the register of special educational needs.

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL WORK IN PARTNERSHIP WITH PARENTS?

38. Parents strongly support the school and what it provides for their children. Over twice as many parents returned the pre-inspection questionnaire as at the last inspection, and their responses were more positive in each category. There were particularly strong endorsements of the school's work from parents of children from minority ethnic backgrounds, from those of higher-attaining pupils, and from parents of pupils with English as an additional language or special educational needs. Parents particularly appreciate the commitment of teachers to the school, and their strong sense of teamwork. The inspection team agreed with the positive points made by parents in respect of older pupils, but judged that provision in Years 1 and 2 needed to be improved. Overall, the very positive relationship the school had with parents at the time of the last inspection has been carefully developed and extended.
39. A carefully planned induction programme has been established, allowing children joining the reception classes to settle quickly and happily. Parents are welcomed to the classrooms to help children feel secure, establishing good relationships between school and home. Home-school reading diaries and word books are used effectively by parents and staff so that parents are able to support the children in their learning.
40. The new reception desk in the entrance area makes parents feel welcome, and they are increasingly involved in the work of the school. Parents often help in classrooms – some go on to become teaching assistants – and many more give practical help, for example with painting and decorating. There is strong support from the school association in organising social and fund-raising activities. The recent sleep-over, which involved almost all of the pupils in Years 5 and 6, was jointly organised by school staff and parents.
41. Parents receive frequent written information of high quality. This includes well-written termly newsletters, with information about what will be studied, and the homework requirements for each class. The school organises well-attended information sessions, as well as parent consultation meetings. Pupils' annual reports are good. Almost all tell parents what their children know, understand and can do. Many include clear guidance on improvement, though they could sometimes be more specific about how the improvement could be achieved, and about the help parents could give. There is an indication of how younger pupils' work compares with national standards, but reports for older pupils have only an effort grade in some subjects. National test results, including optional tests, are fully reported, though not always in a clear format. The school's consultations with parents have led it to examine ways of improving reports.

42. After consulting parents, the school informs them of the outcomes, giving due weight to occasional negative points, as well as to the more frequent endorsements of its work. At the time of the last inspection, 30 per cent of parents were dissatisfied with the amount of work their children were expected to do at home. The school now clearly tells parents each term what they should expect for their child and the proportion with any concern has halved. Pupils felt that the quality of homework improved as they moved through the school, and that it was very good by the time they reached Year 6.

HOW WELL IS THE SCHOOL LED AND MANAGED?

43. The headteacher, deputy headteacher and governors have created a very strong sense of purpose for the school, based on commitment to the highest possible standards and to the inclusion of all pupils. In just over four terms since his appointment, the headteacher has generated a strong sense of teamwork among teachers, used all available sources of information to analyse its strengths and weaknesses, and embarked on a comprehensive and well thought out programme of development. This has led to a strong pattern of improvement in Years 3 to 6, with a very good range of supplementary teaching for all pupils, and an excellent and growing programme of learning activities outside the classroom. Support for teaching in the reception classes – for example in managing behaviour – has also led to satisfactory provision. While the action taken to improve teaching in Years 1 and 2 has not yet been fully effective, it has led to an increased proportion of satisfactory teaching, and the school has good plans to reinforce this teaching further from September.
44. New developments are carefully planned and introduced. In modern foreign languages, for example, the school has carried out an audit of the staff's language skills and interests, obtained the best available advice, and arranged a series of short, enjoyable lesson formats that fit well into its current curriculum. A similar approach has been taken to introducing the Early Literacy Support scheme to support literacy in Year 1, and to extending arrangements for the inclusion of all pupils. These are prominent in the school improvement plan, and their focus is to help pupils who do not share the good attitudes of the majority to learn effectively. This was highly successful during the inspection. For example, the lunchtime club for pupils whose playground behaviour has caused concern protects the interests of other pupils, and helps those who attend to develop very positive attitudes to learning.
45. The headteacher and governors have a strong working partnership. Governors are well organised and well informed. There is a good committee structure, and a systematic programme of links which keeps them in touch with all aspects of the school's work. The school improvement plan is a detailed and comprehensive working document, with detailed financial provision where appropriate. Governors are fully involved in setting priorities for the plan and in setting and reviewing targets. Financial planning and control are very effective, and the school makes good use of its grounds to generate income and to maximise its links with the community – for example, by hosting the Kent Music School. Additional funds are very effectively spent in the interests of pupils, with a clear view of long-term priorities. All of these arrangements allow the school to assess effectively how well it is providing and obtaining best value for money. The school uses ICT well in its management, and has a good relationship with the local authority. The headteacher and governors do not feel that it suffers from bureaucratic interference, but that planning was made difficult by the timing of the school's budget allocation, which it receives a month into the new school year.
46. The headteacher uses monitoring and performance management effectively to identify

areas for professional development among the staff. He is quick to identify strengths and talents among the staff, and the senior management team has been strengthened and extended to cover all key areas within the school. All teachers with management responsibility have good knowledge and understanding of their subjects or areas. Their leadership is a key factor in the trend of improving standards in Years 3 to 6, although only in design and technology is co-ordination also effective in securing above-average standards in Years 1 and 2. Arrangements for in-service training and the professional development of teachers are satisfactory for the reception class and very good for Years 3 to 6. They have had some impact on the management of behaviour in Years 1 and 2, but some initiatives, notably in marking, have not given teachers enough practical help and guidance. The management of provision for special educational needs is excellent. While there have been some interruptions to provision due to illness, pupils with special educational needs make outstanding progress over the course of their school career.

47. The school has sufficient teaching staff, with a good range of qualifications and experience. Several have strong professional interests in subjects and curriculum areas, and use these to develop innovative teaching techniques. Teaching assistants are very well qualified and experienced for the work they do. Administrative and caretaking staff are efficient and play a full part in the school community.
48. The school has a good collection of resources for learning, and most are used well, though there is some under-use of resources for religious education in Years 1 and 2. The computer suite is used effectively, though it is very cramped for a full class, and does not have sufficient demonstration facilities. Computers located in classrooms are not used consistently enough. The library is well stocked with fiction, and is supported by further good collections of books in class libraries. Its stock of books to support learning in subjects is relatively under-developed, particularly in ICT, religious education and music.
49. The school building provides adequate accommodation. It is kept in good condition, and makes a very good contribution to learning through the quality of displays of pupils' work. The school has extensive and attractive grounds. It makes very good use of these, and has excellent plans to develop them further. A grant for £20,000 for this purpose was received immediately before the inspection.

WHAT SHOULD THE SCHOOL DO TO IMPROVE FURTHER?

