

# INSPECTION REPORT

## EYTHORNE ELVINGTON PRIMARY SCHOOL

Eythorne, Dover

LEA area: Kent

Unique reference number: 118399

Acting Headteacher: Miss G Waters

Reporting inspector: Mrs C Skinner  
23160

Dates of inspection: 1<sup>st</sup>-4<sup>th</sup> October 2001

Inspection number:

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

## INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Type of school:	Infant and junior
School category:	Community
Age range of pupils:	4 to 11
Gender of pupils:	Mixed
School address:	Church Hill Eythorne Kent
Postcode:	CT15 4AN
Telephone number:	01304 830376
Fax number:	n/a
Appropriate authority:	The governing body, Eythorne Elvington Primary School
Name of chair of governors:	Mr C McNicholas
Date of previous inspection:	March 1997

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## INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Team members			Subject responsibilities	Aspect responsibilities
23160	Carole Skinner	Registered inspector	English, science, art, information and communication technology, music, religious education, English as an additional language, equal opportunities.	What sort of school is it? The school's results and pupils' achievements. How well are pupils taught? How well is the school led and managed?
9588	Tony West	Lay inspector		Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development. How well does the school care for its pupils? How well does the school work in partnership with parents?
10808	Alan Britton	Team inspector	Mathematics, design and technology, geography, history, physical education, the foundation stage curriculum, special educational needs	How good are the curricular and other opportunities offered to pupils?

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## REPORT CONTENTS

	Page
<b>PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT</b>	<b>5</b>
Information about the school	
How good the school is	
What the school does well	
What could be improved	
How the school has improved since its last inspection	
Standards	
Pupils' attitudes and values	
Teaching and learning	
Other aspects of the school	
How well the school is led and managed	
Parents' and carers' views of the school	
<b>PART B: COMMENTARY</b>	
<b>HOW HIGH ARE STANDARDS?</b>	<b>9</b>
The school's results and pupils' achievements	
Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development	
<b>HOW WELL ARE PUPILS TAUGHT?</b>	<b>11</b>
<b>HOW GOOD ARE THE CURRICULAR AND OTHER OPPORTUNITIES OFFERED TO PUPILS?</b>	<b>13</b>
<b>HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL CARE FOR ITS PUPILS?</b>	<b>16</b>
<b>HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL WORK IN PARTNERSHIP WITH PARENTS?</b>	<b>17</b>
<b>HOW WELL IS THE SCHOOL LED AND MANAGED?</b>	<b>18</b>
<b>WHAT SHOULD THE SCHOOL DO TO IMPROVE FURTHER?</b>	<b>21</b>
<b>PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS</b>	<b>22</b>
<b>PART D: THE STANDARDS AND QUALITY OF TEACHING IN AREAS OF THE CURRICULUM, SUBJECTS AND COURSES</b>	<b>26</b>

## **PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT**

### **INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL**

Eythorne Elvington Primary School educates boys and girls aged between 4 and 11 years. There are 132 pupils on roll, with similar numbers of boys and girls. There are 25 pupils in the Reception class, of whom eight attend full-time and 17 part-time. The number of pupils on roll has fallen significantly over the past five years, which has resulted in a re-organisation into five classes, four of which contain pupils from two year groups. There are 58 pupils (44 per cent) on the school's register of special educational needs, which is well above the national average. One pupil has a statement of special educational need. Just under two per cent of pupils come from ethnic minority backgrounds. One pupil speaks English as an additional language. Thirty-six per cent of the pupils are entitled to free school meals, which is above average. The attainment of pupils on entry to the school is below average, particularly in communication, language and literacy. At the time of this inspection, a temporary acting headteacher had been in post for three weeks. The school has had a very high turnover of staff during the past three years.

### **HOW GOOD THE SCHOOL IS**

The school provides an acceptable standard of education for its pupils. The quality of teaching and learning is satisfactory and helps most pupils to make sound progress. Although the school has improved its performance in the national tests for 11 year olds over the past four years, standards are still below the national average in English, mathematics and science, especially the proportion of pupils attaining at higher levels. The leadership and management of the school are satisfactory. The school provides satisfactory value for money.

#### **What the school does well**

- The acting headteacher provides good leadership for the school and all staff work well together as a team.
- Teachers plan their lessons well and develop constructive relationships with pupils.
- The school makes good provision for the pupils' moral and social development.
- There are effective procedures for monitoring and promoting good behaviour and these are implemented consistently.
- The school makes good provision for the very high proportion of pupils with special educational needs.

#### **What could be improved**

- The standards achieved by pupils in English and mathematics throughout the school, and in science and history at Key Stage 2, particularly those reached by more able pupils.
- The strategic management of the school by governors and subject co-ordinators.
- The use of assessment to guide curricular planning and the monitoring of pupils' academic and personal development.

*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 last inspected in March 1997 and, since, then, it has made a satisfactory improvement. The pace of improvement has been affected adversely by the high turnover of staff and difficulties in recruiting and retaining teachers. The trend of improvement in the standards achieved by 11 year olds in national tests has been above average, but the standards achieved by seven year olds have remained low. The quality of teaching has improved recently since the appointment of permanent staff, who have received good support from the school and the Local Education Authority. Curricular planning has improved and now provides more appropriately for pupils in classes that contain two year groups. The management role of co-ordinators remains underdeveloped as a result of high staff turnover. The school has a satisfactory capacity to continue to improve because of the enthusiasm and commitment of the staff and the strong, but sensitive, leadership of the acting headteacher.

## STANDARDS

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

Performance in:	compared with			
	all schools			similar schools
	1998	1999	2000	2000
English	D	D	E	C
mathematics	A	C	C	A
science	A	C	D	B

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

Where small number of pupils are involved, fluctuations from year to year are not uncommon. Taking the three years together, the performance of pupils in English fell below the national average while that in mathematics and science exceeded it. In 2000, the school compared favourably with other similar schools. Results in English have been consistently lower than those in mathematics and science because of weaknesses in pupils' writing. This was also the case in the provisional results of the 2001 tests. The school did not meet its targets for these tests, although it came close in mathematics. The targets for the present Year 6 are unrealistically high. There are only 11 pupils in the year group, of whom nine are on the school's register of special educational needs. Standards in this year group are below average in English, mathematics, science and history, and well below average in writing. Standards are broadly average in other subjects, except art and music where there was insufficient evidence to make a judgement. The pupils in Year 6 have had their education disrupted during their progress through the school because of the high turnover of teachers and problems with behaviour. Overall, most pupils achieve soundly by the time they leave the school.

