

INSPECTION REPORT

**ST MARY'S CHURCH OF ENGLAND
VOLUNTARY AIDED PRIMARY SCHOOL**

Swanley

LEA area: Kent

Unique reference number: 118754

Headteacher: Mr Edward Cottle

Reporting inspector: David Welsh
10992

Dates of inspection: 30 April – 3 May 2001

Inspection number: 195598

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

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INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Type of school:	Primary
School category:	Voluntary Aided
Age range of pupils:	3 to 11
Gender of pupils:	Mixed
School address:	St Mary's Road Swanley Kent
Postcode:	BR8 7BU
Telephone number:	01322 665212
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Appropriate authority:	The Governing Body
Name of chair of governors:	Reverend Michael Brundle
Date of previous inspection:	2 – 5 June 1997

INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Team members			Subject responsibilities	Aspect responsibilities
10992	David Welsh	Registered inspector	Science Information and communication technology Music Physical education	How high are standards? How well are pupils taught? How well is the school led and managed? What should the school do to improve further?
9388	Anthony Mundy	Lay inspector		How well does the school care for its pupils? How well does the school work in partnership with parents?
20615	Ann Mason	Team inspector	English Art Design and Technology	Under fives Special educational needs English as an additional language
20877	David Pink	Team inspector	Mathematics Geography History	How good are the curricular and other opportunities offered to pupils? Equal opportunities

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PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

St Mary's Church of England Voluntary Aided Primary School, Swanley, Kent, has close connections with the local church. It is similar in size to the average primary school with 202 pupils aged 4 to 11 on roll. The school is larger in size than that reported in the last inspection and the school is almost full in all age groups. There are 98 boys and 104 girls. In addition, 44 children attend the nursery part-time. The number of pupils who join and leave the school at times other than September and July has reduced considerably since the school has been full. Most pupils who attend the school live in the immediate neighbourhood. A significant minority come from families with a traveller background. The proportion of pupils entitled to free school meals is above the national average and in some years well above the average. The attainment of pupils on entry to the school ranges from articulate children who can already read to those who perform well below the national average. However, the general attainment of the pupils on entry is below average although nearly all have benefited from some form of pre-school education. Nearly all pupils are of European origin and there are only two pupils who are learning English as an additional language. The proportion of pupils on the register for special educational need is well above the national average but the number of pupils with a statement is close to the national average. The headteacher was appointed in April 2000.

HOW GOOD THE SCHOOL IS

St Mary's Church of England School is a rapidly improving school as a result of the strong leadership and management provided by the headteacher. Standards in English, mathematics and science are below those expected of pupils aged eleven but they are close to those expected of pupils aged seven. Standards are improving faster than the national trend as a result of improved teaching, although teaching is still unsatisfactory overall at Key Stage 2. Nearly all pupils make at least satisfactory progress whilst at the school. The school provides satisfactory value for money.

What the school does well

- Children in the nursery get a good start to their education.
- Pupils with special educational needs are well supported and make good progress.
- Those pupils aged 7, who learn quickly, achieve better than average results in mathematics.
- Standards in swimming are above those expected of pupils aged 11.
- Spiritual development is promoted very well in assemblies.
- The headteacher is providing strong leadership and he is well supported by the governing body and staff.
- Communication between the school and parents is good.
- Pupils are given good support and guidance by caring staff.

What could be improved

- Standards in English, mathematics and science are not high enough. Standards in information and communication technology [ICT], art, geography, history and music are below those expected of pupils aged 11.
- Teaching is unsatisfactory overall.
- Pupils' understanding of cultures other than their own.
- Planning of the curriculum and using assessment to match tasks to what pupils should learn.
- Role of coordinators in raising standards in their subjects.

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

HOW THE SCHOOL HAS IMPROVED SINCE ITS LAST INSPECTION

The school was previously inspected in June 1997. Since that time the school has made satisfactory improvement overall. It has been very good since the appointment of the current headteacher and the capacity for further improvement is at least satisfactory. Items identified for improvement in the previous report have been addressed although there is still a need to review again schemes of work and to improve the procedures for assessment in subjects other than English, mathematics, science and ICT. In addition, the school has improved its results in English, mathematics, and science. Attainment in design and technology and at the Foundation Stage when the children are aged five has improved and the standards in physical education have been maintained. Behaviour has improved significantly and pupils' attitudes to school are more positive. Teaching has improved significantly and this is having a positive impact on raising standards.

STANDARDS

The table shows the standards achieved by 11 year olds based on average point scores in National Curriculum tests.

Performance in:	compared with				Key
	all schools			similar schools	
	1998	1999	2000	2000	
English	D	E*	E	D	well above average A above average B average C below average D well below average E
Mathematics	E	E*	E	E	
Science	E	E*	D	D	

- Standards achieved by the pupils aged 11 in tests in English and mathematics were well below the national average in 2000 and below average in science. However, 30 per cent of the pupils in the year group had moderate learning difficulties and this leads to an unfavourable comparison with similar schools. Nearly all the pupils without special educational needs attained at least the expected levels. Pupils who learn quickly achieved results at a level higher than expected for their age. Inspection evidence indicates that pupils without special educational needs are likely to attain levels close to those expected of pupils aged 11. The overall results in 2000 were an improvement on previous years and indicative of the upward trend in results.
- When the pupils are aged 7, standards in reading are below average but in writing, mathematics and science they are in line with those expected. The national test results represent a significant improvement on previous years and are above the national trend.
- Children under five make at least satisfactory progress and most are likely to achieve the Early Learning Goals at the Foundation Stage.
- There are no marked differences between boys and girls or pupils from different backgrounds. Pupils with special educational needs and those who learn English as an additional language are supported well and make good progress.
- The school achieved its targets in English and mathematics in 2000 but they were not sufficiently challenging. They are more challenging in 2002.
- By the age of 11, pupils attain standards expected of them in design and technology and physical education. They attain higher levels in swimming. They attain standards below those expected of them in ICT, art, geography, history and music and therefore progress is unsatisfactory in these subjects.

PUPILS' ATTITUDES AND VALUES

Aspect	Comment
Attitudes to the school	Satisfactory. Pupils generally show an interest in their learning.
Behaviour, in and out of classrooms	Satisfactory. Behaviour is improving. It is generally good in classrooms and around the school although a small proportion of pupils behave unacceptably from time to time.
Personal development and relationships	Satisfactory overall and improving as a result of new opportunities promoted by the school. However, there is a small proportion of pupils in most classes who do not understand the effect their actions have on others. They have little respect for other's feelings and values.
Attendance	Unsatisfactory. Despite the school's best efforts, pupils are not consistent enough in their attendance and this affects their learning.

TEACHING AND LEARNING

Teaching of pupils:	aged up to 5 years	aged 5-7 years	aged 7-11 years
Lessons seen overall	Satisfactory	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory

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 is unsatisfactory overall. In 11 per cent of lessons observed teaching was unsatisfactory and this is the main reason for standards not being high enough, particularly in the junior classes. Particular weaknesses include unsatisfactory discipline and not enough challenge to make pupils think.
- Teaching is satisfactory in 89 per cent of lessons and this is an improvement upon the findings in the previous inspection. This is the result of teaching being identified by the headteacher as a key to raising standards and the programme of monitoring, review and development, which has been implemented.
- In 7 per cent of lessons observed the teaching was very good. It was good in 26 per cent and satisfactory in 56 per cent.
- Teaching in the nursery is good overall and the main reason for the children making such good progress towards the Early Learning Goals.
- The teaching of English, including basic literacy skills, is satisfactory and pupils make at least satisfactory progress in their learning. The adoption of the literacy hour has particularly helped the pupils to improve their writing skills. However, literacy skills are not promoted well enough in other subjects.
- The teaching of mathematics, including numeracy, is satisfactory overall. Standards have begun to improve, especially in the infant classes, as a result of the National Numeracy Initiative. However, numeracy skills are not promoted well enough in other subjects.
- Pupils with special educational needs make good progress in their learning because of the good teaching from the specialist teachers and the learning support assistants. The partnership between teachers and teaching assistants is very good and has a significant impact upon pupils' learning.
- In nearly all the lessons observed, pupils' learning was at least satisfactory. Unsatisfactory learning occurred where teachers did not have sufficient control or where the work set was too easy for pupils.

OTHER ASPECTS OF THE SCHOOL

Aspect	Comment
The quality and range of the curriculum	The school teaches the whole range of subjects but the main emphasis is given to English, mathematics and science. In other subjects, not enough emphasis is given to teaching skills or to developing literacy, numeracy and ICT. The time-table does not make the most effective use of time.
Provision for pupils with special educational needs	Very good. Teachers and learning support assistants work effectively in partnership and this enables pupils to make good progress.
Provision for pupils with English as an additional language	The school provides appropriate assistance where it is required.
Provision for pupils' personal, including spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	Pupils' spiritual development in assemblies is very good. In lessons, it is just satisfactory. Pupils' social and moral development are promoted satisfactorily but pupils' knowledge and understanding of cultures other than their own is unsatisfactory.
How well the school cares for its pupils	Pupils receive very good individual care and support from class teachers and from the head teacher. Procedures for assessing pupils' progress are good in the nursery and satisfactory in English, mathematics, science and ICT in the infant and junior classes. They are unsatisfactory in other subjects.

The quality of information for parents is good. Apart from regular newsletters, the school prospectus, reports on pupils' attainment and progress and meetings for parents, the headteacher meets parents daily. The school makes good use of regular and valuable help in lessons provided by some parents and friends.

HOW WELL THE SCHOOL IS LED AND MANAGED

Aspect	Comment
Leadership and management by the headteacher and other key staff	The headteacher is providing strong leadership and he is an effective manager. The roles of the deputy headteacher and coordinators have been clarified and are being developed. Leadership in English, mathematics, science, design and technology and physical education is at least satisfactory. Subject leadership is unsatisfactory in ICT, art, geography, history and music because standards are too low.
How well the governors fulfil their responsibilities	The governing body carries out its statutory duties well. It is committed to improvements in standards, including attendance, and is giving strong support to the headteacher. It applies the principles of best value well.
The school's evaluation of its performance	The school effectively compares its performance with other schools and seeks to identify weaknesses, such as boys' reading. Test results have not yet been analysed to identify strengths and weaknesses within subjects. Teaching and pupils' work are regularly monitored. Targets are set for each pupil.
The strategic use of resources	The school allocates its resources efficiently and it has good systems for monitoring its budget. It uses money allocated for specific purposes

	effectively.
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The school has sufficient suitably qualified teachers and support staff. The accommodation is adequate although there are no separate play spaces for infants and juniors. The range of resources is unsatisfactory in ICT, design technology and history.

PARENTS' AND CARERS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

What pleases parents most	What parents would like to see improved
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • My child likes school. • My child is making good progress in school. • The teaching is good. • I would feel comfortable about approaching the school with questions or a problem. • The school is well led and managed. • The school is helping my child become mature and responsible. • The school expects my child to work hard and achieve his or her best. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The range of activities outside lessons. • The right amount of homework. • Information about how my child is getting on.

Inspectors' judgements support most of the parents' views. The range of activities outside lessons is limited but so is support from pupils. The school has a policy for homework but this does not make clear to parents what work they might expect their child to do at home, when it is to be done or for how long. However, inspection evidence indicates that teaching is unsatisfactory overall rather than good. Parents receive regular reports on their children's progress and in addition, teachers will talk to parents at their request.

PART B: COMMENTARY

HOW HIGH ARE STANDARDS?