50. The school has put in place the steps needed to raise standards in science to the levels reached in English and mathematics. The school is taking action to improve the main issues for improvement identified in this report, but needs to extend this, paying particular attention to the following points:
 - (1) Raise standards of work, and of teaching and learning in Years 1 and 2, by:
 - improving planning, to ensure that all pupils' work contributes effectively to learning;
 - improving provision for the teaching of writing, in English and in other subjects;

- improving the management of classes in Year 2.
(Paragraphs 2, 4, 9, 14-15, 34, 43, 46, 63-7, 69-71, 72-3, 76, 79-80, 83)

(2) Use time during the school day more effectively, by:

- matching the length of lessons more closely to learning goals and to pupils' needs;
- planning work to ensure that pupils are fully extended in all parts of each lesson;
- improving timekeeping, so that fewer lessons over-run, or are cut short.
(Paragraphs 13, 21)

(3) Improve the use of assessment and marking, by:

- using the provisions of the National Curriculum to assess progress in all subjects;
- using information from assessment to plan consistently demanding work for all pupils;
- establishing effective marking in Years 1 and 2.
(Paragraphs 14, 19, 24, 36-7, 46, 49, 76)

Additional issues for consideration in the action plan

Ensure that pupils in both reception classes have good access to outdoor play equipment.

(Paragraph 61)

Ensure that acts of collective worship take place each day.

(Paragraph 20)

PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS

Summary of the sources of evidence for the inspection

Number of lessons observed	94
Number of discussions with staff, governors, other adults and pupils	32

Summary of teaching observed during the inspection

	Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
Number	12	16	17	44	5	0	0
Percentage	13	17	18	47	5	0	0

The table gives the number and percentage of lessons observed in each of the seven categories used to make judgements about teaching.

Information about the school's pupils

Pupils on the school's roll	YR – Y6
Number of pupils on the school's roll (FTE for part-time pupils)	390
Number of full-time pupils known to be eligible for free school meals	31

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Special educational needs	YR – Y6
Number of pupils with statements of special educational needs	8
Number of pupils on the school's special educational needs register	147

English as an additional language	No of pupils
Number of pupils with English as an additional language	22

Pupil mobility in the last school year	No of pupils
Pupils who joined the school other than at the usual time of first admission	16
Pupils who left the school other than at the usual time of leaving	12

Attendance

Authorised absence

	%
School data	4.8

Unauthorised absence

	%
School data	0.1

National comparative data	5.6
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National comparative data	0.5
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Both tables give the percentage of half days (sessions) missed through absence for the latest complete reporting year.

Attainment at the end of Key Stage 1 (Year 2)

Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 1 for the latest reporting year	Year	Boys	Girls	Total
	2001	26	32	58

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		Reading	Writing	Mathematics
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	18	15	21
	Girls	24	24	27
	Total	42	39	48
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	72 (79)	67 (85)	83 (90)
	National	84 (83)	86 (84)	91 (90)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	18	21	26
	Girls	26	29	26
	Total	44	50	52
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	76 (87)	86 (90)	90 (92)
	National	85 (84)	89 (88)	89 (88)

Percentages in brackets refer to the year before the latest reporting year.

Attainment at the end of Key Stage 2 (Year 6)

Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 2 for the latest reporting year	Year	Boys	Girls	Total
	2001	31	14	45

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys	22	21	26
	Girls	13	12	13
	Total	35	33	39
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	78 (81)	73 (78)	87 (91)
	National	75 (75)	71 (72)	87 (85)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys	23	24	23
	Girls	13	12	12
	Total	36	36	35
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	80 (83)	80 (83)	78 (94)
	National	72 (70)	74 (72)	82 (79)

Percentages in brackets refer to the year before the latest reporting year.

Ethnic background of pupils

	No of pupils
Black – Caribbean heritage	1
Black – African heritage	0
Black – other	4
Indian	0
Pakistani	0
Bangladeshi	0
Chinese	0
White	330
Any other minority ethnic group	0

This table refers to pupils of compulsory school age only.

Teachers and classes

Qualified teachers and classes: YR – Y6

Total number of qualified teachers (FTE)	16.6
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	23.5
Average class size	27.9

Education support staff: YR – Y6

Total number of education support staff	18
Total aggregate hours worked per week	314

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Exclusions in the last school year

	Fixed period	Permanent
Black – Caribbean heritage	0	0
Black – African heritage	0	0
Black – other	0	0
Indian	0	0
Pakistani	0	0
Bangladeshi	0	0
Chinese	0	0
White	7	0
Other minority ethnic groups	0	0

This table gives the number of exclusions of pupils of compulsory school age, which may be different from the number of pupils excluded.

Financial information

Financial year	2001-2
	£
Total income	832,939
Total expenditure	854,851
Expenditure per pupil	2,187
Balance brought forward from previous year	45,412
Balance carried forward to next year	23,500

Recruitment of teachers

Number of teachers who left the school during the last two years	5.5
Number of teachers appointed to the school during the last two years	7.5
Total number of vacant teaching posts (FTE)	0
Number of vacancies filled by teachers on temporary contract of a term or more (FTE)	0
Number of unfilled vacancies or vacancies filled by teachers on temporary contract of less than one term (FTE)	0

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Results of the survey of parents and carers

Questionnaire return rate

Number of questionnaires sent out	390
Number of questionnaires returned	240

Percentage of responses in each category

	Strongly agree	Tend to agree	Tend to disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know
My child likes school.	55	39	4	1	0
My child is making good progress in school.	44	48	5	2	1
Behaviour in the school is good.	28	65	3	1	3
My child gets the right amount of work to do at home.	32	50	14	2	3
The teaching is good.	56	41	1	0	2
I am kept well informed about how my child is getting on.	44	46	10	0	0
I would feel comfortable about approaching the school with questions or a problem.	59	34	5	1	2
The school expects my child to work hard and achieve his or her best.	56	40	2	0	1
The school works closely with parents.	45	47	7	0	1
The school is well led and managed.	57	40	2	1	1
The school is helping my child become mature and responsible.	50	44	2	0	4
The school provides an interesting range of activities outside lessons.	59	36	3	0	2

PART D: THE STANDARDS AND QUALITY OF TEACHING IN AREAS OF THE CURRICULUM, SUBJECTS AND COURSES

AREAS OF LEARNING FOR CHILDREN IN THE FOUNDATION STAGE

51. Children in the foundation stage are taught in two reception classes, which give them a sound start to their school life. Most children enter the reception classes with broadly average standards for their age. Teaching in all areas of learning is satisfactory. It leads to satisfactory learning, and a high proportion of children reach the standard expected for their age in all of the nationally recommended areas of learning by the time they move on to Year 1. There are some good features, for example in the range of mathematical activities, in the use of the school grounds, and in personal development. However, there are some limitations in opportunities for physical development that make learning just satisfactory in this area. Children with special needs educational needs and those at the early stages of learning English make good progress, with valuable additional support provided by the special needs team and the local authority support service.

Personal, social and emotional development

52. Children display high levels of involvement in activities – for example, when pretending to be shoe shop assistants in the role-play area. They move confidently and independently from one activity to another, share equipment and pack up the activities willingly and effectively. The children maintain good concentration and sit still when required, for example, when reading together and discussing a big book about mini-beasts. A few find it hard to take turns and not call out their answers.
53. Children show enthusiasm and enjoyment for learning. For example, when using paint to explore colour and make patterns, one child was very excited to discover she had made pink by mixing red and white. Children change and dress themselves with increasing speed and ability, and line up and move around the school in a sensible manner. They are given regular opportunities to improve their social and independent skills, by choosing their own activities. However, planning for outdoor play does not include enough opportunities for children to develop group play where they can work together to solve problems.
54. Children's relationships with each other and with adults are good. Adults provide positive encouragement and praise, and maintain good relationships with the children and with each other. As a result, pupils are secure, and are happy to seek help and support when they need it. Classroom routines are well established, and pupils are helped to know the difference between right and wrong, so that behaviour is well managed in class and around the school. Teachers have made a concerted effort to improve the quality of the children's behaviour, an issue in the previous report. This has been achieved through consistently following the school's behaviour policy and targeting individual or small groups of children with good adult support.