Standards in Year 2 are below average in English and mathematics, and average in other subjects, except art and music where it was not possible to make judgements. Pupils' writing skills are underdeveloped. Children in the Foundation Stage are on course to reach average levels in personal, social and emotional development, mathematical development, knowledge and understanding of the world and creative development. They achieve below average standards in communication, language and literacy and physical development. Pupils with special educational needs make good progress and achieve well.

## PUPILS' ATTITUDES AND VALUES

Aspect	Comment
Attitudes to the school	Satisfactory. Pupils are keen to come to school and most demonstrate positive attitudes towards learning. A few pupils do not put a great deal of effort into their work and sometimes lack interest and enthusiasm.
Behaviour, in and out of classrooms	Satisfactory. Most pupils behave appropriately in class but a few pupils occasionally disrupt the smooth running of lessons by their inappropriate behaviour.
Personal development and relationships	Satisfactory. Pupils and staff get on well together and this helps to create a positive learning environment. Relationships between pupils are sometimes quarrelsome. There are too few opportunities for pupils to show initiative and develop responsibility for their own learning.
Attendance	Unsatisfactory. Attendance is just below the national average. A number of pupils arrive late for registration and this disrupts the

	smooth start to the day.
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## TEACHING AND LEARNING

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

*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.*

The quality of teaching in English, including literacy, is satisfactory. Reading skills are taught better than writing skills. This is because teachers do not give enough time to developing and extending pupils' writing ability, both in literacy lessons and in other subjects. Also, there is an overuse of worksheets, which provide good support for less able pupils but restrict the achievement of those who are more able. The quality of teaching in mathematics, including numeracy, is satisfactory, but does not develop pupils' mental strategies sufficiently or their ability to use mathematical skills and knowledge in different contexts. The quality of teachers' planning is good and shows clearly what pupils are expected to learn. However, teachers' expectations of more able pupils are not high enough and their needs are not always met by the tasks they are given. Teachers and assistants work well together to provide good support for pupils with special educational needs, whose needs are met well. Teachers have sound knowledge and understanding of the subjects they teach and communicate this effectively, but they do not give pupils enough opportunities to plan and organise their own work. This limits the development of independent learning. Most pupils concentrate appropriately on their tasks and produce suitable amounts of work in the time available. Teachers' marking does not always show pupils how they can improve their work.

## OTHER ASPECTS OF THE SCHOOL

Aspect	Comment
The quality and range of the curriculum	Satisfactory. Curricular provision is broad and balanced and meets statutory requirements. It does not always meet the needs of more able pupils. The implementation of the National Literacy Strategy has been effective in raising standards in reading, but insufficient time is given to developing writing skills. Effective links with other schools enrich pupils' learning.
Provision for pupils with special educational needs	Good. Early identification of pupils' needs enables the school to devise clear targets for them to achieve. They receive good support in lessons from teachers and assistants and benefit from an additional specialist teacher. Individual education plans are comprehensive and appropriate to the needs of each pupil, and they are reviewed regularly. Pupils' targets are set in small steps in order to give them the confidence to achieve their learning goals.
Provision for pupils with English as an additional language	There is only one pupil who speaks English as an additional language. This pupil speaks English fluently and does not require specialist support.
Provision for pupils' personal, spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	Satisfactory. Pupils' spiritual awareness is fostered soundly through well planned acts of worship and religious education lessons, but opportunities in other areas of the curriculum are limited. Moral and social development are promoted well through the school's routines and expectations of pupils' behaviour. The school provides suitable experiences to teach pupils about their own culture and heritage but opportunities to learn about the cultural diversity of British society are more limited.



How well the school cares for its pupils	Satisfactory. Teachers and assistants know pupils well and provide good levels of care on a daily basis. Assessment procedures are sound but the use of assessment information to inform future planning is unsatisfactory. The school's procedures for monitoring and supporting pupils' academic progress are insufficiently developed to have an impact on the standards they achieve.
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The school's partnership with parents is satisfactory. The school provides parents with good quality information and works hard to develop an effective partnership.

## HOW WELL THE SCHOOL IS LED AND MANAGED

Aspect	Comment
Leadership and management by the headteacher and other key staff	Satisfactory. The acting headteacher provides good leadership for the school during this time of transition. The delegation of curricular responsibilities is unsatisfactory. Subject co-ordinators are not sufficiently involved in monitoring and evaluating the quality of the school's provision or the standards reached by the pupils.
How well the governors fulfil their responsibilities	Satisfactory. The governors use their individual skills well to support the school and organise their activities efficiently. They visit the school regularly to observe the pupils working and discuss issues with staff. However, they are not given sufficient information about the school's performance to enable them to have a good awareness of what needs to be improved.
The school's evaluation of its performance	Unsatisfactory. The results of national and internal tests are not analysed thoroughly enough to identify ways of improving the pupils' attainment. The monitoring of pupils' work has not been effective in highlighting weaknesses in writing and in the attainment of more able pupils. The school development plan does not have clear enough focus on the action needed to meet the school's targets. The monitoring of teaching has been effective in improving teachers' practice.
The strategic use of resources	Satisfactory. Resources are used appropriately to support the pupils' learning and expenditure is carefully linked to the school development plan. The grant received by the school to improve the grounds and support pupils with special educational needs in reading has been used effectively and produced good results. Governors aim to get good value for money when making spending decisions, although they do not compare the school's performance sufficiently with that of other similar schools.

The school is appropriately staffed and its accommodation and resources are adequate to support the teaching of the curriculum.