The school's results and pupils' achievements

1. The school's results in national tests in 2000 indicate that attainment at the age of eleven in English and mathematics is well below the national average and in science, below the national average. When compared with similar schools based on the uptake of free school meals, attainment in English and science is below the average and, in mathematics it is well below. Nevertheless these results represent a significant improvement upon previous years and reflect the overall upward trend, which is in line with the national trend. Inspection evidence indicates that standards rose faster than the national trend in 2000 and that this trend is likely to be sustained in 2001 and 2002. When the number of pupils with specific learning difficulties is taken into account, approximately 30 per cent, the results indicate that nearly all of those not on the special needs register attain the required level. The school achieved its targets in English and mathematics last year although the targets were not sufficiently challenging. Targets for 2001 are also not high enough but the targets for 2002 are far more realistic.
2. The school's results in the national tests in 2000 indicate that attainment at the age of seven in reading is well below the national average and attainment in writing and mathematics is below the national average. When compared with similar schools, the school's performance is well below the average in reading but close to the average in writing and mathematics. These results represent the school's best performance in the past five years and are indicative of the continuing improvement above the national trend.
3. Since the previous inspection, standards have improved throughout the school in English, mathematics and science. There have been particularly significant improvements in writing and mathematics by the time pupils are aged seven. The school identified reading as an issue, particularly for boys, and introduced a strategy to address this. In the tests in 2000, the standards in reading when the pupils are seven years of age were the highest in five years, particularly as the result of the improvement in the boys' reading. There have also been improvements in attainment at the foundation stage, in design and technology and in geography and music in the infant classes. Standards have been more or less maintained in physical education where they are close to and above the levels expected of pupils aged seven and eleven. In art and history, standards have been maintained at the levels reported in the previous inspection, which are not high enough, and in information and communication technology standards are lower as a result of insufficient resources.
4. There are no marked differences in the performance of girls and boys or pupils from different backgrounds. Pupils with special educational needs are supported well and make good progress. There are only two pupils who speak English as an additional language and they have good English language skills.
5. Overall, the children under five make satisfactory progress during the Foundation Stage. However, children make better progress in the nursery than in the reception class. By the beginning of Year 1, most children are likely to attain the Early Learning Goals in personal, social and emotional development, communication, language and literacy, mathematical development, knowledge and understanding of the world, physical development and creative development. Children are enthusiastic about their learning in the nursery and they quickly learn to work independently and to share equipment, such as the tricycles. The children in the reception class build on these skills but progress is not as rapid. Children develop good speaking and listening skills in both the nursery and reception class, particularly through their role-play activities. They learn how books work, and in both the nursery and the reception class, children are taught the initial sounds. In the reception class, children can add initial sounds to letters to make new words. Children develop a good understanding of shape and size and they also learn about numerals. Games and other activities help children to recognise shapes and colours, such as 'red triangles' and to count up to 10, putting numerals in the correct order. Children develop a sound knowledge and understanding of the world around them. In the nursery, children find out about the seasons by watching the trees and leaves and looking at and discussing the changes in weather. In the reception class,

children learn about animals through studying books and they play with construction kits. They learn the days of the week. The outdoor play area gives the children many opportunities to extend their physical skills and the children in the reception class share this area regularly. Fine finger control is developed through a range of writing and drawing activities. In the nursery, the children's creative development is promoted through activities such as painting, drawing, writing, dancing and singing. They often burst into song related to their activities. Children in the reception class continue to develop these skills and have opportunities to extend them; for example, by learning about different musical instruments and playing them in time to the songs.

6. In English and literacy, standards are below average at both key stages. However, speaking and listening is a strength. By Year 2, pupils' speaking and listening skills are at least in line with those expected of pupils aged seven. By Year 6, pupils speak confidently and listen to others with good concentration. When pupils are seven years of age, reading skills are below average although the school's results in the national tests are improving faster than the national trend, particularly the boys. By Year 6, many pupils are reading at the expected level and above. In writing, attainment at the age of seven is below the national average as a result of specific skills not being consistently used; for example, capital letters and full stops. Standards are still below average at the age of eleven, although a significant proportion of pupils attain level 5, a level higher than expected of pupils of this age. Handwriting is not consistent with letters joined. Spelling is generally accurate amongst the quicker learners and those of average ability. The slower learners find more difficulty in spelling words accurately.
7. In mathematics and numeracy, pupils in Year 2 attain standards close to those expected for their age. They have a sound knowledge of place value and they know the properties of two- and three-dimensional shapes. Higher attainers can solve problems from written stories and calculate using numbers up to 10,000. Pupils in Year 6 extend their arithmetical skills so that they can make calculations in their heads. They recognise triangles of different shapes and can measure the angles. They understand when graphs should be used and recognise symmetrical shapes. Pupils who learn quickly can find square roots of numbers and large prime numbers but pupils are not confident in their explanations of mathematical processes.
8. In science, pupils attain standards close to those expected of pupils aged seven. They have a sound understanding of life processes and living things, materials and their properties and physical processes but they do not have sufficient opportunities to develop their investigative skills. Those who learn quickly are not sufficiently extended. By the age of eleven, most pupils attain the expected standards in three elements of science. A few pupils attain a level higher than expected but not a high enough proportion. Pupils do not have sufficient opportunities to develop their skills of scientific enquiry.
9. At the age of seven, attainment in design and technology, geography, history, music and physical education is close to that expected of pupils of that age. Pupils generate ideas and plan how to make their models. They have a sound knowledge of their school and its local environment. They can make comparisons between jobs in Victorian times and those in the present day. Pupils sing sweetly and identify instruments. They have developed appropriate games skills and ability to move with good control in gymnastics. Attainment in information and communication technology is below that expected as a result of insufficient opportunities to use computers. It is below in art, where there is not enough guidance for teachers to raise standards.
10. At the age of eleven, attainment in design and technology and physical education is close to that expected of pupils of this age. Many pupils attain higher levels in swimming and games. Attainment in art, geography, history, information and communication technology and music is below that expected because teachers are currently provided with insufficient guidance or resources to raise standards in these subjects.
11. Children's learning is good in the nursery and satisfactory in the reception class. When pupils enter the school at the age of five, overall attainment is below average. In English, mathematics, science and design and technology, pupils make at least satisfactory progress in the time they are at the school. Some pupils make good progress, including the pupils with special educational needs. In the infant classes, they make satisfactory progress in geography, history, music and physical education. Learning is unsatisfactory in art and information and communication

technology throughout the infant and junior classes and unsatisfactory in geography and history in the junior classes. This results from not enough guidance for teachers or insufficient resources.

Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development

12. Pupils' attitudes to school are satisfactory. Most arrive punctually and they enter the school in an orderly manner when the first session begins. However, attendance is below the national average despite the school's very good procedures and best efforts. Few pupils manage to achieve full attendance over a school year and few take up the opportunity to participate in extra-curricular activities; for example, recorder playing and dance. More pupils do join in cricket coaching and other sporting activities. A recent innovation was to start a French club for junior aged pupils but only one pupil attended.
13. Parents stated that prior to the current headteacher's appointment, they considered behaviour to be poor with incidents of bullying commonplace. They also stated that whilst behaviour is not yet as good as it could be, it has improved dramatically. Inspectors would confirm from observations in classrooms, in the dining hall and on the playground that behaviour is satisfactory. Children in the nursery settle well when they arrive and quickly adapt to the routine of putting their names on the board to register their attendance. They show positive attitudes to one another; for example, they make a new boy welcome when he is in distress. In most other classes, pupils take a little while to settle because there is no consistent approach to the start of the day other than to take the register; for example, in some classes pupils have tasks to complete as soon as they enter the room whilst in others they merely gather on the carpet and talk noisily to one another. Pupils generally listen to teachers when they are addressing the class and they display satisfactory levels of concentration when they are at work. Pupils are generally courteous to adults and to each other. They take care of the apparatus and equipment in school. Most pupils are trustworthy. However, there is a small proportion of pupils in most classes who do not understand the effect their actions have on others, who on occasions intimidate their peers and who have little respect for the feelings and values of others. They can be rather noisy in class and this interrupts the concentration of other pupils, thereby inhibiting learning. The school has devised a policy for improving behaviour and this is having a positive effect but it is not yet consistently implemented by all members of staff. It is therefore not as effective as it should be. The headteacher takes personal charge of inappropriate behaviour and parents are rapidly involved if the matter is of a serious nature. There has been one instance of a pupil being excluded for a fixed period.
14. Pupils are keen to carry out tasks which require some responsibility, such as taking the registers to the office. The school has introduced a system in which prefects are selected from pupils in Year 6 to help with duties around the school. This is part of the school's strategy to improve behaviour and to encourage personal responsibility. Overall, it is having a positive effect upon pupils' attitudes. Pupils are selected for this office as a result of being well behaved and showing good attitudes to work. However, overall, pupils do not show enough initiative or responsibility.

HOW WELL ARE PUPILS OR STUDENTS TAUGHT?

15. The recruitment and retention of good teachers has posed serious problems for the school in the past. There is a continuing problem when the school needs to find adequate replacements for the permanent staff when they are unwell or attending in-service training. When the school engages teachers on supply, the quality of teaching is mostly unsatisfactory and this causes pupils' learning to be unsatisfactory for those periods of time.
16. Since the appointment of the present headteacher, there has been a major focus on improving the quality of teaching. In addition to observations of lessons carried out by the headteacher, external consultants from the local education authority have visited the school for monitoring purposes, for training teachers in classroom observation and to help them to improve the quality of teaching. Coordinators for mathematics, literacy and key stages have monitored and supported teachers. As a result, there has been a significant improvement in the quality of teaching since the last inspection when it was reported that 23 per cent of lessons were unsatisfactory. However, teaching is still unsatisfactory overall with 11 per cent of lessons observed unsatisfactory.

17. In the lessons observed, seven per cent of lessons were very good, 26 per cent were good and 56 per cent satisfactory. Teaching is satisfactory overall at the Foundation Stage although it is good overall in the nursery. It is satisfactory overall in the infant classes with just under half the lessons being good. It is unsatisfactory overall in the junior classes with very few lessons that are good or very good except in Year 6. Very good teaching was seen in the nursery and in Year 6. Unsatisfactory teaching was observed in all year groups except the nursery and Year 2. The teaching of pupils with special educational needs by specialist teachers was good overall.
18. The teaching of literacy in the infant classes is good overall and a major factor in the improving standards. The teaching of literacy in the junior classes is satisfactory. All teachers follow the format of the literacy hour and the most successful teaching is characterised by imaginative ideas which stimulate and engage pupils' attention. On a few occasions, teachers use other lessons such as science to reinforce vocabulary; for example in Year 1, the teacher emphasised the learning of the words 'push' and 'pull'. She effectively used cards with the words written on them so that pupils learn to read them and how to spell them. However, this approach is not used enough through the school. Learning support assistants play an important role in promoting pupils' learning, particularly with pupils who have specific learning difficulties. Assessment is not always used effectively to ensure the tasks are appropriate for individuals or groups of pupils. On occasions the task is too challenging and pupils lose interest.
19. The teaching of mathematics and numeracy throughout the school is satisfactory overall. It is having a positive effect on raising standards, particularly in the infant classes. Most teachers are familiar with the national numeracy strategy and apply it effectively in most lessons. Mental mathematics is covered satisfactorily but the pace of this activity rarely changes and so the quick thinking pupils are not challenged sufficiently. On most occasions, teachers share with the class what the pupils are expected to learn and what they should do. This helps the pupils to make judgements about whether they have made sufficient progress. The strategy is helping to improve the pupils' mathematical skills but pupils still need more practice in explaining to others how they calculate answers.
20. The teaching of science is satisfactory overall. Teachers plan well and revise previous learning at the beginning of the lesson. Discussion at the end of the lesson concentrates on what the pupils have learned but what pupils are expected to learn is not always made clear at the outset and pupils are not then able to make assessments about how well they have progressed. Pupils have insufficient opportunity to develop investigative skills and this hampers their learning.
21. In information and communication technology, teaching is currently limited by the lack of resources and this has restricted the pupils' learning. Pupils are keen to use the new technology and teachers have little difficulty in interesting the pupils. Wherever possible, pupils use the new technology to help them in their learning in other subjects, such as number bonds in mathematics, spellings in English, data collection in science and constructing pictures in art and composing music. However, they do not have enough opportunities to practise and develop their skills. Most of the teachers have sufficient subject expertise to make full use of the new computers when they arrive.
22. Teaching is satisfactory overall in design and technology and physical education enabling pupils to make at least satisfactory progress in these subjects. It is satisfactory in history, geography and music in the infant classes, where pupils learn at a satisfactory rate, but in the junior classes, teaching is unsatisfactory in art, geography, history and music, thereby inhibiting pupils' progress in these subjects.
23. In teaching and learning seen during the inspection there were strengths and weaknesses:

Strengths

In the best lessons:

- Teachers plan thoroughly and pupils are made aware of what they are expected to learn. Teachers revise previous learning to establish what the pupils can remember; for example, subtraction is the inverse of addition. In the nursery, the teacher and teaching assistants share the activities. They make the best use of their time to help pupils to learn; for example, when the children are choosing an activity, adults talk to individuals or small groups of children and interest them in tasks which extend their learning. Children are encouraged to draw the numeral 2 using chalk on the paving stones. They also colour a shape of 2 on card or paper and then cut it out. This helps the young children to learn their numbers.
- Pupils are given questions to make them think; for example how did you calculate $34 - 19$. One pupil shows his calculation as $30 - 20 = 10 + 4 + 1 = 15$. The teacher praises the pupil and asks others if they did it the same way or differently. Another pupil gives a different example: 34 is 1 less than 35 and 19 is 1 less than 20 so $35 - 20 = 15$. This strategy helps other pupils to see different ways of calculating and improves their understanding of the number system.
- Teachers give pupils specific instructions with practical tasks to help their understanding; for example, when teaching pupils about the eight points of a compass the classroom is marked out with signs showing the eight points. Pupils are asked to stand and face a specific direction and then asked to turn clockwise or anti-clockwise to another direction. By doing this practically, the teacher assesses who knows the points of the compass and understands the difference between clockwise and anti-clockwise turns. She then helps those individuals who most need her support ensuring that all pupils make good progress in their learning.
- In the plenary session, pupils set tasks for each other and judge how well others have progressed in their learning. The teacher sets homework that is related to the lesson and will help the pupils to consolidate the learning in the lesson. This helps pupils to make good progress in their learning.
- Teachers have good control. They do not allow pupils to call out. They have simple ways in which they quickly gain pupils' attention. They use systems such as awarding points for good behaviour to promote positive patterns of behaviour. The environment in which the pupils work is quiet and concentration is sustained by all. This enables pupils to work well and to make good progress in their learning.
- Teachers and learning support assistants work very well together. Teachers brief the assistants well and receive feedback from them at the end of the lesson. Learning support assistants know their children well and provide very good support to the pupils. This enables those with specific learning difficulties or emotional and behaviour problems to make good progress in their learning.

Weaknesses

Where teaching is unsatisfactory :

- Tasks are not always well matched to the ability of children; for example, when children are asked to find words in a dictionary and they find it too difficult. Learning is insufficient.
- Noise is allowed to build up with some children screaming and shouting, for example in the role-play area. This interferes with other children's concentration and inhibits learning. Children stop when asked but then continue again when all return to their activities. Control is unsatisfactory.
- Too many pupils ignore the commands of the teacher and do not listen when they are asked to. Large amounts of time are wasted and pupils do not learn enough in the lesson. In a physical education lesson, one pupil completely ignored the teacher when his name was called and the teacher did not follow this through. The school's behaviour policy was not consistently implemented and this slows the pace of the lesson to the stage where learning is unsatisfactory.

- Lessons lack challenge; for example, in a mental maths session the pace was too slow and the quick thinking pupils were not made to think quickly enough. The average and above average pupils grasped the idea after the first few examples but the extended work did not build upon skills already learnt. Expectations of what the pupils could achieve were too low and pupils are not encouraged to evaluate their own achievements.
- At the beginning of the lesson, teachers do not tell the pupils what they are expected to learn. They do not talk about this during the lesson and they are therefore not able to involve pupils in determining how much they have learnt at the end of the lesson. This restricts the opportunities for pupils to make realistic assessments about their learning and to take more responsibility for their own progress.

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

24. The curriculum is satisfactory at both key stages and in the Foundation Stage. It includes personal, social and health education with suitable emphasis on drugs and sex education. The quality of the curriculum is unsatisfactory. There is inadequate development of skills in history, geography, and art. Opportunities for developing literacy, numeracy and information and communication technology across the curriculum are insufficiently planned. The time allocated to subjects is not properly displayed on timetables and so cannot be adequately checked. The curriculum for English language learning and the teaching of mathematical skills is satisfactory. The teaching of pupils with special educational needs is good. The school meets statutory requirements in relation to the National Curriculum.
25. A Christian ethos is reflected in this Church school, where all pupils are included, especially those with special educational needs. The provision for the under-fives is satisfactory. In the nursery it is good and in the reception satisfactory. It is matched to the Early Learning Goals in the Foundation Stage satisfactorily. The teaching of information and communication technology is satisfactory at both key stages and under-fives. There has been a good improvement in the planning of numeracy and literacy curriculum since the last inspection. However, in subjects, apart from English, maths and science, planning is not linked effectively to expectations of standards and progression of skills and so opportunities are missed to broaden pupils' learning.
26. The quality of the provision for English and mathematics is satisfactory. There are some opportunities for pupils to develop these skills in other areas of the curriculum; for example in Year 2, pupils use computers to process data and produce charts and in Years 3 and 6 pupils are expected to measure accurately using different equipment in science. Opportunities for pupils to develop their language and numeracy skills across the curriculum are limited although there are some good instances, as in the use of information and communication technology in maths. Opportunities for extending pupils' language skills are limited. Both the National Numeracy Strategy and the National Literacy Strategy have been implemented satisfactorily.
27. The opportunities provided for pupils with special educational needs are good. All pupils are included in the life of the school.
28. There is a satisfactory range of extra curricular activities, especially for a school of this size. There are recorder and singing groups. Football and cricket are available for both boys and girls. Pupils have access to an after-school club run separate from the school but in an adjacent building.
29. The opportunities for promoting the spiritual, moral, and social development of pupils are satisfactory. Opportunities to learn about other cultures are unsatisfactory. The school has a Christian ethos and this is evident in the assemblies and displays around the school. Spiritual learning in assemblies is very good. The daily assemblies, in which pupils sing and listen to music, provide very good opportunities for pupils to reflect upon themselves and others. Pupils are encouraged to acknowledge things spiritual and how they influence their lives. The school maintains close links with the local church, through regular visits by the clergy.

30. The development of a moral sense in pupils is satisfactory. Rules agreed by the class are displayed in each classroom and pupils are given opportunities to reflect upon their behaviour. In Year 2, when pupils sit in a circle quietly to discuss moral and social issues, pupils are encouraged to describe actions they would take if they felt they were being bullied. However, teachers do not refer to the classroom rules sufficiently on those occasions when individual pupils do not follow the rules.
31. Knowing how to behave in different types of groups is a skill which is developing satisfactorily. A prefect system in Year 6, the introduction of circle time in Years 2, 3 and 6 indicate that the school is beginning to build social learning. These strategies are still in their early days and have not yet had a significant impact on relationships within the school. However, pupils do relate well to each other in lessons and the playground. There are good relationships between staff and pupils. The programme of personal and social education is a priority for the school and is being developed effectively. The social development of children in the nursery is a strength of the school.
32. There are few opportunities for pupils to show respect, understanding or enjoyment of the cultures of others. Pupils draw upon ideas from Western culture in art and recognise Scottish dance tunes, but they have little understanding of other cultures and the effect they have on pupils' lives and those of others who live in Britain. Apart from a few books in the library there is little recognition of Britain as a multi-cultural society.
33. The school maintains very good links with the local community. There are very good links with the local parish from which the vicar visits school regularly for services and assemblies. The school supports the church's summer projects. Relationships with the nearby secondary school are also very good. This link enables some pupils to transfer to the secondary school more easily. Pupils visit the secondary school to use computers and the secondary pupils assist and do work experience in the school. The headteacher has established useful links with local businesses and with other schools in the area.

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL CARE FOR ITS PUPILS?

34. The safe and caring environment maintained since the previous inspection has a positive effect on the standards pupils achieve. Good procedures are established for child protection and ensuring pupils' welfare. The teacher nominated as the responsible officer for child protection is conscientious and well-informed. All staff, including learning support assistants and midday assistants, understand child protection issues. They tactfully implement the school's procedures.
35. The school's health and safety policy, based on a local authority document, includes procedures for ensuring the safety of pupils on site and during out of school visits. Good health and safety practice is founded on the headteacher's daily inspection of the site and is supplemented by occasional, formal, risk assessments. Good supervision ensures pupils' safety in the playgrounds at break times and lunchtimes. However, during the inspection, when persistent rain confined pupils to their classrooms at lunchtimes, some midday assistants were unable to quieten pupils or guide their activities. This resulted in some inappropriate behaviour. A member of staff is qualified in first aid and all staff are sensitive to the individual needs of pupils.
36. Teachers and other adults know the pupils well and are skilled in assessing their needs. Pupils receive very good individual care and support from class teachers and, particularly, from the head teacher, whose accessibility, humour and understanding are skilfully combined with assertive discipline. Procedures for monitoring pupils' personal development are very effective. Although largely informal, they are based on teachers' observations, knowledge and understanding of individuals. The school's learning support assistants are skilled in helping pupils to learn effectively and to be able to relate well to others and they develop good relationships with pupils.
37. An informative booklet is part of the warm welcome offered to parents when their children join the nursery class. Pupils joining other year groups settle quickly and happily into the school's routines. Good procedures in Years 5 and 6 prepare pupils for transfer to secondary school.