Communication, language and literacy

55. Most children speak clearly and in simple sentences but a minority are reluctant to speak out in a group. Pupils sustain their listening in large and small groups, and respond appropriately to what they have heard. They listen with enjoyment to stories and join in reciting nursery rhymes with enthusiasm. When playing with animal puppets, however, higher-attaining pupils found it difficult to interact with others to plan and negotiate what they were going to do, and to create a story. Adults miss opportunities to encourage pupils to use talk in their play, and do not always allow the pupils enough time to respond and share their ideas and thinking. As a result, pupils' vocabulary and their ability to interact with others are not extended as much as they could be.
56. Higher-attaining children read simple stories fluently, with little support from adults. They talk about the story and recall the main events. However, they need prompting to correct mistakes when their reading does not make sense, rely heavily on the words they already know, and do not readily use their knowledge of the links between letters and sounds to tackle less familiar words. Lower-attaining children recognise about ten individual words, but know very few letter sounds. Even when supported, they are unable to blend sounds to make simple words. While they enjoy pictures, their limited vocabulary makes it difficult for them to talk about the story.
57. In writing, higher-attaining children are beginning to compose their own simple sentences, as, for example, 'I would like to be a dancer because I like to dance'. Their letters are recognisable, and mostly correctly formed. They understand the purpose of capital letters and full stops in sentences, but do not apply them consistently in their writing. Lower-attaining children use strings of letters to represent their ideas, but the letters they choose show little relationship to the words they are trying to write. Their pencil control is less well developed, so that letters are usually recognisable but not correctly formed.

Mathematical development

58. The children experience a good range of mathematical activities involving number work and counting. For example, they use small circles to draw and count the sizes of caterpillars. They use playdough to form numbers and arrange number cards on the floor in the correct order from 1 to 10. Pupils learn about the different times of the day and use card clocks to help them read 'o'clock'. They develop their understanding of mathematical language – for example, smaller/bigger and least/most – through practical activities such as gathering data for graphs. They learn about shapes by making prints, pictures and designs with 2D shapes. Higher-attaining pupils successfully order number tiles to 50 and can say what number comes after 47 and before 49. They begin to use the vertical patterns in a 100 number square to locate specific numbers. They understand simple addition and subtraction sums and make recordings of their work. Lower-attaining pupils need support to recognise and count numbers to 10. Using a computer game, they are able to match big, middle-sized and small pictures. Effective use is made of counting and action rhymes to reinforce number skills. The pupils join in these confidently and with enthusiasm and enjoyment.

Knowledge and understanding of the world

59. Children learn about the world around them through the role-play areas such as the 'Garden Centre' and 'Nature Table'. Good use is made of the school's extensive and well-resourced grounds for the children to make "journey sticks", with plants, stones and animals that they have discovered on their walk. Following a visit to a local garden centre, the children are growing different kinds of seeds such as lettuces, radishes and beans and observe and record their observations. In a project on mini-beasts, they learn about the life cycle of a butterfly and demonstrate their understanding through the use of graphic art. They recognise and name a range of mini-beasts including snails, spiders, beetles and ladybirds and make pictures, paintings, collages and models of them. They use construction toys to build model vehicles. Children successfully use computer programmes to create pictures such as their illustrations for the story of 'Goldilocks and the Three Bears'. They confidently use the mouse, and the arrow keys and space bar from the keyboard to make their selections and move the pictures when working with mathematics programs. They work confidently in the computer suite.
60. Children learn about other cultures from looking at dolls, and during the week of the inspection they were visited by a mother from Japan. The beauty and grace of the kimonos fascinated the children, some of whom were chosen to display them. This gave them a feeling of pride. Children recite a prayer at the end of the day and this contributes to their spiritual development.

Physical development

61. Children ride and control small tricycles and bicycles confidently and safely, showing an awareness of others. In a PE lesson, pupils recognised the change in their heart rate after their warming up activities, and showed control as they moved in a variety of ways, crawling, spinning and rolling using their knees and elbows. They co-ordinated their arm and leg movements effectively when pretending to be 'joints' and made good use of the space as they moved around the hall. Children's manipulative skills are developed through the use of pencils, pens, brushes, modelling materials and a range of tools. The children roll and shape playdough to make numbers and show good control of a brush when making patterns to decorate a kimono. They learn to handle construction toys, including large wooden bricks, safely and confidently. Since the previous inspection, an outdoor play area has been developed for the reception classes, but one class has limited access to it. Except for lessons in the hall, children also have too little use of large apparatus for climbing and balancing. Overall, progress in physical development is just satisfactory.

Creative development

62. The role-play areas such as a home corner and garden centre promote imaginative play and encourage pupils to take different roles. This represents satisfactory improvement on a weak point noted during the last inspection. Children make careful and accurate observational paintings of plants, and experience colour mixing by painting their hands and rubbing them together before making hand prints. They explore thick paint, draw pictures in it with their fingers and make prints from their drawings. They make head-dresses from a range of materials such as tissue, feathers, coloured and gummed papers. Children join in the words and actions of songs with great enthusiasm, singing tunefully and using their voices to create different effects and expressions. They respond quickly to the teacher's hand signal to stop. Opportunities to use musical instruments are more limited, although children have access to a listening corner with

tapes and headphones.