## PARENTS' AND CARERS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

What pleases parents most	What parents would like to see improved
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• They feel comfortable approaching the school with questions or problems.</li> <li>• Their children like school.</li> <li>• The school has high expectations of their children.</li> <li>• Their children make good progress.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The behaviour in school.</li> <li>• The amount of homework their children receive.</li> <li>• The range of activities outside lessons.</li> </ul>

The findings of the inspection agree with some of the parents' views. However, the school does not have high enough expectations of some of the pupils, especially the more able. Most pupils make satisfactory progress, but pupils with special educational needs make good progress towards their targets. Pupils' behaviour is satisfactory overall, although there are instances of unacceptable behaviour, which teachers deal with well. Pupils receive suitable amounts of homework and the school offers a satisfactory range of extracurricular activities.

## **PART B: COMMENTARY**

### **HOW HIGH ARE STANDARDS?**

#### **The school's results and pupils' achievements**

1. Children make good progress in personal and social development, mathematical development, knowledge and understanding of the world and creative development and are on course to reach average standards by the end of the Reception year. Progress is satisfactory in communication, language and literacy and physical development, although the children are on course to reach standards that are still below average by the end of the Foundation Stage. The previous inspection report stated that "most pupils' attainments are almost in line with national expectations", which is broadly similar to the judgement of this inspection. Overall, the quality of children's learning and their achievement are satisfactory. Children with special educational needs are identified at an early stage and are supported appropriately, which helps them to make satisfactory progress in their first year at school. There are no children with English as an additional language in the Reception class. There is too much emphasis on copy writing. Children are not given enough opportunities to write freely in order to develop enjoyment in and appreciate all the different purposes of writing. This limits children's creativity and inhibits the natural flow of their writing, which slows down the progress that some children make, especially the more able.

2. In the end of Key Stage 1 tests in 2000, the latest for which validated results are available, the pupils' results were very low in reading, being in the lowest five per cent of schools nationally. They were well below the national average in writing and mathematics. When compared with similar schools, the results were well below average in reading and below average in writing. Overall standards in reading have been very low for four years, even though the proportion of pupils reaching Level 2, the national expectation, increased from 42 per cent in 1999 to 62 per cent in 2000. This is because few children achieve higher than average standards. The school's 'Reading Recovery' programme has been successful in helping non-readers to read. However, there is not enough emphasis on raising standards for the more able pupils. In writing, standards rose to average in 1999, when 79 per cent of the pupils reached Level 2. This was an unusual year and has not been repeated. There are not enough opportunities for pupils to learn to write at length and expectations have not been high enough in the past. However, the school recognises that a strict adherence to the format of the literacy hour is restricting the amount of time that is spent on writing and is now taking steps to allocate more time for the development of pupils' writing skills. Standards in mathematics have also been low for four years, but the successful implementation of the National Numeracy Strategy is beginning to address this. Here too, however, there is not enough challenge for more able pupils to ensure that they reach higher levels of attainment. The assessments made by teachers in science in 2000 were average at Level 2 but well below average at Level 3, which reflects the picture seen in English and mathematics.

3. The findings of the inspection are that, in Year 2, standards are below average in English and mathematics, including literacy and numeracy. This is the same judgement as that made by the previous inspection but represents an improvement on the well below average standards of recent years. Standards are average in science, information and communication technology, religious education, geography, history, design and technology and physical education. There was not enough evidence to make judgements about standards in art and music. Standards in science, geography, design and technology and history have improved since the last inspection, while those in information and communication technology and religious education remain similar. Where standards are higher than in 1997, improvements to the curriculum and teaching strategies have had an impact on raising attainment. Pupils' achievement is satisfactory at Key Stage 1, although more able pupils do not reach high enough standards, especially in English and mathematics. There are no significant variations in attainment between boys and girls.

4. In the national tests for 11 year olds in 2000, the pupils' results were well below average in English, average in mathematics and below average in science. The proportion of pupils reaching Level 4, the national expectation, in English has risen from 31 per cent in 1997 to 67

per cent in 2000. In 2001, provisional results indicate that this fell back to 53 per cent. However, the numbers of pupils who take the tests are small and variations in percentages are not always significant. An evaluation of individual pupils' scores in 2001 indicates that they made satisfactory progress given their low scores at the end of Key Stage 1. However, pupils' attainment in writing is much weaker than in reading and this accounts for their low overall scores. The proportion of pupils achieving Level 4 in mathematics rose from 41 per cent in 1997 to 78 per cent in 2000, whilst in science it increased from 45 per cent in 1997 to 78 per cent in 2000. In recognition of these significant improvements, the school received an achievement award from the Department for Education earlier in the year. Provisional results of the 2001 tests show that this improvement was sustained in mathematics and increased further in science where 86 per cent of the pupils gained Level 4. However, in all three subjects, very few pupils achieved Level 5. Compared with schools that have a similarly high percentage of pupils eligible for free school meals, the school's results were average in English, well above average in mathematics and above average in science. Overall, the trend in the school's results over five years was above the national trend. The school exceeded its targets for the proportion of pupils to reach Level 4 in English and mathematics in 2000, but did not do so in 2001, especially in English, where there was a considerable shortfall. Its targets for 2002 are unrealistic given the very high proportion of pupils with special educational needs in the year group.

5. The findings of the inspection are that, in Year 6, standards are below average in English, including literacy, mathematics, including numeracy, science and history. Standards in writing are well below average. Pupils reach average standards in information and communication technology, religious education, geography, physical education and design and technology. There was not enough evidence to make overall judgements in art and music. Compared with the findings of the previous inspection, standards are higher in information and communication technology and in design and technology. This is because of improvements to the curriculum and resources, and increased expertise among teachers. Standards in other subjects remain broadly similar, except art and music where it was not possible to make comparisons. It should be noted that the present Year 6 consists of only 11 pupils, of whom nine are on the school's register of special educational needs. Three of these have significant levels of need. All of these pupils are making satisfactory progress. The achievement of pupils at Key Stage 2 is satisfactory overall, but there is insufficient challenge for more able pupils to allow them to reach their full potential. There are no significant variations in attainment between boys and girls.

6. An analysis of pupils' records shows that, in the past, achievement and progress have been inhibited by the high turnover of staff and the difficulties that the school has had in recruiting and retaining teachers. For example, the records for pupils in the present Year 6 show that for two years they did not make enough progress in English and mathematics. This coincided with a period of instability when the school had a number of temporary teachers and the pupils were taught by several different teachers during the course of a school year. The school now has a stable staff for the first time in several years. Three of the five class teachers have only been at the school for a year and a fourth for less than two years. They are working well together as a team to find ways of raising standards of achievement under the guidance of the acting headteacher and this positive approach is having a beneficial effect on the quality of learning for the pupils.