38. A good policy for discipline and behaviour has the potential to promote good behaviour in the school building and in the playground. However, teachers do not consistently implement the policy. On occasions, unacceptably high levels of noise are tolerated in a number of classes and pupils are not reprimanded for calling out answers or interrupting their teachers. When pupils' behaviour deteriorates, they are not reminded of the specific rules agreed and displayed in classrooms. Teachers have received little training in behaviour management and their expectations of behaviour are generally too low. On too many occasions, control of the class depends upon the teacher's ability to shout above the prevailing noise.
39. The anti-bullying policy is not displayed, but the provisions of the policy are implemented consistently and thoroughly. Pupils have few concerns about bullying. They know that a process of discussion and reconciliation resolves any incident reported to the headteacher. Staff and governors have not yet agreed a policy on the use of force by staff, or procedures for noting incidents of restraint of pupils.
40. Class teachers and the head teacher use a variety of informal merit awards to acknowledge good behaviour, good work and effort. Each week, during an assembly, a boy and girl are nominated for occupancy of 'golden chairs', which they carry out of assembly to replace their classroom chairs for the next week. Pupils are proud to win these awards and this has a positive effect upon their attitudes to behaviour and work.
41. The headteacher, staff and governors are doing all they can to monitor and promote attendance. Registers are completed neatly and comply with legal requirements. The educational welfare service has helped the school improve historically low levels of attendance and high levels of unauthorised absence. The headteacher and an educational welfare officer monitor attendance figures each week and act quickly in attempting to support families whose children's attendance is unsatisfactory. Unexplained absences from school are immediately investigated and unauthorised absences are meticulously recorded. Despite the interventions of a governors' panel, some families do not fulfil the legal requirement of ensuring their children's regular attendance.
42. Deficiencies in assessment procedures were a key issue in the previous inspection report. Assessment has improved in English, mathematics, science and information and control technology and is satisfactory in these subjects. Assessment in other subjects is still unsatisfactory and this has a detrimental effect on the quality of teaching and pupils' learning.
43. Assessment is good in the Nursery. In the Reception class, pupils are assessed through the use of the local authority's test. In addition to the national tests in Years 2 and 6, the school uses similar test materials in other year groups to assess standards and levels of achievement in English and mathematics. The headteacher is adept at using samples of pupils' previous work to demonstrate individual improvement or deterioration. However, no support programmes are provided for pupils whose unsatisfactory behaviour affects the quality of their work.
44. The school has a satisfactory assessment policy but not all teachers follow the procedures in all subjects. Teachers' daily assessments are not shared with pupils and are sometimes inaccurate. Individual targets are not set consistently in all subjects and, where they are set, are not fully implemented.
45. The school is beginning to analyse information from assessment procedures. In Key Stage 1, teachers amend their planning in response to the monitoring and assessment of pupils' work. Analysis is less well developed in Key Stage 2 and is unsatisfactory in the foundation subjects.
46. The assessment coordinator and the Key Stage 1 coordinator have worked hard to develop and implement the new policy. Teachers' experiences and requirements will be reviewed at a staff meeting late in summer term and the policy amended where necessary.

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL WORK IN PARTNERSHIP WITH PARENTS?

47. Parents' views of the school are generally favourable. At a pre-inspection meeting attended by a small number of parents, critical views were expressed about pupils' attainment and behaviour. These concerns were not shared by the much larger number of parents who returned questionnaires, or by a further small number of parents interviewed at length during the inspection. Although the inspectors agree that some aspects of pupils' attainment and behaviour are unsatisfactory, they confirm rapid and continuing improvement. The inspectors conclude that the work of the school is now rightly valued and respected by parents.
48. A substantial number of parents who completed the pre-inspection questionnaire, 31 per cent, considered that the school does not provide a wide range of activities outside of lessons. Inspectors found that the range of activities provided outside of lessons is satisfactory for a school of this size, especially as some activities are not well supported, such as French for junior pupils. Many parents want to be involved with their children's learning and help them at home. Parents confidently ask teachers for advice on general or particular issues related to their children's work. However, a quarter of the parents responding to the pre-inspection questionnaire were dissatisfied with the amount of homework provided. Inspectors found that the school has a policy for homework but that it is not consistently implemented.
49. The school has established some effective links with parents, who are welcome to visit at all times. The inspection confirms their view of good two-way communication and good relationships with class teachers and other members of staff. Some parents and friends provide regular and valuable help in lessons to groups of pupils and to individuals. Whenever possible, the school broadens the curriculum by encouraging parents' specialist skills and interests.
50. A small group of parents is attempting to sustain the school's formal group of parents, teachers and friends. Good co-operation is established between the parents' group and the governing body, with some families active on both committees. Recent social events have raised money for a computer printer and scanner, playground equipment and books for the library.
51. The quality of information for parents is good. The headteacher greets families each morning in the playground and responds immediately to questions and concerns. The weekly newsletter is very informative about events and important dates and is usually accompanied by a church newsletter. The National Numeracy Strategy was explained to parents at an evening meeting. The school prospectus conforms to legal requirements and includes much useful information and advice for parents. The most recent governors' annual report to parents does not include all the information legally required. At two consultation evenings each year and regular 'surgeries', parents are clearly informed of their children's progress. Annual written reports to parents are of variable quality. Reports usually show in some detail what children know and can do but are less consistent in showing how attainment may be improved, or in setting targets for improvement. Mid-term reports are brief and informative.
52. Parents are well informed of the school's routines and expectations when their children enter the reception classes or join other year groups and about secondary transfer when their children are in Years 5 and 6. Parents of pupils with special educational needs are provided with good information about their child's progress and they understand the school's procedures for support and discipline. Good records are maintained by the special needs coordinator, and she is always available to discuss pupils' progress.

HOW WELL IS THE SCHOOL LED AND MANAGED?

53. The school has undergone significant changes in staff in recent months. The headteacher was appointed in April 2000 and, since that date, four teachers have been appointed including the teacher in the nursery who has been in school only one term. Only three teachers have been in the school longer than 3 years. In September, the headteacher carried out a review of teachers' roles and re-allocated curriculum responsibilities. He spent most of the autumn term teaching a class to maintain some stability in the class as the pupils had been taught by a succession of supply teachers.

54. The headteacher has provided strong and effective leadership. Parents are agreed the school has improved considerably since his appointment. He has a high profile amongst the parents with whom he mixes each day before and after school. This, together with regular newsletters and an improved prospectus, has ensured that communications between school and home are much improved. He quickly identified the need to improve teaching as a priority and introduced plans and strategies to ensure there have been improvements in standards, particularly in English, mathematics and science and in behaviour. The mission statement has been revised, numerous policies have been written or re-written, including one on behaviour, links with neighbouring schools developed and a development plan identifying the areas most in need of improvement. Members of staff in key positions now feel empowered to carry out their revised roles and the relationships between staff are very positive. The school is now over-subscribed after several years of having spare capacity.
55. The management of the school by the headteacher is very good. He has reviewed the roles of key staff and has agreed targets with them. Staff are clear about their roles and what is required of them. Job descriptions set out each teacher's responsibilities. Action plans based on raising standards have been drawn up for all members of staff and these include agreed targets. However, curriculum leadership is generally unsatisfactory as progress has not been sufficient since the last inspection. Most of the current subject coordinators have not had sufficient time to make a positive impact on standards in their subjects. The exceptions to this are coordinators for English, mathematics, design and technology and physical education, where standards have either improved significantly or they have been held at an acceptable level. The coordinator for Key Stage 1 and the Foundation Stage is effective with rising standards at both stages. The school has a good policy for assessment but it is not being consistently implemented by teachers in all subjects. Staff feel valued and part of the St Mary's team. They are strongly committed to further improvement.
56. The governing body has undergone significant changes in the past two years. It has carried out a review of its work and purpose and now has a rolling programme to ensure that it meets its statutory obligations. It has arranged an appropriate committee structure to carry out its work and allocated responsibilities to individuals to monitor the work of the school and to report back to the governing body. It has regular reports from the headteacher and individual members of staff report to the governing body on their area of responsibility; for example, special needs. Governors are aware of the strengths and weaknesses of the school. Prospective parents are now interviewed before governors offer places and the chair of governors has been involved in writing to parents as a result of them not keeping to their part of the contract; for example, when their children arrive late to school. The governing body is aware of the need for value for money and it has ensured that the best value principles of comparison, challenge, consultation and competition are applied when making decisions. The governing body has a clear view of the need for a long-term view of the school and to review its performance to see how well it is meeting its targets. New governors have recently attended training to ensure they are able to carry out the role as the critical friend and to hold the school to account for its standards.
57. Since the appointment of the headteacher, the school has developed systems to analyse the results of the national curriculum tests; for example, it found that the boys results in reading were low. It has taken remedial action which has had a positive effect upon the results. It has not yet looked at weaknesses within subjects but that is planned after the results of the next national tests. The school has instituted a system of tracking pupils' progress in the three core subjects and setting targets for individual pupils to ensure they achieve as well as possible. Other analyses have focussed on identifying pupils with special educational needs and high ability pupils.
58. The school makes very good use of its resources; for example, it has allocated funds to group pupils by ability in Year 6 for English and mathematics and this is having a beneficial effect on the standards being achieved. It spends considerably more than it receives on pupils with special educational needs and the allocation of grant through the standards fund is used effectively. It has begun to update its use of modern technology with new systems for financial accounting on the office computer. Plans and finances are in place to provide additional computers throughout the school in the near future.

59. The school is staffed by a sufficient number of teachers who are suitably qualified to teach the pre-school and primary curriculum. There is a good balance of experienced and less experienced teachers, although most of the teachers are new or new in their current position in the school. The number of support staff in the classrooms is appropriate to support the needs of the targeted pupils. These learning support assistants make a good contribution to the effectiveness of teaching.
60. The school accommodation is adequate for the purpose. There is a good secure area both indoors and outdoors for the nursery. There are extensive outside play areas for other pupils but there are insufficient hard play areas to allow separate play spaces for infants and juniors. Occasionally the play of the older pupils interferes with that of the younger ones.
61. The quality and range of resources is unsatisfactory. In most curriculum areas, there are sufficient resources to support teaching. However there are insufficient computers to allow pupils appropriate access, although this is partly surmounted by the use of the computers in a neighbouring school. The school does have new computers on order. There is also a shortage of specialist equipment for design and technology and artefacts in history.

WHAT SHOULD THE SCHOOL DO TO IMPROVE FURTHER?

62. The school should:
- (1) raise standards in English, science, mathematics and information and communication technology by:
- raising teachers' expectations of what pupils can achieve and the pace at which they learn,
 - providing more challenging activities,
 - ensuring sufficient resources.

[paragraphs 6-9, 79-80, 91-93, 100-102, 127-128]

- (2) raise standards in art, geography, history and music by:
- planning to develop skills within the schemes of work,
 - raising teachers' expectations of what pupils can achieve and the pace at which they learn,
 - providing more challenging activities,
 - checking on pupils' progress and using the outcomes of these checks to increase learning and improve standards.

[paragraphs 10,106-108,117-118, 122-123, 131]

- (3) improve the quality of teaching by:
- ensuring teachers have sufficient subject expertise,
 - making clear learning objectives at the beginning of every lesson,
 - implementing the school's behaviour policy consistently,
 - reducing noise to enable pupils to concentrate at all times,
 - encouraging pupils to be involved in evaluating their own progress against the learning objectives,
 - raising teachers' expectations of what pupils can achieve and the pace at which they learn.

[paragraphs 15-23]

- (4) improve the quality of curriculum planning by:
- ensuring schemes of work include a progression in the acquisition of skills,
 - using assessment to match what is taught to pupils' learning needs,
 - reviewing and monitoring allocations of time,
 - promoting the development of literacy, numeracy and information and communication technology skills across all subjects of the curriculum,
 - extending the opportunities for pupils to learn about cultures other than their own.

[paragraphs 24-33]

(5) develop the role of coordinators by:

- defining their role,
- improving the monitoring of the subject/area, including teaching, to raise standards.