ENGLISH

63. The results of National Curriculum tests in Year 6 have improved steadily over recent years, and were well above average in 2001. Test results for Year 2 in 2001 were well below average in reading and writing, and had been below or well below average in both skills since 1999. The standard of work seen during the inspection maintained the high standards achieved in tests in Year 6. In Year 2, work seen shows a little improvement on the most recent results, but standards are still well below average in writing, and higher-attaining pupils are not achieving as much as they should.
64. By Year 6, pupils with special needs make good progress in English, and most of those with English as an additional language reach high standards. Gifted and talented pupils are under-performing in Year 2, but achieve well by Year 6. Girls do better than boys, but the school population contains a higher proportion of boys than girls who began with low standards in English, and who have special educational needs. Overall, achievement in English, and improvement since the last inspection, are very good by Year 6, but are unsatisfactory in Year 2, where standards have fallen.
65. Standards in speaking and listening are above average in Year 6. Many pupils are articulate speakers, who present an argument forcefully, listen well to arguments put forward by others, and create persuasive counter-arguments. These good standards are the result of careful teaching in Years 3 to 6, where teachers in all subjects explain work clearly, use a broad and challenging range of questions, and give pupils carefully planned opportunities to speak at length. Standards in speaking and listening in Year 2 are below average. Most pupils talk readily about matters which interest them, and some are beginning to use technical vocabulary such as 'alliteration'. However, pupils in Years 1 and 2 do not listen as well as they should, and their contributions to discussion are often very brief for their age. They also tend to talk to each other in class when they should be focusing on other aspects of English.
66. Standards in reading are well above average in Year 6. Higher-attaining pupils read a broad range of texts with good fluency and understanding, including attention to meaning that is implied rather than explicitly stated. They learn to consider the reasons for different points of view in the texts they read, for example by comparing texts written by native Americans and by European settlers. Lower-attaining pupils and those with special educational needs find complex vocabulary difficult, but they persevere well, and achieve standards which are close to those expected for their age. Most pupils in Year 2 during the inspection could use the connections between sounds and letters to work out unfamiliar words, but higher-attaining pupils are not reading as fluently and extensively as they should, and some lower-attaining pupils are still in the early stages of learning to read. Overall, reading skills in Year 2 are under-developed.
67. By Year 6, pupils write to a well above average standard, with well presented work and often very good spelling and handwriting. Independent writing develops well, and pupils develop their own individual styles. Standards of writing in Years 1 and 2, however, are well below average, and lower than in other aspects of English. There are significant weaknesses in spelling, the formation and size of letters, the use of full stops and capital letters, and the range and quality of pupils' compositions. Long-term progress and achievement in writing are held back by the pattern of work pupils are given. There are far too many worksheets, which often demand only one or two words or even a drawing, and too few opportunities for pupils to write simple stories and accounts of their work and interests. Higher-attaining pupils do not reach the above average

standards they should.

68. Teaching and learning are very good in Years 3 to 6. Teachers combine enthusiasm with careful planning and a good balance of attention to speaking and listening as well as to reading and writing. Open questioning gives very good opportunities for pupils to think and develop their own ideas, and pupils develop increasing understanding of their own work and of how they need to improve. Teachers manage classes very well, so that pupils want to do their best – for example, by concentrating hard in private reading sessions, and by presenting their work to the best of their ability. Marking and assessment are used very well to track progress and to set targets, and pupils are given time to reflect on points they need to improve. Where the teaching is excellent, a combination of dynamic presentation, clarity and a well-judged sense of humour help pupils learn very effectively across the whole range of English skills.
69. Teaching in Years 1 and 2 is unsatisfactory, despite effective support from an additional teacher in Year 2, and good work from teaching assistants. In some Year 2 lessons, pupils are allowed to chat to each other while the teacher is talking, and then do not know what to do in their group work because they have not been listening. Teachers across the age group do not plan effectively to teach writing, and most do not use day-to-day assessment and marking to track and guide progress. At worst, incorrect work on full stops and capital letters is marked as correct and annotated as 'Good'. There are some sound features, including the Early Literacy Support scheme for lower-attaining pupils in Year 1, and an increasingly systematic approach to teaching the connections between letters and sounds.
70. Teachers in Years 3 to 6 make very good use of ICT, but this is much less systematic in Years 1 and 2. The library contains a good range of books to support work in English, and is used well. Work in other subjects makes a very good contribution to reading and writing in Years 3 to 6, but not in Years 1 and 2, where this aspect of literacy is significantly under-developed.
71. The subject manager's strong personal lead and detailed knowledge and understanding of English contribute to very effective planning, assessment and teaching in Years 3 to 6. However, action to improve the quality of teaching and learning in Years 1 and 2 has been only partially successful, and the school accepts that substantial further action is needed if standards are to be brought up to a satisfactory level by the end of Year 2. It has good plans to bring this about, including the redeployment of staff who have particular skills in teaching this age range. Nevertheless, the strengths in Years 3 to 6, where English teaching is supported by very good work in other subjects, outweigh these weaknesses. Good resources, cross-curricular links with other subjects and the high quality displays of pupils' work contribute to a very positive climate for learning, and pupils are well prepared for secondary school.

MATHEMATICS

72. Standards in 2001 National Curriculum tests were well below average in Year 2, and above average in Year 6. The standard of work seen during the inspection showed some improvement over the 2001 results in Year 2, although it was still below average overall, and good improvement in Year 6, where it was well above average. This represents good progress from the above average standards in mathematics seen during the last inspection in Year 6, but a fall in standards in Year 2, which the school is beginning to tackle. Throughout the school, teaching assistants support pupils with special educational needs very well. As a result, these pupils make sound progress in Years 1 and 2, and very good progress in Years 3 to 6. All pupils are fully included in lessons, and there is no significant difference between the performance of boys and girls. Achievement in mathematics is not as good as it should be in Year 2, but is now very good in Year 6.
73. By Year 2, average and higher-attaining pupils understand place value to 100, can add and subtract two-digit numbers, can multiply by a single number and have a sound grasp of the concept of odd and even numbers. This work is broadly of the standard expected nationally, and these pupils also reach broadly average standards in understanding two-dimensional and three-dimensional shapes and in measurement. Lower-attaining pupils reach slightly lower standards, but this represents good achievement for these pupils, who benefit from very effective support from teachers and teaching assistants. Pupils begin to apply their knowledge of mathematics effectively, for example, by finding out which containers in their bathrooms at home contain less than a litre. Overall, standards in Year 2 are lower than national average levels, because higher-attaining pupils are not reaching above average standards.
74. By Year 6, standards are well above average, and higher-attaining pupils often reach very high standards for their age. Standards in mental mathematics are well above average, and the breadth of the curriculum contributes to high levels of mathematical understanding in other areas. Higher-attaining pupils in Year 6, for example, reached very high standards as they investigated the properties of a range of quadrilaterals. There are examples of very high achievement in individual classes, beginning with Year 3, where pupils make exceptional progress in multiplication. All pupils begin to make accelerated progress in this year, and gifted and talented pupils develop very high levels of skill and competence. One pupil in Year 3, for example, worked out 16 times 8 as part of his weekly test. This test was an extremely well designed teaching tool in its own right, as it enabled the whole class to be tested on a broad range of tables simultaneously. The rapid pace of the test was then followed by slow and careful explanation of strategies for pupils to use with calculations some still found difficult. Pupils had prepared carefully for this test in their homework, and parents expressed strong appreciation to inspectors of the quality of work in this aspect of mathematics. By Year 5, pupils work out fractions of numbers to 100, interpreting results with ease as a ratio or proportion.
75. The quality of teaching is very high in Years 3 to 6, but is unsatisfactory overall in Years 1 and 2. Teachers in Years 3 to 6 use assessment very effectively to set a high, but achievable level of challenge for all pupils, and keep in very close touch with progress through regular marking, observations and assessments. They are able to set work at the right level, and then to plan immediate extensions once pupils have achieved a learning target. Teachers in Years 3 to 6 explain each learning activity very clearly. They set clear targets, and make very good use of resources. In one excellent lesson in Year 6, pupils first responded to the mental challenge of naming and defining the

properties of equilateral, isosceles and scalene triangles, then moved on to investigate the properties of a range of quadrilaterals. At each point in the lesson pupils knew exactly what to do and how long they had to do it. An excellent final session, involving the whole class, allowed them to explain their investigative strategies using a wide range of mathematical vocabulary.