7. A significant factor which affects the school's performance in national tests is the proportion of pupils identified as having special educational needs, which, at 44 per cent, is well above the national average, and has been so since the previous inspection. Pupils with special educational needs make good progress towards achieving the targets in their individual education plans. This judgement shows an improvement since the previous inspection. Parents are generally pleased with their children's progress. Pupils make good progress in the basic skills of numeracy and literacy during daily lessons when they are given extra support by teaching assistants, teachers and the special educational needs co-ordinator. Some pupils have made sufficient progress to be removed from the register of special educational needs or to be placed in categories needing less support. This shows that the school's strategies are working effectively. A good example has been the success of the 'Reading Recovery' programme, which has been funded by a special grant and implemented by

an experienced part-time teacher. Records show that pupils have derived great benefit from this strategy in learning to read.

8. At the time of this inspection, there was only one pupil in school with English as an additional language. This pupil speaks English well, is achieving soundly and is on course to reach the standards expected of 11 year olds by the end of Year 6.

### **Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development**

9. Overall, whilst pupils' attitudes, values and personal development are satisfactory, this represents a decline in standards since the previous inspection, when they were found to be good. Evidence shows that the high turnover of staff since the previous inspection had an adverse effect on pupils' attitudes and standards of behaviour. New teachers are now working together well to establish a consistent and effective behaviour policy. As a result, pupils are enthusiastic about school and parents confirm that they want to come to school. They are interested in lessons and have satisfactory attitudes towards learning. Pupils with special educational needs show good attitudes to their work. Pupils' behaviour is satisfactory in a majority of lessons, during assemblies and at lunch. However, while pupils were at play, and during some lessons, examples of unacceptable behaviour were seen. A few pupils have emotional and behavioural difficulties that manifest themselves on occasions in unacceptable behaviour in lessons. Teachers and assistants have good strategies for dealing with this and minimise its effects on the rest of the class. There were two exclusions during the previous school year.

10. In most lessons, pupils listen attentively, follow instructions and settle quickly to the task given. However, there are occasions when pupils do not pay enough attention to what the teacher is saying. Some pupils in Years 1 and 2 have a tendency to call out and interrupt the teacher, and sometimes find it difficult to sit still and listen carefully. Most pupils concentrate hard and work well on their own or in groups, but some children lose concentration and motivation easily. When pupils are given the opportunity to work in groups, the majority share views and value each other's work. In a science lesson, pupils from Years 3 and 4 worked well together to investigate materials. Most unsatisfactory behaviour in lessons occurred during the whole class introduction when pupils were sitting together to listen to the teacher. Many find this difficult. During the rest of the lesson, when pupils are engaged in a variety of practical activities, behaviour is generally better.

11. Pupils are interested in the life of the school; most comply with school and class rules and know right from wrong. A minority of pupils do not comply with the rules and cause disruption. Adults handle this very well and limit the effects on others' learning. Most pupils are polite and courteous to adults, but some do not show the same consideration for each other and relationships between some pupils are quarrelsome. Pupils generally form orderly queues, wait their turn and open doors for others. Behaviour in the dining hall, during assembly and while pupils move about the school is good. Pupils and staff get on well together and this helps to create a positive learning environment. Most pupils form constructive relationships with each other and show concern and support for those with special educational needs. No examples of any oppressive behaviour, bullying, sexism or racism were seen during the inspection and the majority of pupils understand the impact of their behaviour on others.

12. Pupils handle resources sensibly and no examples of damage or graffiti were seen during the inspection. On outside visits, pupils are praised for their behaviour. As in the previous inspection, the inspection team found that pupils have limited opportunities to take personal responsibility, or to display initiative. However, some act as monitors and help in the classroom, and when they are given the chance to help and assist others, they accept the challenge. Children in the Foundation Stage make good progress in their personal and social development. They quickly learn how to behave well and form good relationships with adults and other children.

13. In the previous inspection, pupils' attendance was described as better than the national average. In this inspection, punctuality and attendance are unsatisfactory. Attendance overall is now lower than the national average. The school confirms that the most absences are for

medical reasons. The school involves the educational welfare service appropriately in improving the attendance of individual pupils. The registration of pupils at the start of sessions is handled efficiently and most pupils settle down promptly. However, a number of pupils arrive late for registration and this detracts from a smooth start to the day.

#### **HOW WELL ARE PUPILS OR STUDENTS TAUGHT?**

14. The quality of teaching and learning is satisfactory overall and there are no significant variations between key stages or year groups. Just over half of the lessons seen were good and one was very good. There was no unsatisfactory teaching. This represents an improvement since the previous inspection when teaching was satisfactory in most lessons and good "in a few". There was also a small proportion of unsatisfactory teaching in the previous inspection. The quality of learning is also satisfactory overall. It was good in just over half of the lessons observed. A careful analysis of pupils' work that was completed during the previous school year shows that the quality of teaching was broadly satisfactory. However, it also showed that, across the school, there is too great a reliance on worksheets and insufficient challenge for more able pupils, which limit progress and impair the quality of learning for some pupils. Too few opportunities for independent learning and research are also factors that slow down pupils' progress. The relatively new staff have begun to address some of these issues under the guidance of the newly appointed acting headteacher.

15. A weakness identified by the previous inspection was that teachers' lesson plans did not show clearly what pupils were expected to learn or how work would be tailored to meet the needs of pupils at differing levels of attainment. This is much improved and teachers' planning is now good. All lesson plans show clearly what the teacher intends pupils to learn, and the activities planned are modified to suit the needs of different groups. However, in some lessons, the work provided for more able pupils is not demanding enough. This is often because pupils are presented with a format for recording their work in the form of a prepared sheet. Whilst this provides a useful framework for less able pupils, it does not allow more able pupils the freedom to use their capabilities to the full and often restricts their progress. In these instances, teachers' expectations of what pupils are capable of achieving are not high enough. Although teachers explain to pupils the purpose of a lesson, they do not always go back to it at the end of the lesson and encourage pupils to say if they have learned what they set out to do. Homework is used appropriately to support pupils' learning.