[paragraph 55]

Other lesser matters for consideration include:

improving the behaviour of the small proportion of pupils who behave unacceptably from time to time by ensuring that all staff implement the school's behaviour policy consistently. [paragraph 13]

providing pupils with more opportunities to show initiative and to take responsibility. [paragraph 14]

using the analysis of national test results to ascertain strengths and weaknesses within English, mathematics and science. [paragraph 57]

making clear to parents what work they might expect their children to do at home, when it is to be done and for how long. [paragraph 48]

improving the quality of supervision at lunchtimes by providing appropriate training for supervisors. [paragraph 35]

PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS

Summary of the sources of evidence for the inspection

Number of lessons observed	57
Number of discussions with staff, governors, other adults and pupils	39

Summary of teaching observed during the inspection

Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
0	7	26	56	11	0	0

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

Information about the school's pupils

Pupils on the school's roll	Nursery	YR – Y6
Number of pupils on the school's roll (FTE for part-time pupils)	22	202
Number of full-time pupils known to be eligible for free school meals	N/a	69

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Special educational needs	Nursery	YR – Y6
Number of pupils with statements of special educational needs	0	4
Number of pupils on the school's special educational needs register	17	92

English as an additional language	No of pupils
Number of pupils with English as an additional language	2

Pupil mobility in the last school year	No of pupils
Pupils who joined the school other than at the usual time of first admission	8
Pupils who left the school other than at the usual time of leaving	9

Attendance

Authorised absence

	%
School data	7.3
National comparative data	4.3

Unauthorised absence

	%
School data	1.8
National comparative data	0.3

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

Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 1 for the latest reporting year	Year	Boys	Girls	Total
	2000	15	16	31

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		Reading	Writing	Mathematics
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	7	11	10
	Girls	12	14	15
	Total	19	25	25
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	61 (64)	81 (73)	71 (73)
	National	84 (82)	85 (83)	90 (87)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	9	10	10
	Girls	12	15	12
	Total	21	25	22
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	68 (68)	81 (73)	71 (73)
	National	84 (82)	88 (86)	88 (87)

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

Attainment at the end of Key Stage 2

Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 2 for the latest reporting year	Year	Boys	Girls	Total
	2000	17	13	30

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys	7	7	10
	Girls	8	8	12
	Total	15	15	22
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	50 (50)	50 (35)	67 (44)
	National	75 (70)	72 (69)	85 (78)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys	7	7	10
	Girls	8	8	10
	Total	15	15	20
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	50 (44)	50 (38)	67 (44)
	National	70 (68)	72 (69)	80 (75)

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

Ethnic background of pupils

	No of pupils
Black – Caribbean heritage	0
Black – African heritage	0
Black – other	4
Indian	0
Pakistani	0
Bangladeshi	0
Chinese	0
White	167
Any other minority ethnic group	2

This table refers to pupils of compulsory school age only.

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	1	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.

Teachers and classes

Qualified teachers and classes: YR – Y6

Total number of qualified teachers (FTE)	10
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	20.2
Average class size	28.9

Education support staff: YR – Y6

Total number of education support staff	7
Total aggregate hours worked per week	78.5

Qualified teachers and support staff: nursery

Total number of qualified teachers (FTE)	1
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	22

Total number of education support staff	2
Total aggregate hours worked per week	75

Number of pupils per FTE adult	7.3
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FTE means full-time equivalent.

Financial information

Financial year	1999-2000
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	£
Total income	434046
Total expenditure	418141
Expenditure per pupil	1992
Balance brought forward from previous year	12500
Balance carried forward to next year	28405

Results of the survey of parents and carers

Questionnaire return rate

Number of questionnaires sent out	224
Number of questionnaires returned	48

Percentage of responses in each category

	Strongly agree	Tend to agree	Tend to disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know
My child likes school.	50	48	0	0	2
My child is making good progress in school.	42	52	2	2	2
Behaviour in the school is good.	29	62	6	2	0
My child gets the right amount of work to do at home.	33	42	21	4	0
The teaching is good.	50	44	4	0	2
I am kept well informed about how my child is getting on.	38	42	12	4	4
I would feel comfortable about approaching the school with questions or a problem.	60	38	2	0	0
The school expects my child to work hard and achieve his or her best.	48	50	2	0	0
The school works closely with parents.	46	40	8	2	4
The school is well led and managed.	56	44	0	0	0
The school is helping my child become mature and responsible.	35	58	6	0	0
The school provides an interesting range of activities outside lessons.	19	40	31	4	6

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

63. In the previous inspection, provision for the under fives was based upon the Desirable Learning Outcomes (DLOs) and covered children who were still under five at the time of inspection in the nursery and reception class. Thus some children in the reception class were reported under national curriculum subjects and some under DLOs. All children under five are now working to the new Foundation Curriculum; that is, towards the Early Learning Goals (ELGs) via the 'stepping stones'. This means that, although there are many similarities between DLOs and ELGs no direct comparison is possible between the last report and this.
64. Most children attend the nursery before entering the main school, though not all can be admitted into the reception class as there are insufficient places. The nursery has 52 part time places, some morning and some afternoon, while only 30 children can be admitted into the reception class. Five places in each session of the nursery are reserved for children who are recommended by social services as they have particular special needs for language and social skills development. Children in the nursery make good progress in relation to their attainment on entry. Those in reception make satisfactory progress. This is an improvement since the time of the last inspection when all children were deemed to be making satisfactory progress overall. By the beginning of Year 1, most children will achieve the ELGs in personal and social development, communication, language and literacy, mathematical development, knowledge and understanding of the world, physical development and creative development.

Personal, social and emotional development

65. All the adults working with the under fives place a high priority on developing personal and social skills, believing that, without these, learning is impeded.
66. In the nursery, almost every interaction promotes these skills in some way; for example, when a new boy was crying the teacher asked the children to understand that he was sad because his mummy wasn't there. They said they understood and one went over to him and sympathised. Independence is encouraged as children register their attendance by putting their names on the board as they arrive, by getting their aprons on to paint and by putting them back where they got them from when they have finished painting. They go to the toilet and wash their hands without help. They make choices about what to do and who they want to play with. They learn to concentrate as they go about their chosen tasks and on occasion are to be seen concentrating on the same task for twenty minutes. They are enthusiastic about their learning and are keen to do well. Teaching promotes the children's personal, social and emotional development well. The teacher and other adults model courtesy and good manners as they respond to things children say. Teachers praise children when they allow another child to take a turn in the sand. All adults ensure that inappropriate behaviour is dealt with immediately. They always take up issues of aggression, which are very few, and deal with them firmly. Moral attitudes and values are constantly reinforced. The relationships between all the adults here model those that they want to see between the children. This area of learning is very good and these children have already reached many of the ELGs.
67. In the reception class, children develop personal and social skills in much the same way as in the nursery. They are learning to work well together in groups; for example, in mathematics, as well as individually, although some of the children still find co-operation difficult. Children were seen to be considerate of each other when they wanted something. They usually ask for it very politely, although when too many went into the play-house together there was not enough space and patience was quickly exhausted. Many children are interested in the activities provided, though there is often a minority who do not engage. When they are interested, they can concentrate for long periods of time, but when they are not engaged, they talk throughout the session. Relationships between children are satisfactory as are those between teacher and children. Children are confident for their ages and able to show a wide range of personal responses. They are learning that their actions have consequences for themselves and others. Teaching is

satisfactory overall. Moral attitudes and values are sometimes not sufficiently reinforced so that children are unsure of the boundaries for their actions. At tidy up time, most children are helpful but there is always a minority who do not do as they are asked and the teacher is not sufficiently firm with these children. The development of personal and social skills is good in the nursery and satisfactory in the reception class. Overall, children under five show satisfactory development towards the Early Learning Goals.

Communication, language and literacy

68. In the nursery, children are making good progress towards the ELGs, through play-based activities, sometimes self determined and other times teacher directed. Speaking and listening skills are enhanced in many ways; for example, by listening to adults reading and by talking with the adults about many of the activities in which they engage. They also listen to stories using the computer programme, "Living Stories" and then retell them in correct narrative sequence to the adults or other children. Teaching is good. Early 'stepping stones' for reading and writing are developed through a wide range of activities. Children try to write their own name helped by an adult and they are taught to recognise the letter of the week; for example, 'W'. They read their own names on the name labels when they 'sign in' in the morning, sing songs and rhymes at registration time and sit in the book area 'reading' books alone or with a friend.
69. In the reception class, children extend speaking and listening skills in many ways. When they play in the role-play area they ask each other what they want for dinner. When they play with the small world farm they invent a game of cowboys and tell each other who is dead and who has run away. Teaching is satisfactory. In more formal sessions, the teacher reads the Big Book and then discusses it with the children, asking them to sound out the first sound, such as in 'snake' "S", and in 'monkey' "M". The children are able to put the initial sound on the letters 'at' to make new words, such as 'cat', 'mat', 'hat' and 'sat'. The lower ability children are challenged to write their names and then draw pictures of things that begin with each sound in their names. They can all write their names, copying from name cards while being well supported by the classroom assistant. Children who learn quickly are challenged to find words in first dictionaries and write them out. Children know that books are read from left to right and top to bottom and that print carries meaning. Their achievements overall are in line with the ELGs. Those children with special needs are well supported both in groups and in class and they make good progress for their ability.

Mathematical development

70. In the nursery and in the reception class, mathematical activities are planned as games to motivate children. Teaching is good in the nursery and satisfactory in the reception class. In the nursery, the daily counting of the number of children attending ensures that most children can count to ten and many can count to twenty. The lower attainers are on the 'stepping stones' toward this ELG. While printing with blocks, a child says, "I've made three red triangles" and she also identifies squares and circles showing she has already partially attained the ELG. Children were enabled to show their understanding of shape and size when painting, when the teacher asked if they wanted to paint on a tall house shape or a short one. They pointed to the correct shape as they replied. In the reception class at carpet time, 90 per cent of the class held up the correct number of fingers as the teacher held up a card with a number; 6, 3, 9. Then children were asked to recognise a numeral as others held a card. Most children were able to sort themselves out into the correct number sequence from 1-10. Most children can add numbers to 10. A few above average ability children can recognise numbers to 20. Overall children are making satisfactory progress toward the ELGs, with some children making good progress.

Knowledge and understanding of the world

71. In the nursery and in the reception class, children are given many opportunities to learn about the world in which they live and to make progress towards the ELGs. The nursery play area has plants and trees as well as equipment and children see the seasons change as the trees drop leaves in autumn and then are reborn in spring. Teaching is good. Adults take every opportunity to talk to children about what is happening. They talk about the weather (daily chart decided by the children), stressing the concept of time past and present with the words 'yesterday', 'today'

and 'tomorrow'. Children talk about things that have happened at home and they are able to identify 'tent', 'house' and 'flat' and learn about 'bungalow' while playing a game with the nursery nurse. Many children are competent at the computer keyboard and show each other how they manipulate the mouse and 'click on the icon' to play "Tweenies". Those children who choose to go outside show they are knowledgeable about traffic and signs for drivers as they ride their bikes and scooters. A group of children wash babies in the bath with real soap and water and learn about health and hygiene as well as about life. Children make good progress in the nursery.

72. In the reception class, children talk about the day of the week and what day it will be tomorrow; for example, when asked, 'Today is Thursday, what will tomorrow be?' they answered, 'Friday!' They learn about jungle animals during the book section of the literacy time. Children with special needs show they know about zoos and they show that they understand about families and growing up when they play with puppets. They play with construction kits and have opportunities to make models from junk, refining their finger skills by using scissors and glue. No computer use was seen during the lessons observed. Children in the reception class make satisfactory progress toward the Early Learning Goals as a result of satisfactory teaching.

Physical development

73. Children's physical development is supported by activities in school and outside in the garden area, which is shared by both under five groups. Nursery children have outside play as a choice every day and all children make use of that choice. They ride bikes and scooters and follow each other around the paths showing good control over their vehicles. This good control continues in physical education in the hall and in movement to music where they dance and move with increasing confidence. The new programme, 'Dance Write' also encourages large movement development as children move their arms and bodies to music to learn letter shapes. Fine motor skills are acquired as children paint, draw, skip, fix things together and write. When the children are outside, they climb on the large climbing frame and gain confidence at heights. Physical development is good as children move towards the Early Learning Goals.
74. The under fives in the reception class and in the nursery have similar opportunities for physical development. The children in the reception class do not have 'outside time' every day but they have opportunities for play at break and lunch. Physical development overall is good as a result of the good teaching.