76. Teaching and learning in Years 1 and 2 are satisfactory in the first half of lessons, which are interesting and offer challenge to all pupils, particularly in mental mathematics. Teachers plan sound opportunities for pupils to apply their understanding of number properties and measurements. However, in the second half of lessons, teachers often use the same worksheet for all pupils, apart from those with special educational needs, and this gives higher-attaining pupils too few opportunities to reach above average standards. Assessment procedures are good, but are not used well enough in planning. Teachers do not use marking effectively to identify what pupils have and have not understood, and what they most need to learn next. As a result, work is sometimes too easy and sometimes too hard.
77. Lively mathematical investigations in Years 3 to 6 strongly support learning, and the contribution of work in other subjects to mathematics is very well thought out. Pupils record survey findings in geography using a range of graphs, estimate measurements in design and technology and identify dates on a timeline in history accurately. Overall, the use of ICT in mathematics is satisfactory, but it could be improved throughout the school by more detailed planning.
78. Management and co-ordination are good in Years 3 to 6, but have been only partly effective in Years 1 and 2. Teachers' planning in Years 1 and 2 is monitored, but the standard of pupils' work is not tracked closely enough. This has limited progress, though there has been some recent improvement, particularly in mental mathematics. There is a very strong sense of shared commitment among teachers and pupils to mathematics in Years 3 to 6, and both derive a high degree of satisfaction from their achievements. Many pupils in Years 3 to 6 say that mathematics is their favourite subject, and the reasons for this opinion are clear in every classroom.

SCIENCE

79. Standards, both in the National Curriculum tests and in pupils' classwork, are broadly average in Year 6, although too few higher-attaining pupils reach above average standards. They are well below average in Year 2. From Year 3 onwards, pupils make good progress, but this is not enough to enable them to reach the same high standard that they achieve in mathematics and English. The school is taking appropriate steps to remedy this. Pupils in Years 3 to 6 are encouraged to use their literacy skills well, and their work on computers helps them to research and analyse their results. There is little difference between the standards reached by boys and girls. The progress of all groups of pupils is affected by variations in the quality of teaching, but there is consistently good individual support for pupils with special educational needs, and they make excellent progress in Years 3 to 6. Standards in Year 6 are broadly similar to those at the time of the last inspection, but there has been a significant fall in standards in Year 2.

80. Pupils in Years 1 and 2 have too few opportunities to carry out investigations, and some of their science work is lost among other aspects of the topic that they are covering. Lower-attaining pupils are given simpler work, but some of this, for example cutting out pictures of things that are or are not alive, is pitched at an undemanding level. There are too few opportunities for higher-attaining pupils to reach above average standards, or for all pupils to extend and develop their initial thoughts on a scientific topic. Too much work is incomplete and unmarked. This represents significant underachievement.
81. By the end of Year 6, pupils have covered a good range of topics from the National Curriculum and developed sound skills in investigation, analysis and experiment. Higher-attaining pupils make well-argued predictions of the outcome of experiments, and learn to classify living things and to draw conclusions from observations – for example, that plants do not always need soil to grow, but that they do need light and water. Pupils design and carry out some good longer-term experiments, with clear predictions of likely results. Most record their work well and illustrate it with graphs and charts, but occasionally work is left unfinished. By Year 6, lower-attaining pupils understand the requirements of a fair test, and most reach the nationally expected standard.
82. Teaching is very good in Years 3 to 6, but unsatisfactory in Years 1 and 2. There was excellent teaching in two lessons in Years 5 and 6. In the excellent lessons, learning is made fun and secure relationships enable the pupils to discuss and think about their work. Teachers listen carefully to their pupils, and use their suggestions to take them forward. Consequently, pupils listen to each other attentively; many volunteer to answer questions and give thoughtful answers. They are not frightened to make a mistake. Excellent teaching captures pupils' attention and challenges them to find the answers. For instance, pupils in Year 5 used scale models to compare the relative size of the planets and were fascinated at the relative size of the earth, moon and sun, with lentils and peas used to illustrate relative sizes, and the school field to discuss relative distances. Standards in this lesson were above average. Teaching assistants are very well-informed and briefed. They work very closely with teachers to ensure that all pupils are involved in the work, and teachers and teaching assistants take great care to explain issues in ways that the lowest-attaining pupils can understand. Very occasionally, a lesson in Years 3 to 6 does not demand enough of higher-attaining pupils, and sets a pace of work that is too slow.
83. Teaching in Years 1 and 2 does not provide a clear and consistent framework for developing pupils' knowledge, skills and understanding. Topics are not pursued in sufficient depth, and work is not matched to the learning needs of all pupils in the class, particularly in the second half of lessons, when some worksheets demand much too little of higher-attaining pupils. Weakness in managing the class, and in particular in ensuring that all pupils pay attention, limits learning in Year 2, and also in some lessons in Year 1. Marking in Years 1 and 2 does not contribute effectively to learning.
84. The subject manager has good scientific knowledge and has used this to train staff. He has ensured that the curriculum is broad and balanced, has very good links with other subjects such as geography and ICT, and is enriched by using the extensive school grounds. An after-school club allows pupils to try out challenging and exciting aspects of science. The subject manager has identified the need to improve investigative science, and has bought good new resources, for example a camera linked to the computer, which is used to photograph sunflowers growing. Resources are now good, although they are contributing most to work with older pupils. Sufficient time is given to

monitor teaching and learning in order to raise standards. So far, co-ordination is helping to raise standards in Years 3 to 6, and the school is well placed to take the action needed to raise them in Years 1 and 2.

ART AND DESIGN

85. Pupils reach average standards in Year 2, and well above average standards in Year 6. All pupils, including those with special educational needs make at least satisfactory progress in this subject and the older pupils make very good progress. By Year 6, most pupils with special educational needs enjoy art activities and do very well. Both boys and girls achieve similar standards of work. Overall, standards since the last inspection have improved in Year 6, but have fallen a little in Year 2. When pupils of all ages work together during 'Art Afternoons,' they create interesting, colourful collages and paintings where the three-dimensional element is particularly good. This area of work was a weakness noted during the last inspection.
86. Pupils in Years 1 and 2 reach broadly average standards, and occasionally do better than this – for example, in pencil drawings of natural objects such as shells and anemones. Pupils use a variety of materials such as charcoal and soft pencils to create different effects, and learn to mix paint to create different shades. Standards and achievement in drawing are satisfactory, but pupils are not challenged to produce interesting work of an above average standard. The older pupils build on the skills that they have learned before and make rapid progress. They make very good, detailed plans for different types of chairs and their 3D models match their creative designs well. By Year 6 the pupils are very competent at planning their work and using a variety of techniques such as papier mâché. They also select a variety of colours which enhance each other. The pupils are good at choosing suitable materials and are given scope to use their creative talents and practise their skills. The work of famous artists is used well to inspire pupils. Visiting artists make a valuable contribution towards teaching all pupils a wide range of techniques, and the resulting work is interesting and very well displayed.
87. The quality of teaching is satisfactory in Years 1 and 2, with good teaching in some individual lessons. It is very good, and at best excellent, in Years 3 to 6. Pupils are interested, and know that they must concentrate and behave well. Teachers have sound knowledge and understanding of the subject, and benefit from very good guidance from the subject manager. Interesting topics and resources such as natural materials are provided to stimulate pupils' curiosity. They are encouraged to make choices – for instance, a Year 1 pupil chose a curled piece of bark to represent a boat. In an excellent lesson in Year 4, pupils used their sketchbooks very well to design a collage of an imaginary journey, and then made imaginative selections from a broad range of materials to build it, often combining materials in interesting layers. The inclusion of pupils with behavioural difficulties in this lesson was particularly effective.
88. Very good curriculum links have been devised with English, history, geography, ICT and multi-cultural education so that time is used well and pupils can build on the knowledge gained from other lessons. Resources are also good. Pupils improve their skills in drawing, printing and modelling by examining the work of famous artists from this and other countries.
89. The subject manager gives a strong and effective lead. She has done much to improve the standards reached by older pupils, and has designed a system of special art afternoons to help raise standards throughout the school by enabling the whole school to work together and share skills. Photographic evidence shows that these afternoons