16. The high turnover of teachers in recent years had an adverse effect on standards of behaviour throughout the school which, in turn, affected the pupils' attainment and progress. Teachers have had to work hard to re-establish expectations of behaviour and, for the most part, are successful in maintaining quiet, calm discipline in the classrooms. This ensures that pupils are able to concentrate on their work without distraction, but where teachers have to keep stopping to remind pupils of the class rules about calling out, this breaks the flow of lessons.

17. The quality of teaching and learning for pupils in the Foundation Stage is satisfactory overall. No judgement was made by the previous inspection. The quality of teaching and learning is good in personal, social and emotional development, mathematics, knowledge and understanding of the world and creative development, and satisfactory in communication, language and literacy and physical development. During this inspection, six lessons were observed in the Foundation Stage. Three lessons were good and three were satisfactory. The Reception teacher takes the class for four days and the co-ordinator for special educational needs teaches the class on one day each week. They plan closely together to ensure continuity and consistency for the children, but their teaching styles vary. Some children did not respond well to the change of teacher during the inspection. Planning is good and shows clearly what children are expected to learn in each lesson and weekly planning makes very effective links between all areas of learning. For example, as part of their topic on *Goldilocks and the Three Bears*, children acted out the story in role-play, matched differently sized bowls to the three bears in mathematics and made models of the bears' cottage. There are not enough opportunities for children to develop their writing skills by writing unaided for different purposes. There is a strong

emphasis on developing pupils' personal and social skills, which is done well and enables them to make good progress in this area of learning.

18. At Key Stages 1 and 2, the quality of teaching and learning is satisfactory and enables pupils to make suitable progress. No clear judgements about the quality of teaching in each key stage were made by the previous inspection. During this inspection, 12 lessons were observed at Key Stage 1. Teaching was very good in one, good in five and satisfactory in six. At Key Stage 2, 15 lessons were seen of which nine were good and six were satisfactory. Overall judgements of the quality of teaching take into account the pupils' work that was completed during the previous year as well as the lessons observed during this inspection. At both key stages, the quality of teaching is satisfactory in all subjects, including literacy and numeracy, although aspects of these are not done well enough. In English, there are not enough opportunities for pupils to write at length, partly because of an over-reliance on worksheets, and partly because of the lack of flexibility in the way the literacy hour is implemented. Literacy skills are not developed sufficiently in other subjects, such as history and science. Teachers do not develop pupils' independent learning enough, including research skills. Too often, pupils copy out text from a worksheet without writing it in their own words or extracting from it key pieces of information. In mathematics, there is not enough emphasis on developing quick mental strategies or on using and applying mathematical skills and knowledge in problem solving situations. In science, pupils often undertake investigations and experiments, but these are mainly directed by the teacher and pupils have too few opportunities to devise their own or suggest ways of finding out the answer to scientific questions.

19. Features of the good teaching included good planning with clear objectives for the lesson, and activities that were designed to meet the needs of different groups of pupils in the class. Effective teaching methods motivated and inspired pupils to do their best and a brisk pace moved the lesson along and enabled pupils to learn effectively. A good example was a literacy lesson for pupils in Years 5 and 6, in which pupils were comparing different types of play script. They had previously read the witches' scene from *Macbeth* and had explored the archaic language, which many found difficult to comprehend. They then went on to read an extract from a modern play script, which was a 'spoof' science fiction script with elements of *Star Trek* and *Star Wars*. The choice of text was very appropriate and captured the attention of both boys and girls as they each took parts, reading from an overhead transparency. As they gradually became engrossed in the script, the pupils began to enjoy themselves, appreciating the humorous allusions to other 'sci-fi' characters and situations. The teacher encouraged expressive reading and modelled this for the pupils where necessary, which helped them to improve their own use of expression. Subsequent tasks provided pupils with word and sentence work to improve their spelling and understanding of grammatical structures and conventions. A part-time teacher provided valuable additional help for a group of pupils who had been identified as under-achieving in writing.

20. Where teaching is satisfactory, as it was in just under half of the lessons observed, although teachers' planning is good, it is often the pace of lessons that slows down learning. In some lessons, the teacher talks for too long and pupils become restless and inattentive. In others, the teacher dominates the introduction to the lesson and does not give the pupils enough opportunity to contribute ideas or ask questions. Sometimes, the teachers' questions are not open-ended but demand simple one word answers, which do not extend pupils' ability to think for themselves or develop their speaking skills, which for many are weak. In some lessons, pupils' listening skills are underdeveloped, and many sit passively while the teacher talks because they are not sufficiently motivated or inspired by the lesson.

21. The quality of teaching for the very high proportion of pupils with special educational needs is good and promotes good progress for these pupils. Teachers' planning focuses well on pupils' needs and the targets in their individual education plans are clear and realistic. Targets are planned in small, achievable steps to encourage these pupils and give them confidence. Consequently, pupils make good progress in their learning of basic skills. Teaching assistants provide good support in lessons, actively taking part in whole class sessions and individual or small group activities, especially in the literacy and numeracy hours. Teachers' planning folders contain copies of pupils' individual education plans and these are used well to plan lessons and activities for them. The co-ordinator for special educational needs withdraws pupils from some lessons

for specific help to meet their targets. This is well planned and organised to fit in with class lessons so that pupils do not miss other areas of the curriculum. Pupils are fully included in the introduction to lessons, where they receive effective support from teaching assistants who help them to be involved and make contributions to the lesson. The school employs an additional part-time teacher to support pupils with special educational needs and give them additional tuition in basic reading and writing skills. She has successfully implemented the 'Reading Recovery' programme, which has enabled a number of pupils to learn to read, and is carrying out detailed assessments of other pupils to enable effective strategies to be put in place to meet their needs.