Creative development

75. The nursery curriculum provides daily opportunities for children to experiment with paint, pencils and crayons. There are always four easels available for children to paint pictures and often a table, where the children mix colours before painting. Often children choose to cut and stick and make designs and pictures from paper scraps. They cut up 'pastry' for jam tarts and while doing this, they are refining their finger skills and learning to organise shapes into a pattern. Teaching is good. Led by adults, children sing regularly and often burst into song for the fun of it. They enjoy using musical instruments. In the role-play area, they exercise their imaginations as they play the parts of people who live in the house or work in the shop. They constantly offer the adults cups of tea or cakes made from dry oats. Adults use questions well to make the children think. Children make good progress in the nursery.
76. In the reception class, many nursery activities are replicated. Children paint and draw, sing rhymes and number songs, count how many children there are and talk about what they are doing today and tomorrow with increasing confidence and accuracy. The role-play area is small, but children who use it well are developing language skills and imagination in their play. Instruments are available in the room and children identified some when the teacher asked them to choose one and name it. They chose the triangle, tambourine and shaker. All children were encouraged to beat out the rhythm of a song either with instruments or on their hands. Not all could manage to keep in rhythm, but most did. In the hall, children move well to music. Children under five are making satisfactory progress toward the ELGs overall as a result of the satisfactory teaching.
77. Teaching of the under fives is sound overall, varying between unsatisfactory and very good. The best teaching is based upon extremely detailed plans that ensure that all adults have a specific

focus and know the aims for the day. Plans are based on ongoing assessments by staff so that activities are decided on the basis of children's needs. Very good teachers and assistants work conscientiously to develop children's speech and language at all times. When children are working, the adults pose questions or make comments which force the child to reply. For example, when a child wanted to paint, the teacher asked, 'Which shape house do you want, the tall one or the small one?' The teacher did not allow the children to start until they replied. When children bring the teacher food to 'eat' she always makes a comment which engages them in conversation. In mathematics activities, the teachers motivate the children by providing interesting games, such as putting themselves into a living number line to show they can order numerals. This very good teaching gives children the opportunity sometimes to choose an activity and at other times to join in a teacher directed activity. The poorer teaching involved tasks that were too complex, causing children to lose concentration and give up. It also included the unsystematic application of control systems within the class so that children did not learn how they should and should not behave. In the areas of knowledge and understanding, creative arts, and physical development, teachers use the children's interests to motivate them, linking learning to life wherever possible. Children make cakes from clay, ride bikes and play with cars on a track. They write to mummy and draw pictures of themselves to take home to dad. Both teachers plan according to the ELGs and base their planning on prior learning determined through assessment.

78. Coordination of the infant and under five provision is effective. The coordinator is supporting and monitoring two new staff, who are working with the under fives. The new curriculum has been put in place in such a way that the 'stepping stones' toward the ELGs are very clearly understood. The outdoor play area is well equipped and used. Children with potential learning needs are identified very early in the nursery and followed through the key stage by being visited in class twice a term and by sampling work and talking to the teachers. The coordinator understands the importance of parental interest and has held workshops for parents about literacy and numeracy and briefed governors about the new Foundation Curriculum. The coordinator also assisted the nursery teacher in writing the brochure for parents. Leadership is good.

ENGLISH

79. The school's results in National Curriculum tests in 2000 indicate that attainment at age eleven is well below the national average in comparison with all schools and with similar schools. The percentage achieving the higher level (level 5) is below the national average but in line with the average when compared to similar schools. In the tests at age seven, at the end of Key Stage 1, the results are well below national averages and below in writing. Compared to similar schools, their results are well below in reading and in line with the average in writing. The percentage of pupils achieving the higher level (level 3) in reading is well below the national average and well below average when compared with similar schools. In writing, it is below national averages but in line with the average in similar schools. The trend over four years in English, however, is upward, and slightly above the national trend. By the end of Key Stage 2 when pupils are eleven, there is little difference between the achievement of girls and boys measured over the last three years. If the school meets its current target of 60 per cent achieving the expected level (level 4) this will be a considerable improvement on last year though still below the national average. The school is confidently expecting 66 per cent of pupils to attain this level which, considering there are 30 per cent of Year 6 pupils on the special needs register for English, would be a significant improvement. This is a realistic target for this year group.
80. The inspection found that standards overall at both key stages are below the national average as they were at the last inspection, though undoubtedly improving. Improvement is more noticeable at Key Stage 1 than at Key Stage 2 because the strategies adopted by the school to improve standards have had a greater impact in the infant classes, especially the literacy strategy. The school has analysed the data from previous national tests and has focused on reading skills, with a particular concern for motivating boys. The National Literacy Strategy has undoubtedly helped at both key stages. Other factors include purchases of books to stimulate boys' interest, Additional Literacy Support (ALS) for Year 3 and intensive support for Year 6 during literacy hours.

81. Pupils enter school with attainment below that of most children in Kent as measured by the local education authority's assessment, although the current intake appears to be not so far below as previously. By the age of seven in Year 2, pupils are good listeners and confident speakers. For example, when the special educational needs group were asked to put an initial sound to 'ap', learned the previous week they said 'cap', 'map', 'tap' and 'lap'. One pupil talked about his dad, saying of 'cap'; 'People wear it to play golf or when it's wet. My dad plays golf and so does my brother'. This is an example, one of many, where a pupil includes relevant detail to interest the listener. Pupils listen carefully to the teacher and they respond appropriately to her questions. They are able to explain their ideas, such as how to change MISS to MRS; 'change IS to R'. During the previous inspection, standards in speaking and listening were satisfactory. They are now good.
82. Reading by the age of seven in Year 2 is almost in line with expectations nationally with most pupils reading at the expected level. Those who do not are the pupils with special needs. The teacher asks pupils to read aloud from the Big Book for the day. They each read a page, with virtually no mistakes and when a mistake is made the teacher uses that as a teaching point for the whole class. Pupils read confidently, self correcting for meaning and using phonic cues to help with new words. The phonic ability of these pupils is very good and they find it stimulating to work out words using phonics. During the Literacy Hour, some groups each day read the group reading book together and individually. They make good progress overall based on prior attainment. They enjoy reading and those who read to inspectors all had books at home and said they read at home each day. Standards are generally satisfactory which is an improvement on the last inspection findings.
83. Attainment and progress in writing by the age of seven is less good than in reading. The quicker learning pupils are working above the level expected for their age. They have good ideas in their writing but the script is still not fully cursive, the spelling not yet standard, though phonically plausible, and the punctuation is at the stage where capital letters and full stops are used but often irregularly. At all levels of ability, pupils have good ideas for stories and descriptions but their grammatical ability is below that expected for pupils of their age. Attainment is unsatisfactory overall, as it was at the previous inspection, though progress based on prior learning is satisfactory.
84. In Key Stage 2, pupils are building on the sound start made in Key Stage 1. By the age of eleven when pupils are in Year 6, they speak confidently and can explain difficult ideas and hypotheses to the listener. They listen when playing word games. For example, the class divided into three groups to have three word definitions read out, by the teacher, the assistant or another pupil. They had to remember these definitions and decide which was correct, using powers of reasoning. All were fully involved in this and were very successful. In class discussion, a pupil pointed out that as hedgehogs are blind maybe their sense of smell is enhanced, which shows powers of reflection and the ability to explain an idea to others. Speaking and listening skills are good which is an improvement on the previous inspection findings.
85. In the previous inspection, reading was found to be generally unsatisfactory. Since the arrival of the new headteacher reading has become a strong focus throughout both key stages. By Year 6, many pupils are reading at the expected level and above. Pupils are making satisfactory progress and attainment has improved, though standards in tests, in percentage terms, still appear to be well below the national average. Pupils other than those with special needs read well and with enjoyment. All pupils read to an adult at times during the week, as well as during the 'Literacy Hour'. During a discussion on Haiku poetry, pupils were able to infer and make deductions from the text to elicit meaning, (the previous example about the hedgehogs shows this well, though it was not the only one). Pupils of average attainment and above read fluently, using semantic, graphic and phonic cues to decode. They read with good intonation in an engaging and interesting manner. A pupil of lower attainment said he liked reading now he had 'got the hang of it'. He read slowly but with expression.
86. Writing is developing throughout Key Stage 2 in accordance with the curriculum of the 'Literacy Hour'. Pupils experience many genres including poetry, persuasive writing, argument, complaint, letters, lists, recipes and limericks. Standards are still below average, as they were at the previous inspection. The above average pupils in the work sample seen have generally accurate

spelling. Punctuation is standard and paragraphing is used with speech marks. Pupils' handwriting has a personal style, is cursive and easy to read. Pupils from Year 3 onwards write using dictionaries of appropriate complexity for their ability. They are confident about writing even when they do not enjoy it (some see it as a chore that must be done). In Year 6, below average pupils are writing below the level expected with poor hand control and poor handwriting. A small proportion of Year 6 pupils do not use full stops or capital letters and their progress is poor when compared to national expectations though it is satisfactory compared to prior attainment. Pupils do not use the library enough so their library skills are not satisfactory. Overall, progress in relation to prior attainment seen during the inspection was satisfactory.

87. Pupils enjoy the challenge of the 'Literacy Hour'. They concentrate on the given tasks, getting positive feedback from their successes. They are mostly keen to do well. They are able to work together in discussion and assist each other in activities, such as spellings. By Year 6, they can sustain concentration for substantial periods of time. Response overall is satisfactory.
88. The quality of English teaching is satisfactory overall, being good in Key Stage 1 and satisfactory in Key Stage 2. Good teaching is characterised by imaginative ideas to implement the 'Literacy Hour', ideas which stimulate and engage pupils' attention and motivate them to put effort into what they do. Other strengths include:
- The ability to maintain control through positive relationships even with the most difficult pupils, engaging them in the tasks on hand; for example, giving praise to those who respond quickly to the teacher's instructions.
 - Allowing pupils to put forward their ideas in such a way that they feel valued. It makes pupils feel special and clever; for example, when pupils share their knowledge of hedgehogs with the remainder of the class.
 - An established routine and code of expectation which pupils know and accept so that the teachers are able to implement sanctions, where necessary, without losing the flow of the lesson; for example, using the board to note a pupil's name when he calls out.
 - Lessons are pacy and interesting.
 - Good records of achievement on which teachers plan the grouping of pupils.
89. Particular weaknesses in unsatisfactory lessons include:
- Tasks which do not engage pupils' interest or are set at the wrong level of difficulty causing pupils to give up; for example, when reading a story from a book and showing illustrations which the pupils cannot see. Inappropriate behaviour then often results.
 - Inconsistent implementation of the school's policy on behaviour, such as having no clear procedure for ensuring pupils work quietly. This often results in pupils being noisy and off task.
90. The coordinator gives a good lead and her input is helping to raise standards in the subject. Test results have been analysed and books purchased to appeal to boys as a direct consequence of these analyses. The local education authority advisory service has supported teachers, particularly on phonic development. Staff felt they needed support with ideas for tasks in 'Literacy Hour', so a scheme was purchased to help them. The teaching of literacy and pupil achievements are monitored in an effort to raise standards.