have been very successful in involving all teachers and teaching assistants, and in giving all pupils experience of good work. Every effort is made to ensure that pupils with special educational needs do not miss art lessons for extra literacy or numeracy work. They are given equal opportunities to succeed, and enjoy experimenting with different techniques, such as pastels. The priority in the school plan to improve displays has been achieved.

DESIGN AND TECHNOLOGY

90. Standards are above average in Year 2, and well above average in Year 6. All pupils, including those with special educational needs, make good progress, and the older pupils make very good progress in this subject. All pupils are included in design and technology practical activities. Pupils are grouped to work together. These groups include boys and girls, the more able pupils and those with special educational needs. All help each other. Standards and provision have shown good improvement from the broadly average levels reached during the last inspection.
91. By the end of Year 2, pupils plan and make simple models and puppets to a good standard for their age. They know several ways to join materials and to make hinges, to use their creative skills to re-create special rooms in their houses. Pupils build very well on this good start in Years 3 to 6, developing a broad range of designing and making skills, all to high standard. Pupils in Year 4, for example, selected from a broad range of materials and designs when making a purse as a present for a friend, and were encouraged and taught to use advanced techniques, such as back-stitching. By Year 6, pupils plan their work co-operatively, select the best design, and test and trial materials. They make sure that frames are measured accurately and that they are joined strongly. They are open to suggestions for improvement, both from their teacher and their classmates, and incorporate these into their designs. They apply the skills learned in science lessons to help them to evaluate materials and to make battery-operated machines.
92. Teaching is good in Years 1 and 2. It is very good, and often excellent, in Years 3 to 6. Across the school, teachers share their interest in the subject with pupils, and make the best use of their enthusiasm to work practically. There is a good balance between teaching pupils skills, and giving them a chance to use their imagination. Pupils are keen to take work home, for example in Year 3, when they produced model Egyptian coffins to a high standard. Teachers have good and often excellent relationships with pupils, and use a variety of strategies to manage behaviour and challenge them so that they try hard to complete their work. They have a very good understanding of the full design process and make sure that their pupils follow this, encouraging them to design first and then to evaluate the success of their work. Teachers adapt work very well to the needs of pupils with special educational needs – for example, by providing extra support and practice with stitching to give them the satisfaction of working to the same standard as others in their class. Where the teaching is excellent, these qualities are combined with an outstanding pace of work, and a very strong atmosphere of co-operation within the class.

93. The subject is well managed. There is a well thought-out scheme of work to help teachers plan, and there are good links with other subjects such as art and history. The pupils' English skills are extended when labelling their drawings, talking in groups to plan their work, and writing about what they have done. Pupils learn to apply their mathematical skills in design and measurement. There is some use of ICT, but this could be extended. The subject manager ensures that teachers have good resources for the work they do, but the school does not have enough facilities for food technology. She has very good subject knowledge and has been able to help colleagues with technical aspects such as cams and gearing.

GEOGRAPHY

94. Standards are average in Year 2 and above average in Year 6. The exciting and challenging range of curriculum opportunities offered to junior pupils together with above-average teaching has resulted in good achievements for seven to eleven-year-olds. The school gives very good support to pupils with additional educational needs or English as an additional language. They take a full and active part in all lessons. There are no significant differences in the achievements of boys and girls. At the time of the last inspection, standards were above average in Year 2, and average in Year 6. The rise in standards among pupils moving on to secondary school represents satisfactory overall improvement.
95. Pupils in Year 2 have sound knowledge of their local area. They can find Sevenoaks on a map, plan a route to the seaside, and find Britain on a globe. Good links are made with history as they compare the way they travel nowadays with the ways children travelled in times past. Pupils study travel brochures to identify favourite travel destinations, and are challenged to pack their suitcases with appropriate clothes. They have sound understanding of the influence of weather patterns. However, past work shows that in some lessons the same published worksheet is given to the whole class, leading to too little challenge to higher-attaining pupils.
96. The improved standards in Year 6 are the result of an interesting range of well-planned and challenging investigations involving local, national and global issues. Pupils in Year 6 during the inspection reached above average standards in a geological investigation of the United Kingdom, with good focus on coastal erosion. These pupils also reached good standards in investigating a proposal to build a skate-board park in Sevenoaks. There is imaginative map work in Year 5, including comparisons of Tudor and modern maps of the same area. Geography makes a very good contribution to pupils' knowledge and understanding of other cultures and of their place in the world, for example through studies of Japan and of Chembokali in India.
97. The quality of teaching is satisfactory overall, and sometimes good, in Years 1 and 2. It is good in Years 3 to 6, with very good teaching in some lessons. Teachers in Years 3 to 6 manage classes very well and sustain interest through the diversity and relevance of topics for investigation. They make good use of resources, including local newspapers, ICT, and the outside environment. The technique of investigating in groups helps pupils learn to co-operate, and there is good challenge to higher-attaining pupils. In Years 1 and 2, planning for the subject promotes sound learning, and, where the teaching is good, topics are well chosen to engage pupils' interest. However, there are some weaknesses in managing classes, and too little emphasis on ensuring that higher-attaining pupils reach above average standards. Overall, teaching in geography makes a satisfactory contribution to literacy, and there is some good application of numeracy skills among older pupils.

98. The subject manager has recently taken up this responsibility. She has begun to improve resources, and has accurately identified strengths and weaknesses in the subject, including the need to improve assessment. The school has made significant improvements in planning the curriculum since the last inspection, but has not yet developed effective systems for monitoring standards. Attractive displays promote learning in geography throughout the school.

HISTORY

99. Pupils reach average standards in Year 2, and above average standards in Year 6. This represents a good improvement in Year 6 since the last inspection, when standards were average throughout the school. The school has also taken effective action since the last inspection to improve the range and use of historical resources and source material. Pupils with special educational needs or English as an additional language are well supported and fully included in all lessons. Boys and girls do equally well.

100. Pupils in Year 2 enjoy investigating photographs as they look for clues about what children did long ago at the 'old seaside', and listened attentively to an account from a grandparent about a seaside visit made 50 years ago. From points made in discussion, they developed broadly average understanding of the differences in patterns of seaside behaviour over time. On the other hand, in most lessons all pupils are given the same work, so that there is too little scope for higher-attaining pupils to go beyond simple observations.