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

22. The curriculum fully meets the requirements of the National Curriculum at both key stages and is broad and balanced. All statutory requirements are met, including the provision for religious education. A daily act of collective worship is carried out at the beginning of each day, in the form of a whole school or key stage assembly. The school is successful in offering a wide range of appropriate opportunities for pupils of all ages to interest and motivate them. However, some more able pupils are not always appropriately provided for and this was the case during the previous inspection. All other issues raised in the previous inspection report regarding, "the improvement of curriculum planning to consistently include clear learning objectives and desired outcomes", have been fully addressed.

23. The school has implemented the National Literacy Strategy in all classes, and this is helping to improve the development of pupils' reading skills and their appreciation of different styles of literature. However, standards in writing remain low because the school has not modified the strategy to allow sufficient time for pupils to develop the ability to write at length. The school has successfully implemented the National Numeracy Strategy in all classes and this has partly been responsible for the rise in standards of attainment in mathematics in most year groups in the school. The school's strategy has not had the effect of fully raising standards in mental mathematics and numeracy.

24. The Foundation Stage curriculum is well planned in accordance with national guidelines. It offers children in the Reception year an appropriate range of activities and experiences, which help to develop their confidence, skills, knowledge and understanding in most areas of learning. There are good opportunities for children to learn through carefully structured play, which also allows them to make choices and to become independent in their learning. However, the lack of a suitable outdoor play area and large equipment limits the development of children's physical skills.

25. The provision of extracurricular activities is satisfactory which is similar to the judgement of the previous inspection. These include a gymnastics club for pupils in both key stages, a soccer club open to both boys and girls, organised and run by the school site manager, and a weekly Spider Club for pupils in Years 3 to 6, all of which are well supported. Visitors to the school and educational visits are important and regular features of the curriculum, especially in history, geography and science, and these provide a rich variety of experiences for all pupils.

26. Curricular provision for pupils with special educational needs is good. Individual education plans are comprehensive and appropriate to the needs of each pupil, and they are reviewed regularly. Targets include goals for literacy, numeracy and behaviour. These targets are set in small steps in order to give pupils the confidence to achieve their learning goals. The needs of pupils with statements of special educational needs are well met and their annual reviews provide a good focus for further improvement. Pupils are not withdrawn from other subjects like physical education, music, art and design technology so that their entitlement to the whole curriculum is not compromised. The school ensures that all pupils with special educational needs take a full part in all aspects of school life including visits and extra curricular activities, to enhance their social, spiritual and cultural knowledge, understanding and skills.

27. The school has addressed the issue relating to equality of opportunity that was identified in the previous inspection with regard to classes that contain pupils in two year groups. Curricular planning has been improved to take account of this and there is now a two-year cycle



of topics that ensures that pupils do not repeat the same work and cover the required curriculum appropriately. Although this has improved equality of opportunity for all pupils, the curricular provision for more able pupils is not sufficiently demanding to ensure that they receive enough challenge and make good progress. Consequently, these pupils do not always reach their full potential.

28. Personal, social and health education is promoted satisfactorily in the school. Although arrangements are not co-ordinated through a whole school policy, the lessons the pupils experience are appropriate to their needs. The pupils are made aware of the dangers of drugs in line with the school's drugs education policy and receive appropriate sex education for their ages in science and health education lessons. When health education is taught to the children, health professionals come into school to support these lessons. The benefits of a healthy lifestyle are emphasised and the pupils are instructed in personal and road safety. Assembly themes reflect social and moral aspects of life and teachers use circle time to focus on making appropriate choices and improving pupils' life skills.

29. The local community contributes satisfactorily to pupils' experience and learning. The school is used by local organisations and visitors are welcomed into the school and to assemblies. Pupils are involved in the local Flower Festival and the social events that are successfully organised by the 'Friends Association', which has raised large sums of money for the school. There are effective links with the village church and local businesses, which have enriched the curriculum. A close link with a large pharmaceutical company enriches science teaching in the school and helps to enhance the resources that are available to the pupils. Good relationships with partner schools help significantly when pupils transfer from one stage of education to another. There are strong links with the pre-school group and the after school club, both of which use the school premises. There is also good co-operation with the secondary schools to which pupils transfer. Local secondary schools have provided support for information and communication technology and science that have successfully enriched the curriculum. The school's sports teams compete against other local primary schools.

30. Pupils' improving behaviour and their generally positive attitudes towards their work are founded on the school's provision for their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. The judgement of this inspection is that provision is satisfactory overall which is similar to the findings of the previous inspection.

31. Provision for pupils' spiritual development is satisfactory. The daily act of collective worship forms an integral part of pupils' spiritual development and follows themes such as sharing and friendship, which are also closely related to moral and social development. A lighted candle and classical music playing softly in the background as pupils enter the hall help to create a spiritual atmosphere before the assembly begins. Worship is mainly Christian, but other world religions such as Judaism and Islam are acknowledged and taught in religious education lessons. In a whole school assembly, the topic was 'Friendship' and pupils were invited to reflect on what makes a friend and the reason particular pupils are friends. Later in the week, in a Key Stage 1 assembly, the teacher asked, "How do you feel when you are playing with your friend?" and pupils from Years 1 and 2 and the Reception class were invited to tell the rest of the assembly about their special friends. 'Circle times' are also used also effectively to encourage pupils to reflect on various aspects of their lives. In a religious education lesson, the teacher used the story of *The Good Samaritan* to encourage pupils to, "think of a time when you have helped someone". Several examples of pupils' poetry displayed around the school reveal a spiritual dimension, as in the 'Colours of Day' display, and in particular, the poem entitled 'The Rainbow'. The recently built 'Millennium' garden, with its quiet areas, provides a focus for peace and reflection. However, few examples were seen of teachers developing in pupils a sense of awe and wonder, especially in subjects such as art, music, science and literature.

32. The school makes good provision for the pupils' moral development. There are clear expectations of high standards of behaviour, which are displayed in the numerous notices about behaviour around the school. The environment inside the school is reasonably calm, and adults

praise and reinforce examples of good behaviour and attitudes to work. Pupils have a clear understanding of right and wrong at levels appropriate to their age and this is mainly developed through school assemblies, religious education lessons and circle times. For example, in the lesson about *The Good Samaritan*, pupils were encouraged to discuss the good and bad people in the story while the teacher used stick puppets to illustrate the characters. The school uses a number of reward systems; for example, points are awarded when a pupil achieves an agreed target. For co-operation with others in the classroom or play areas, tickets are awarded and there is a weekly draw for a small prize. Achievements by the whole class are also rewarded as the class receives a special treat when a target is reached. Certificates are presented in assembly to pupils who have made good progress in their work or behaviour during the week. All adults act as good role models for pupils and the consistent and caring way in which issues are dealt with promotes pupils' appreciation of tolerance and fair play. Pupils show a keen awareness of their responsibility towards property and the environment both inside the school and in the grounds.