MATHEMATICS

91. Pupils aged seven in Year 2 attain standards close to those expected for their age. Pupils aged eleven in Year 6 attain standards below those expected for their age in numeracy and in all areas of mathematics (number, algebra, space, shape and measures and data handling). The 2000 national test results show the school to be close to the national averages at Year 2 when compared to similar schools, but below average when compared to all schools. However, pupils attaining at the higher levels exceed national averages. At Year 6, results of national tests show pupils to be below the national average and below average when compared with similar schools. However, about one third of pupils in a year have special educational needs related to learning difficulties and this reduces the school's overall levels of attainment. Standards, measured against national averages, have improved since 1997 by both the end of Year 2 and Year 6. The school's target for mathematics in 2001 of 45 per cent of pupils in Year 6 attaining the expected level 4 is not sufficiently challenging. Standards observed during the inspection indicate that pupils without special educational needs are attaining at levels expected for their age, although standards for higher attaining pupils are not as high as they should be in Years 3 to 6.
92. The attainment of boys at the age of seven, as shown in the 2000 tests, is well below that of girls, but there is no significant difference in attainment between boys and girls by the age of eleven. No significant differences in the attainment of boys and girls were observed during the inspection. Overall, pupils with special educational needs, identified by the school, are well supported and make good progress.
93. By the age of seven, pupils have a sound knowledge of place value up to 100. They can add 10 to a single number and recognise half and a quarter as fractions. They add and subtract numbers up to 100. They know the properties of two- and three-dimensional shapes and use a ruler to measure with some accuracy. They estimate and measure in inches, pints and litres. They can draw symmetrical patterns. They use their mathematical knowledge to solve problems involving addition and subtraction. The higher attainers add and subtract numbers up to 10,000 and solve number problems from written stories. They can develop repeating patterns. By the age of eleven, pupils are increasingly confident about making calculations in their heads and use decimals to two places. They calculate the value of missing angles in triangles and draw symmetrical shapes. They recognise discrete data in graphs and charts and use co-ordinates in four quadrants. They solve written numerical problems involving one or two stages. They can check their calculations on a calculator. The higher attaining pupils find the square roots of numbers and find large prime numbers. However, through the school pupils are not confident in their explanations of mathematical processes.
94. The quality of teaching and learning throughout the school is satisfactory. This could be improved. Teaching in the under-fives is good. In the lessons seen in Year 1 and Year 2 teaching is satisfactory. In Years 3 and 4 teaching is also satisfactory. In Years 5 and 6 it is satisfactory overall, with some good and some unsatisfactory teaching.
95. In the good lessons, teachers have a positive and purposeful rapport with the pupils. Planning is good and learning objectives are clear. Tasks are set which are appropriate to the needs of the pupils and so pupils of all abilities are both challenged and supported. Lessons are well timed so as to keep the interest of the pupils in the varied activities. Alternative ways of calculating are suggested to the pupils so that they make decisions about the best way to arrive at a solution. Teachers give clear instructions and share their lesson objectives with the class. This helps pupils to take responsibility for their own learning. During the final part of a lesson, teachers stress accuracy and indicate wider applications of the work in the lesson. In the least successful lessons in Year 6, lessons are not structured to keep pupils' interest. Activities are not used to stimulate the pupils' imagination and they are not encouraged effectively to take on more challenging work. The expectations of pupils' both in work and behaviour are too low. Homework is not set consistently and is not used effectively to challenge and consolidate the learning of pupils especially in Years 3, 4, 5 and 6.
96. Most teachers are familiar with the National Numeracy Strategy. This is applied effectively in most lessons and has established a clear basis for planning that allows teachers to help the pupils in their learning. Pupils are not confident speakers and whilst in Year 1 and 2 teachers develop

language skills, this is not so evident in Years 3 to 6. Teachers' planning does not include specific vocabulary for the mathematical ideas within the lesson. In Years 3 to 6, pupils are not sufficiently encouraged through questioning to explain their ideas in appropriate specialised language. Mental mathematics, where it is part of a lesson, is satisfactory. However, the pace of this activity rarely changes and so the more able pupils are not challenged to think quickly enough. The main teaching activities, in which pupils practise their skills, are mostly carried out effectively. Pupils are not independent in their work in Years 3 to 6. Activities are not always well matched to the abilities of all pupils.

97. In all year groups, pupils' ability to use computers to develop their mathematical knowledge is limited. However, there are good examples of particular classes of pupils using computers effectively. In Year 3, pupils use the 'roamer' to find angles of triangles. In Years 5 and 6, they process data to form graphs and charts. The opportunities to develop mathematical understanding in other curriculum areas are not sufficiently planned for, although pupils do develop their use of co-ordinates in map work in geography.
98. The headteacher collects information on pupils' attainment. From this an analysis is made of achievements of pupils from minority groups and from boys and girls. Teachers test pupils regularly and this information is used to arrange pupils into ability groups within the class. Although there is good quality information in the school it is not used effectively by the teachers to inform planning on a day-to-day basis. Pupils are set targets over too long a period and this has little impact on helping them to identify their own strengths and weaknesses. The school targets for 2001, agreed between the school and the local education authority, are not sufficiently challenging. Whilst there are individual good examples of assessment in lessons to improve pupils' learning this is not consistent in all classes.
99. The school has made satisfactory progress since the last inspection. Standards are continuing to improve at both key stages. The coordinator is developing a new role with the change in management within the school. The coordinator leads by example and this is reflected particularly in the improvement in Years 1 and 2.

SCIENCE

100. Pupils aged seven in Year 2 attain standards close to those expected for their age. Pupils aged eleven in Year 6 attain standards below those expected for their age, particularly in investigative skills. Teacher assessment shows pupils to be well below average at Year 2 when compared to all schools and with similar schools. The proportion of pupils attaining at the higher levels are below the national average. At Year 6, results of national tests show pupils to be well below the national average and below average when compared with similar schools. However, about one third of pupils in a year have special educational needs related to learning difficulties and this makes a significant difference to the school's performance in the tests. Standards, measured against national averages, have improved significantly since 1997 by both the end of Year 2 and the end of Year 6. Standards observed during the inspection indicate that those pupils without special educational needs are attaining at levels expected for their age although standards for higher attaining pupils are not as high as they should be throughout the school.
101. There is no significant difference in attainment between boys and girls in the National Curriculum tests and no significant differences in the attainment of boys and girls were observed during the inspection. Overall, pupils with special educational needs, identified by the school, are well supported and make good progress.
102. By the age of seven, the pupils who learn quickly can respond to suggestions of how to find things out, use simple equipment provided and make observations related to the task. They can say whether what happened was expected. For example, in an experiment on forces, pupils used pieces of sponge and plasticine to identify the effect of pulling and pushing. Pupils learnt that pushing can speed up movement and that pulling can have a braking effect. Pupils gave many examples of everyday objects being pushed and pulled; for example, the trolleys at the supermarket and the opening and closing of windows. By the age of eleven, the pupils who learn quickly and those of average ability can put forward their own ideas and make simple predictions.

They understand the notion of a “fair test” and can describe investigations using this principle. Pupils who learn more slowly are less confident in their knowledge of a “fair test”. Overall, pupils have insufficient opportunities to ask questions that can be investigated scientifically, to think about what might happen or try things out when deciding what to do, what kind of evidence to collect, and what equipment and materials to use.

103. The quality of teaching is satisfactory at both key stages. In half of the lessons observed it was good and if this quality of teaching was sustained, standards should rise even faster. The aspects of teaching which promote good learning are:
- well-planned lessons with appropriate discussion at the beginning of the lesson to revise previous learning;
 - effective support for those who find learning difficult,
 - teaching based on good subject knowledge that enables teachers to use probing questions to make pupils think;
 - high expectations of pupils in terms of behaviour and output of work;
 - reinforcement of vocabulary and literacy skills.
104. However, overall teaching is not sufficiently rigorous. Teachers do not expect enough of pupils both in the quantity and quality of work and in their ability to respond rapidly to instructions. They do not consistently tell the pupils what they are expected to learn and use this information as targets for individual pupils to ensure they make good progress and to make assessments of their own learning. Insufficient use is made of lessons to develop the pupils’ literacy and numeracy skills. Computers are not used enough to support learning in science. Teachers know their pupils well and assess their learning for use when planning future work. Teachers track the progress of pupils within their own class and the headteacher oversees the whole process.
105. The school has made satisfactory progress since the last inspection. Standards are improving. With a new coordinator in post, leadership and management are now satisfactory. The scheme of work has been revised recently and there is a determination to raise standards further. The capacity for improvement is good.

ART AND DESIGN

106. At the time of the last inspection art did not meet the requirements of the National Curriculum. Statutory requirements are now met but standards are still below those expected when pupils are aged seven, in Year 2, and aged eleven, in Year 6. Progress is unsatisfactory overall.
107. By the age of seven, pupils draw using different media, including pencil for self-portraits. They paint to communicate their ideas and impressions. They produce collages using several different materials, print making their own designs and make paper patterns by weaving. In one class, pupils used chalk pastels to draw flowers from real life and one or two did very well indeed. The majority needed to understand how to use pastels in order to make better use of them. Progress through the key stage is hampered as there is little opportunity to develop previously learnt skills.
108. By the age of eleven, pupils continue to draw ‘still life’ using a pencil for line and tone. They paint posters to advertise products, draw pencil self-portraits while looking at themselves in mirrors and they work on watercolour landscapes in the manner of Monet. In Year 6, some pupils made three-dimensional sculptures of musical instruments after Picasso from corrugated card, which were of high quality. Some Year 6 pupils also use computers to produce very complex art based on segments of two existing images. The quality of work seen in lessons and on display, except for that mentioned in Year 6, was below the national average showing very little skills progression; for example, the brushwork in watercolour was poor, leaving marks on the paper as if the pupils had scrubbed with the brush. Pupils do not use sketchbooks to collect visual information nor are they used for practising artistic techniques with different media. There is no evidence of them commenting on ideas or methods nor of adapting or improving work done. Pupils in both key stages enjoy art and they work hard to do well.

109. Teaching was satisfactory in the few lessons seen but from the completed work it is clear that teachers' lack of subject knowledge is preventing pupils from attaining higher standards. Teachers plan and resource the subject efficiently and some of them try to motivate pupils by introducing new elements into the session; for example, in the lesson in Key Stage 1 the teacher had purchased two huge bunches of flowers to enable to pupils to draw from real life. Control is satisfactory and lessons proceed at a sound pace. Complete lessons are devoted to art rather than being part of a multi-activity session as it was at the time of the last inspection. This is an improvement.
110. Currently there is no coordinator for this subject. A brief scheme of work exists and there is a curriculum for both key stages. Although skills are mentioned in this curriculum, they are not revisited for practice. Progression is therefore inadequate. The scheme gives no ideas to teachers about how to teach, what to say or how to build up good art skills in pupils. The curriculum is not as broad as it should be. There is very little work in dye or batik or three-dimensional work; for example, using clay or other modelling material, and withy- or wire-work. There are few opportunities for pupils to study art from other cultures. There is no overall strategy for assessment and there is no portfolio of evidence which would help teachers to understand what pupils have achieved or how far they could improve. Resources are adequate.