101. By Year 6, pupils become skilled historical detectives. In work on a timeline running from 1950 to 2010, Year 6 pupils placed a series of events from 1950 to 2002 with impressive accuracy. They used good mathematical skills to divide the timeline into decades, a term they define correctly. Good research enabled pupils to place the start of Barbie dolls, the Falklands War and the death of the Queen Mother in the right decades. In an excellent Year 4 lesson, pupils used a wide range of research materials, including the Internet, to prove their hypothesis that the Vikings were good sailors. Pupils' response to these first-class opportunities to conduct historical enquiries is very good. There is an audible 'Oh no' at the end of lessons. The subject makes a strong contribution to their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development.

102. The quality of teaching is satisfactory in Years 1 and 2 and very good in Years 3 to 6. Teachers in Years 3 to 6 have very good understanding of their subject, and plan interesting and exciting tasks, making good links with other subjects. For example, pupils in Year 3 make clay pots using Greek designs, and write letters home from the war between Athens and Persia. Teachers manage classes very well, and pupils cooperate very successfully in groups. In Years 1 and 2, lessons promote satisfactory learning, but worksheets used in the second half of lessons are often undemanding, and learning in parts of some lessons is held back by weak class management. Good, and often excellent, displays enhance motivation and learning throughout the school.

103. Management of history ensures that there are good resources for the subject. More needs to be done, however, to identify and remedy the remaining weaknesses in teaching in Years 1 and 2.

INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY

104. Pupils reach average overall standards in Year 2 and Year 6, and above average standards in multi-media communication skills. Standards have shown good

improvement since the last inspection, and computers make an important contribution to standards in other areas of the curriculum. Examples include the use of control technology and data handling in mathematics, research through the Internet in history, science and geography, graphic programs in art and design, and the digital camera, coupled with word processing, to produce books, projects, poetry and a newspaper called 'Pupils in Focus'.

105. By the end of Year 2, pupils can open a program, and log on and off to start and finish their work. They control the mouse well, can retrieve data from a computerised encyclopaedia, and can compare different programs for their 'user friendliness'. Pupils interpret bar and tick graphs. Their word-processing skills are developing to the extent that they can enter icons into a music program to write their own piece of music. They are beginning to learn how to save their work to an appropriate file. Pupils know the names and functions of the main keys and symbols, and use the appropriate computer language. Pupils in Year 2 can give instructions to a programmable floor robot, and those with special educational needs make good progress in their understanding of direction by using this facility. Year 2 pupils can amend text by deleting and adding words, although many have difficulty in holding down the 'shift' key with another key to produce symbols and capital letters.
106. Standards in Year 6 have kept pace with the developments in the subject since the last inspection, and pupils have a significantly broader range of skills. Major improvements have included the opening of an information and communication technology suite, computers and laptops accessible to every classroom, and the availability of the Internet and email facilities. Pupils are beginning to evaluate information and communication technology. Older pupils understand the need to refine Internet searches by entering specific words, and compare different search engines to find out which ones will give them the best information. They enter graphics, animation and sound into multi-media presentations with ease and delight. There is excitement in the learning at what they are able to achieve.
107. The quality of teaching is good overall, with some very good teaching for the oldest pupils. In the good lessons, pupils achieve well, because teachers have clear expectations and pupils know what they have to do. Occasionally, teachers are hesitant because they lack confidence and speed when demonstrating computer skills, and in some lessons they do not ensure that each pupil has a turn on the computer. At times, teaching in Years 1 and 2 relies too heavily on the unsupported work of the technician; when this happens, higher-attaining pupils are not encouraged to develop more advanced skills. The technician, however, provides very effective support to teachers and individual pupils in lessons. Teachers do not make full use of the computers in their classrooms and corridors, and ICT is not always included in their planning. There is, on the other hand, some excellent use of computers to develop learning in some subjects, particularly English and history, and to support the learning of pupils with special educational needs.

108. Very effective co-ordination of the subject is helping the school to raise standards and improve the range and quality of provision. An audit of standards was conducted last year and areas for development, such as software for Years 1 and 2, and additional computers for Years 3 to 6, have been targeted. Subsequent investment in resources and staff training has greatly enhanced the learning opportunities for pupils, and a further, comprehensive training programme is planned for all adults. The school is beginning to monitor pupils' progress, keeping folders of their work on the hard drive, but recognises that monitoring and assessment need improvement to enable teachers to match tasks to the differing needs of pupils. The lack of a large teaching screen in the computer suite makes demonstrations difficult. Overall, the school has established a strong pattern of improvement in ICT, and has very good plans for its further development.

MODERN FOREIGN LANGUAGES

109. The school is in the early stages of introducing modern foreign languages, and it was possible to observe only one short lesson in French, in Year 5. This was taught very well, and gave pupils a good start in learning to speak correctly, and with a good accent. The teacher had good knowledge and understanding of French, and had made good use of the local authority's advisory service to plan an exciting range of learning activities, including a lively song. Pupils enjoyed the lesson and worked hard. Planning for a Year 6 lesson in Spanish was carried out to the same standard. The introduction of modern foreign languages is being very well managed.

MUSIC

110. Standards are broadly average in Year 2, and well above average in Year 6, where gifted and talented pupils and those with a special interest in music reach high standards. Pupils with special needs and those with English as an additional language achieve very good standards, and there are no significant differences in the standards reached by boys and girls. There has been a fall in standards in Year 2 since the last inspection, but a much more substantial rise in standards in Year 6. By the time they move on to secondary school, pupils' achievement in music is very good.
111. Although standards in Year 2 are broadly average overall, they vary too much from class to class. Where teaching is good, pupils appreciate and identify the range of emotions which the music arouses. Where it is unsatisfactory, pupils do not pay attention to the music, but talk amongst themselves. One class enjoyed incorporating correct glockenspiel beats into the music, which they did with evident enjoyment, pleasure and accuracy, whilst a parallel class beat in a haphazard and inaccurate manner. A similar situation arose with singing: one class sang well, enthusiastically and tunefully, while the singing in the other was half-hearted and unconvincing.
112. Learning and standards improve dramatically in Year 3, with excellent teaching of singing and instrumental music that immediately leads to above average standards. Pupils make rapid progress in using a broad range of instruments, including tuned percussion and electronic keyboards, and learn to use musical terminology in discussing their work. In Year 5, pupils identified emotions aroused by Holst's Planets Suite, and compared the contrasting styles of 'Mars' and 'Venus'. They chose two feelings and created their own musical composition in groups of four or five pupils. They selected the instruments carefully and later justified their choice with very persuasive reasons. By Year 6, pupils have developed a broad range of skills in performing and appreciating music, both in class and through the school's excellent

range of clubs, all of which provide teaching to a very high standard.