33. There is also good provision for pupils' social development and most parents agree that the school is helping their children to become mature and responsible. The school has a welcoming ethos, pupils form constructive relationships with each other and with adults, and all adults in the school provide good role models to develop pupils' social skills. Pupils with special educational needs are integrated well into all aspects of school life including extracurricular activities. Pupils are encouraged to relate to others and take responsibility for their own actions. In lessons, appropriate opportunities are offered in class for pupils to work collaboratively, for example, in the dance session based on *West Side Story* performed by Year 5 and 6 pupils in groups of eight or four. In a Year 3/4 mathematics lesson on shape and space, pupils worked well together to construct three dimensional shapes like cubes and cuboids. The many functions arranged by the school to promote the social development of its pupils include participation with staff in 'Red Nose Day', a Fantasy Fair and Christmas Fayre, class parties, Autumn games and disco and a Valentine's Disco.

34. The provision for pupils' cultural development is satisfactory. British and western cultures are promoted well through subjects such as literacy, history, art and music. Pupils are made aware of the contributions of ancient civilisations, such as Greece and Egypt, and of the impact on people caused by the Second World War. Tudor and Victorian history is studied to give pupils an understanding of the way people lived in the past in British society. Pupils are introduced to the works of several composers in their music lessons and daily assemblies. Pupils from Years 4, 5 and 6 have visited the Marlowe Theatre in Canterbury to see the musical *Oliver* and pupils in Years 5 and 6 went on a trip to London to visit the Science Museum and to see the musical *Cats*. Pupils learn about different faiths and cultures in religious education lessons and this helps them to appreciate the richness and diversity of other cultures. However, the provision for study of a variety of cultures in art, music and literature is relatively under developed. There is also limited opportunity in the curriculum for pupils to recognise and celebrate the multicultural diversity of their own country.

### **HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL CARE FOR ITS PUPILS?**

35. The school continues to provide satisfactory care for its pupils, as at the time of the previous inspection. Adults care for and get to know pupils well. The information kept on each pupil is detailed and comprehensive, so that members of staff know pupils and their medical and personal needs very well. External agencies, including the educational welfare service, health professionals and social services, support the school effectively in providing appropriate care for pupils.

36. The school identifies and deals with any hazards found on site, and health and safety checks and inspections are undertaken regularly. There is a detailed health and safety policy, but there are some administrative weaknesses in the provision. Despite these, the school provides a safe learning environment. A member of staff is trained to administer first aid and procedures are satisfactory.

37. The school's policy and procedures for child protection follow the guidelines of the local committee for the protection of children. The headteacher is the designated person responsible for child protection and other members of staff understand well the school's arrangements and procedures.

38. The school has effective procedures for monitoring and promoting good behaviour. It is good at monitoring and eliminating oppressive behaviour. Parents and children confirm that the children feel safe in the school. Parents also confirm that there are few incidents of bullying or racism and, if any incidents of bullying occur, the school deals with them speedily and sensitively. Staff have worked together well to develop consistency in their approach to dealing with unacceptable behaviour. This has resulted in improvements in pupils' behaviour over the past year.

39. Children in the Foundation Stage also receive good levels of care when they start school. They are invited into school before they start to prepare them and help them to settle quickly. Arrangements for starting school allow children to adapt to their new environment gradually and are flexible enough to take account of their individual needs.

40. The care and support of pupils with special educational needs are good. Teachers and support assistants know the pupils they work with well. There are good procedures for the early identification of pupils with special educational needs which arise from good communication with the pre-school on site. Once pupils' needs are identified, appropriate arrangements are made for the regular review of their progress. There is good liaison with outside agencies, including the educational psychologist, speech and language therapist, welfare officer and behaviour specialist, who provide valuable support. Detailed records are kept of pupils' progress in relation to their targets.

41. The school's monitoring of attendance is satisfactory, but it has not been successful in improving pupils' punctuality and attendance. The school complies with statutory requirements for registration and the coding and the recording of attendance. The educational welfare service supports the school well and confirms that the school meets its responsibilities well and has worked with the service to improve individual pupils' attendance.

42. There are good procedures for monitoring and promoting good behaviour. Through the hard work and dedication of the staff and the application of appropriate rewards and sanctions, most lessons, assemblies and lunchtimes take place without incident. However, instances of unsatisfactory behaviour do take place in a few lessons and during playtimes. The impact of these incidents is quickly limited by the prompt actions of the staff.

43. Teachers have good knowledge of pupils' needs and work hard on the children's personal development. 'Circle time' is used effectively and the teachers emphasise pupils' responsibilities for their own well-being and health and safety. However, there is no whole school plan for the co-ordination of personal social and health education. As in the previous inspection, pupils are given too few opportunities to take responsibility or to use their initiative. They are not able to influence school affairs and are given few opportunities to take responsibility for their own learning. This aspect is unsatisfactory.

44. The monitoring and support of pupils' academic performance and personal development is unsatisfactory, overall. Careful analysis of internal and national end of key stage and year group tests, in English, mathematics and science, has led the school to identify weaker areas and those which require further emphasis. However, this work has been interrupted by frequent changes of staff. The results of the baseline tests in Reception and pupils' end of Key Stage 1 national tests are used to start tracking the attainment and progress of all pupils in numeracy and literacy. These assessments are used appropriately to identify children that are likely to need additional help, but those with above average ability are not always identified. Although the tracking documents are comprehensive they have not been used for accurate target setting or predicting individual pupils' progress in order to plan their future work. Class teachers and subject co-ordinators are not sufficiently involved in setting targets for pupils or tracking their progress.