DESIGN AND TECHNOLOGY

111. Previous inspection findings indicated that attainment in this subject in both key stages was below national expectations and pupils' progress was unsatisfactory. Since that time, provision for the subject has improved and pupils' attainment at the end of both key stages is now in line with that expected of pupils aged seven and eleven. Progress is erratic because skills are not practised consistently.
112. During the inspection, only one lesson was seen. Judgements are therefore made on the basis of work seen around the school and from talking with pupils in Year 6. By the age of seven, pupils make model houses using junk materials, joining parts together with tape or glue. They build model cars and trucks using construction kits and learn the properties of wheels and axles. With help they generate ideas and plan how to make their models, sometimes using drawings and words to decide what they will need. They sometimes make verbal evaluations at group discussion times with the teachers.
113. By the age of eleven, pupils have used a wide variety of materials to plan, design and make models; for example, of Greek temples and Viking boats from card and junk, pencil cases to hold four pencils from leather or fabric and wind chimes from clay. Pupils generate ideas based on previous experience. In Year 4, pupils were making trial boats as a preliminary task before making a land craft to race. They drew detailed plans and worked accurately and carefully when using equipment such as hacksaws. They made their trial craft from plastic tubs with sails of straws and fabric and then tested the sails by floating the boats on water outside in the wind. Other pupils designed the wheeled part of the craft from dowelling and cotton reels and tested out different ways of joining the wheels to the axles. In some classes, written evaluations are made but in the lesson seen, evaluation remained verbal.
114. Pupils enjoy the subject and those in Year 6 remember what they have done with real satisfaction. One pupil stated, "We made wind chimes and I've still got mine in my room". Behaviour is satisfactory.
115. Teaching is satisfactory overall. The lesson seen was planned thoroughly and clearly introduced with pupils being told the purpose of the activities. The teacher provided good appropriate resources and organised the classroom assistant effectively. The weakness in the lesson was the unsatisfactory management of the behaviour of a difficult group of pupils during the concluding part of the lesson. However, in spite of this, many pupils practised skills and acquired a more thorough understanding of the intricacies of design technology.
116. Leadership and management of this subject are satisfactory. An improved scheme of work is being implemented although this still lacks progression in skills and systematic evaluation.

Resources to support the scheme of work have been identified and a bid submitted. Staff adherence to the curriculum framework is monitored but there is no check on the quality of pupils' work or achievement.

GEOGRAPHY

117. Standards in geography are below those expected of pupils of a similar age at the age of eleven. They are in line with expectations of pupils at the age of seven. In Years 1 and 2, this is a slight improvement since the last inspection.
118. By the age of seven, pupils have knowledge of their school and local environment. By the age of eleven, pupils can complete a study contrasting two localities and understand the journey of a river. In Year 3, pupils look for evidence on a local map after having walked the area. In Year 6, pupils discuss the implications of building a road through part of the locality.
119. Teaching is unsatisfactory. Only two lessons were seen during the inspection and these were satisfactory and good. When teaching is good, pupils are imaginatively placed in a setting which engenders personal responses. From this, pupils understand some of the issues of pressure groups involved in large scale road planning. Map work is taught thoroughly in Years 3 to 6. However, planning is insufficient to support teaching in enough depth. Skill development, apart from map work, does not allow pupils to build upon previous learning. Teachers do not use assessment to raise pupils' expectations of higher standards.
120. Pupils' learning in lessons is satisfactory. Pupils respond well to their teachers. However, pupils follow the directions given by teachers and do not develop as independent learners. Because of low expectations in teachers' planning, learning overall is unsatisfactory.
121. Leadership and management are unsatisfactory. The coordinator is new to the post and is enthusiastic about changing the teaching. However work in the subject is insufficiently directed into raising standards and there is inadequate guidance for teachers as to what should be their expectations of pupils. There are good opportunities for some pupils in Year 6 to develop their knowledge and experience of fieldwork on a residential trip to the Isle of Wight.

HISTORY

122. Standards are below those normally seen for pupils at the age of seven and eleven. These standards are similar to those reported in the last inspection in Year 6 and so improvement has been unsatisfactory. The role of the coordinator has not been developed sufficiently to raise standards and lead teaching.
123. By the age of seven, pupils develop their knowledge and understanding of the lives of significant people who influenced events in the past. They understand that the Great Fire of London happened in 1666 and they begin to recognise the significance of Samuel Pepys and his diary. They understand that Mary Seacole had an impact on hospitals in the 19th century. In Year 1 pupils compare jobs in Victorian times with modern jobs and in doing so develop their language skills and make decision about preferences. They compile a list of activities that Mary Seacole would have completed in a day. By the age of eleven, pupils know about a nearby city, Rochester. They compare the city from a map of 1860s with a modern map and note the changes. However, they lack sufficient knowledge to group buildings into periods. They carry out a research project on an aspect of Victorian life.
124. Teaching is unsatisfactory. Three lessons were observed during the inspection and two thirds of these were satisfactory, the other was unsatisfactory. In Year 1, teaching encourages the pupils to develop their spoken language through the subject and to make choices about the work of factory children and chimney sweeps in Victorian times. In Year 3, pupils understand that the Viking raids on Britain had different purposes, some for plunder and others for settlement. They can place the changes in Viking intentions in a chronological sequence. In Year 6, pupils understand that the city of Rochester changed from the 1860s to the present day. Overall

planning is not sufficient to allow appropriate depth to the subject; nor does it allow for the development of skills and knowledge especially across Years 3 to 6. Expectations of pupils' work are low and assessments are not used to raise standards. Resources are not used effectively enough to interest and motivate pupils in their learning.

125. Pupils' learning is unsatisfactory overall. Pupils respond well to their teachers, although they become noisy if not checked. In the lessons observed, pupils' learning is satisfactory, but the overall expectations of the curriculum means that learning could be more effective. The teacher directs much of the learning and pupils are not sufficiently able to be independent in their learning.
126. Leadership is unsatisfactory. The newly appointed coordinator is enthusiastic and is aware of some of the strengths and weaknesses in the teaching. Too little guidance is given to teachers for the development of historical skills or what might be expected of pupils' attainment. There are insufficient opportunities for pupils to carry out and develop their own research and not enough artefacts, especially in Years 1 and 2, to enable pupils to experience historical evidence at first hand.

INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY

127. Standards are below those normally seen for pupils aged seven and eleven. The main reason for this has been the lack of appropriate computers and therefore, the pupils' lack of access to use them. Where pupils have had access to appropriate equipment such as the 'roamer', an electronic programmable toy, they have learnt the appropriate skills of control.
128. By the age of seven, pupils have learnt to use the mouse well. Those who learn quickly have a good understanding of how to switch on the computer and how to turn it off. They understand how different programs are loaded and changed and they have some understanding of how to use text, tables and images. They use the computer to help them with their literacy and numeracy skills. By the age of eleven, average and above average pupils can clearly describe the tasks they have completed. They can demonstrate how they develop and refine ideas; for example, images. They have experience of using 'Encarta' to research information and they have used a musical programme to put together combinations of different sounds. Pupils use text programs and the pupils in Year 6 are currently designing the school web-site. However, they have little experience of control technology and apart from the few pupils who have their own computers at home, they have too little time to practice the skills. The slowest learners use the computers to help develop basic skills in literacy and numeracy.
129. Most teachers have adequate expertise but teaching has been unsatisfactory to date as a result of having too few resources. It was not possible to observe any lessons in information and communication technology during the inspection and little use of computers was seen in other lessons. However, pupils are very keen to use the computers and they talk knowledgeably about their work.
130. Leadership and management have been unsatisfactory. There has not been enough improvement since the last inspection. However, since the appointment of the new headteacher and the coordinator, an action plan has been drawn up to improve the standards. It includes sufficient computers for all pupils to have appropriate access to modern machines, an adequate range of software, and access to the internet and electronic mail by the beginning of the next academic year. Funds are sufficient and plans are in hand to ensure all staff have adequate expertise. The capacity for improvement is good.

MUSIC

131. Attainment in music is close to that expected of pupils aged seven and below that expected of pupils aged eleven. This is a slight improvement on the findings reported at the last inspection. By the age of seven, pupils can identify different instruments when they listen to a piece of music, for example the drum, a saxophone and a piano, even though the quality of the equipment makes it very difficult to hear clearly. Pupils learn to sing sweetly and by the time they are eleven, they sing in two and three parts. Pupils in Year 3 learn about pitch and demonstrate their knowledge when listening to the voices of a soprano, bass and pop group. By the age of eleven, pupils attempt composition using a programme of sounds on the computers. They learn a variety of vocal rhythms and when listening to music, they identify $\frac{3}{4}$ time. A few pupils are learning to play the recorder in an extra-curricular activity and they play confidently in parts. They also play with confidence in front of an audience, such as in assembly. This enhances the provision and for those involved, their musical skills, but the proportion of pupils playing is very small. Standards in reading music, playing and composing are too low.
132. Teaching is unsatisfactory overall as the pupils' learning is not good enough. However, in the three lessons observed, teaching was satisfactory. Pupils generally enjoy their music and they respond well when asked to perform. In some lessons, recorded tapes are used as the basis for learning as teachers have insufficient confidence and expertise. This results in mediocre standards because not enough is expected of pupils. They are not challenged enough, particularly when performing. For example, posture, breathing, diction, a sense of phrase and musical expression are not given sufficient attention when singing.
133. Leadership and management are unsatisfactory. Too little has been done since the last inspection to raise standards. However, two teachers new to the school and who have musical expertise have been appointed joint coordinators. They are keen to improve musical standards in the school. A good start has been made by re-organising the instruments and making them available to all classes. Also, plans are in hand to provide a new scheme of work which ensures progression in learning new skills as pupils move through the school. The capacity for improvement is satisfactory.

PHYSICAL EDUCATION

134. Lessons were seen in games, gymnastics, dance and swimming during the inspection. It was not possible to see lessons in athletics or outdoor and adventurous activities. Pupils throughout the school, including those in Year 6, achieve standards expected for their age, except in swimming, where they achieve above. Since the previous inspection standards have been maintained.
135. By the age of seven, pupils have developed an awareness of the need for safe practices in gymnastics. They understand the need for warming their bodies prior to activity to ensure fewer injuries. Pupils build sequences of movements on the apparatus without using their feet. In games, pupils learn to handle equipment carefully, such as hockey sticks when guiding a sponge ball around a hoop. Pupils enjoy their physical activities and they encourage their team-mates when engaged in relay activities.
136. By the age of eleven, most pupils have developed appropriate bat and ball skills, which they use in games such as cricket, baseball and rounders. They use their feet well to control a ball and kick it, for example in football. Pupils have learnt sequences of steps, used in folk dances from around the British Isles, and they all join in with enthusiasm. They work well together and they quickly learn new steps. In swimming, nearly all pupils can swim safely and with good technique the minimum requirement of 25 metres. Many can swim much further, as far as 1000m and using all recognised strokes. Those pupils who attend extra-curricular activities generally attain higher standards than other pupils.
137. The quality of teaching is satisfactory overall. Lessons are well planned and the scheme of work gives good guidance to teachers so that pupils continue to improve their skills through regular practice and continuing challenge. Where teaching is unsatisfactory, the behaviour policy of the school is not consistently implemented and pupils are not reprimanded or corrected when they fail

to carry out the teacher's instructions. Insufficient use is made of praise to those who do well and conform to the rules. Where teachers use good exemplars, pupils learn more quickly and they improve their skills. Generally, teachers do not ask pupils to evaluate their own and others' performances enough to raise pupils' awareness of their strengths and weaknesses and to make then their own targets for improvement.

138. Leadership and management are satisfactory. The coordinator has ensured there is a comprehensive scheme of work. This helps teachers to ensure progression in the pupils' acquisition of skills and their knowledge and understanding of how the body works and the effect exercise has upon it. There are adequate resources and the accommodation is good with areas of grass, hard surfaces and a good-sized hall on site.