113. Teaching and learning are very good in Years 3 to 6, but there is some unsatisfactory teaching in Year 2 because of weak management of pupils. Teachers throughout the school have adequate knowledge and understanding of music, and many in Years 3 to 6 have outstanding skills that they use to plan exciting and inspiring programmes of learning. These teachers' lessons exude a love of the subject, whether in listening and appraising or in creating and composing. Skilful questioning encourages pupils to think for themselves, and teachers expect very high standards in learning new vocabulary and in playing a melody by ear. In a small minority of lessons in Years 3 to 6, planning does not make full use of the time available, and the lesson finishes early. The quality of teaching and learning in extra-curricular clubs is often exceptionally good, leading to a dynamic, voluntary partnership between pupils and teachers that makes an excellent contribution to pupils' skills and confidence.
114. Information and communication technology is beginning to be used well, particularly through the increasing use of keyboards. Most teachers make a useful contribution to literacy by ensuring that pupils learn and use specialised technical vocabulary. In some classes in Years 1 and 2, counting beats provides support for numeracy, but in others pupils do not pay sufficient attention to benefit from this.
115. Overall, provision for music is managed well, though the impact of leadership and management has been much more effective in Years 3 to 6 than in Years 1 and 2. There are good resources for learning, including many instruments of good quality, from a broad range of cultures. In addition to promoting a high standard of musicianship, extra-curricular activities give pupils excellent scope to follow and develop their own interests, for example through a well-equipped rock band of boys and girls, and through the energetic interpretation of music in dance. The quality of singing in assemblies is very high, and music makes a significant contribution to performing arts through the school's regular productions. The new subject manager has begun an audit of provision, and has very good plans to extend the quality of provision even further.

PHYSICAL EDUCATION

116. Pupils reach broadly average standards in Year 2, and well above average standards in Year 6, including well above average standards in swimming. Pupils with special needs and with English as an additional language make good progress throughout the school. Gifted and talented pupils make very good progress and achieve high or very high standards in their areas of strength. Both boys and girls achieve good overall standards. By Year 6, the school's excellent range of extra-curricular activities has a very positive impact on standards. Since the last inspection, standards have been maintained in Year 2, and have shown good improvement in Year 6.
117. By Year 2, pupils acquire and develop skills comfortably. They take part in warm-up sessions and learn to roll and aim a ball with increasing accuracy. Higher-attaining pupils can position their bodies to stop a ball effectively, and develop their capabilities

by increasing the difficulty of the tasks, for example by moving further apart when they work in pairs, or by using smaller balls. Most can evaluate their own progress in relation to that of other pupils in the class. Almost half of the pupils can swim 25 metres by the age of seven.

118. By Year 6, pupils are competitive, and want to improve on their personal best as well as win. Nevertheless, they understand fully the importance of fair play and of enjoying good relationships with the opposing team. In tennis, pupils show good, sensitive control of the racket, which enables them to direct the ball accurately. They work together very well in pairs, and this increases the challenge and the opportunities for self-improvement. In rounders, they select appropriate tactics for batting and understand how to create a wall barrier when fielding. Pupils have good understanding of health and safety issues. They follow warm-up and cool-down activities at the beginning and end of sessions, and can explain why such activities are important. When they play in teams they know how to make best use of individuals' strengths. Photographic evidence shows good levels of achievement in adventurous activities, such as abseiling, high wires, rock scrambling and canoeing. Standards in swimming by the end of Year 6 are well above average, and the school has a good record in local galas.
119. Teaching in Years 3 to 6 is very good. Its strengths include excellent practical skills in tennis and swimming, very good knowledge of team games and expert handling and demonstration of warm-up and cool-down activities. These skills inspire confidence in pupils, and enhance their desire to imitate and do well. In a small minority of lessons, teaching promotes satisfactory learning, but the pace of work and focus on the skills being taught could be sharper. It was not possible to observe the full range of teaching in Years 1 and 2, but there was unsatisfactory teaching in one lesson of outdoor games. Pupils were not properly dressed, and talked and shouted during demonstrations by the teacher, so that they were unable to follow them and learn effectively. Warm-up and cooling down were not effectively managed, and pupils sometimes ran about in an uncontrolled way. The ending of another outdoor lesson was managed effectively, and swimming was well taught.
120. In Years 3 to 6, physical education makes a valuable contribution to pupils' understanding of numeracy. They learn to estimate and measure distances, count and score. Information and communication technology is not yet used, though the school has plans to do this. There is some contribution to speaking and listening skills, particularly for the oldest pupils, as they discuss and evaluate their work.
121. Leadership and management are good. Extra-curricular activities are a particular strength. There is some sporting activity each lunchtime. All clubs are very well supported, and taught to a high standard. The dance club, for example, is attended by over half of all pupils, and makes an outstanding contribution to standards in Year 6. Pupils have frequent opportunities to work with professional coaches, the community has sponsored netball and football kits, and the school does well in district sports. The school is developing assessment procedures, but these are not yet fully in place. The lack of them had some impact on learning in a minority of lessons for older pupils in which learning was satisfactory rather than good. The school has very good grounds and resources for learning. There are exciting and imaginative plans to develop provision for physical education, which are beginning to attract substantial external funding.

RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

122. Standards at the end of Year 2 and Year 6 are broadly in line with those set out in the locally agreed syllabus. Pupils throughout the school have a good basic understanding of the main features of Christianity and other world faiths, and learn to treat other people's religious beliefs with understanding and respect. Overall, standards are very similar to those at the time of the last inspection, and achievement is satisfactory, though it has not improved.
123. The quality of teaching is never less than satisfactory, and is often good. Teachers have clear basic knowledge and understanding of the subject, plan effectively and relate moral issues to a religious base. Whether learning about 'Moses and the Burning Bush' or about Hinduism, teachers use the art of story-telling well, and relate stories to moral issues, such as care for others and looking after God's world. This helps foster a strong sense of respect for the range of religious beliefs, and contributes to moral development.
124. A good range of teaching methods, many of which give pupils direct experience of religious belief and enthuse them, enhances learning. One class of older pupils developed a wider appreciation and understanding of the Sikh faith when they learnt about the Baisakhi festival. This lesson, involving the use of dramatic representations by the pupils themselves, engendered a thoughtful discussion about whether you would be prepared to die for your religion. Pupils from all backgrounds and faiths shared their knowledge and experiences, and there was good development of speaking and listening skills particularly for those pupils for whom English is an additional language. Younger pupils were shown how to respect the Hindu faith by looking at features of a Hindu shrine and making their own 'Special Tray'. One pupil chose a white cloth to cover the tray because 'It looked like heaven'. In a minority of lessons in which the diverse faiths among the pupils are not fully drawn upon, teaching is less effective.
125. The subject manager has recently taken up this responsibility, and is aware of the strengths and weaknesses in current provision. For example, there are too few resources, and teachers do not assess progress against the attainment targets of the agreed syllabus. This leads them to planning work that is not always matched to pupils' needs, including the needs of higher-attaining pupils, and is preventing the school from gaining full benefit from the good teaching in individual lessons. One consequence is that pupils in Years 3 and 6 are learning similar facts about the parables of Jesus.
126. With some exceptions, work in religious education is not making the contribution it should to literacy skills. Pupils rarely write independently, and too much is copied. There are few links between religious education and the literacy hour, and limited use is made of computers in teaching the subject. However, the quality of teaching, and the respect with which the subject is treated by pupils and teachers throughout the school, place staff in a good position to bring about improvements in standards and in the contribution of religious education to the aims of the school.