45. The school has sound procedures for assessing pupils' attainment and progress in English, mathematics, science and information and communication technology including national standardised assessment tests at the end of each key stage, continuous teacher assessment and standardised tests and tracking documents for individual pupils in numeracy and literacy. Assessment in all subjects is carried out using the Qualification and Curriculum Authority's guidelines. Children in the Reception class are assessed soon after they start school and at the end of the Reception year to ascertain progress. This progress is assessed in line with the national Early Learning Goals for the Foundation Stage. At the end of each academic year, all teaching staff use the information from their records to assess how pupils have progressed through the National Curriculum levels of attainment. This information is used to plan the allocation of classroom assistants and learning support time for individual pupils, especially those with special educational needs, to raise their standards of attainment.

46. All class teachers have assessment folders for individual pupils containing records of their academic progress in all subjects, but this system is unwieldy and requires teachers to search through large amounts of paperwork to find relevant information. Appropriate notes are sometimes made in teachers' lesson plans on pupils' social and personal development and on individual education plans for pupils with special educational needs. These are then considered when planning work and the use of classroom support. In the Reception class, there are good arrangements for children to be assessed in relation to the Early Learning Goals and other aspects of their development, including their social behaviour and attitudes to learning. The key issue from the previous inspection concerning the more efficient use of assessment information in order to plan for pupils' next steps in learning, has not been satisfactorily resolved in English and mathematics. Also the key issue to provide tasks that are clearly matched to learning objectives and pupils' abilities has not been addressed with regard to more able pupils. Teachers have had few opportunities to compare pieces of work and agree on the criteria for achieving each level in the National Curriculum.

#### **HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL WORK IN PARTNERSHIP WITH PARENTS?**

47. Parents' views of the school are mainly positive, although only seven parents attended the pre-inspection meeting with the registered inspector and only 41 returned their questionnaires. The school provides parents with good quality information. This represents an improvement since the last inspection.

48. The impact of the parents' involvement on the work of the school is satisfactory. The Friends' Association raises money to purchase materials and resources for the school and organises social events. Parents are invited to attend assemblies, performances, social and curriculum events, briefing meetings and parents' evenings. Few parents were seen helping in school during the inspection and there are no strategies to develop this aspect of their involvement or to find out ways of attracting parents into school.

49. The information provided for parents is good. They are given information about work that can be done at home, and they receive newsletters and day-to-day class and school information. Parents have opportunities each term to discuss their children's progress with teachers and these are greatly appreciated. Parents feel that the information in pupils' annual reports is detailed, accurately describes their children, and gives useful information about achievements in each subject. The inspectors agree with these comments, but find that reports do not consistently include information on how pupils can improve and make further progress. The school's documentation for parents fulfils most statutory requirements, other than the governors' Annual Report to parents which has a number of omissions.

50. Parents of pupils with special educational needs are involved well in their child's support through annual reviews, individual education plans, end-of-year reports and regular parents' evenings. They are informed as soon as the school has concerns and are consulted in all procedures. Parents are then kept aware of the school's targets for their child and most parents are willing to be involved in the setting of these targets and regular reviews of their child's progress. Part of the special educational needs co-ordinator's time is set aside for consultation with parents.

#### **HOW WELL IS THE SCHOOL LED AND MANAGED?**

51. The leadership and management of the school are satisfactory. No clear judgement was made by the previous inspection. At the time of this inspection, an acting headteacher had been in post for three weeks, pending the appointment of a new headteacher for the spring term 2002. The school has five class teachers, four of whom were appointed less than two years ago. A sixth teacher carries out the duties of co-ordinator for special educational needs three days a week and teaches in the Reception class one day a week. Over the past three years, there has been a considerable turnover of teachers, which has affected every class, in some cases resulting in pupils having several different teachers during the course of a year. Difficulties in recruiting and retaining staff have inevitably affected the pace of improvement in the school since the previous inspection. They have also affected the quality of leadership and management as there has been little continuity in the co-ordination of different subjects. The acting headteacher, who has been seconded from another school, is providing good leadership for this school until a new headteacher can be appointed. She has quickly established a positive rapport with the staff and is working alongside them to address some of the issues they have identified for improvement, such as the quality of pupils' writing.

52. The school has made a satisfactory improvement since it was last inspected. There has been a significant increase in the proportion of pupils who attain average standards in the national tests at Key Stage 2, although results at Key Stage 1 have not improved. The quality of teaching has improved, though evidence shows that this was not the case during the period of high staff turnover. There has been a good improvement in curricular planning. Teachers now clearly state what pupils are expected to learn and plan activities to match these objectives. Every subject has a comprehensive policy and scheme of work, which takes good account of pupils from the same year group who are in different classes. However, some policies, such as that for English, have not been modified to reflect changing needs, and most are lengthy and detailed, making it difficult for new teachers to absorb quickly and implement the guidance they give.

53. Frequent changes of staff have prevented the efficient management of the curriculum by subject co-ordinators, whose main task has been to check resources and ensure that each of their subjects has sufficient books and equipment to enable teachers to implement the scheme of work. This they have done well. However, their role in monitoring the curriculum, standards and the quality of teaching and learning remains underdeveloped, as at the time of the previous inspection. Most of this work was done by the previous headteacher with the assistance of Local Education Authority advisers. The school has made good use of this external advice to identify areas for development and provide practical support for new and inexperienced teachers. Evidence shows that this has had a good impact on improving the quality of teaching and learning in the school during the past 18 months. The school has a satisfactory capacity to continue to improve because of the enthusiasm and commitment of the staff and the strong but sensitive leadership of the acting headteacher.

54. There is much evidence to show that the previous headteacher carried out regular observations of all teachers each term. The science co-ordinator, who is an experienced teacher, also monitored the quality of teaching and learning throughout the school during the past year and identified areas for development, such as the need to give pupils more opportunities to make suggestions about and devise their own investigations. Analysis of the school's results in national tests focused predominantly on the percentage of pupils achieving Level 4 in Year 6 and failed to highlight the lack of higher achievers. Nor did it focus sufficiently on Key Stage 1, or analyse the reasons for the lack of improvement in pupils' writing skills. There has clearly been a strong emphasis on provision for the high proportion of pupils with special educational needs, but insufficient attention has been given to the attainment of other groups of pupils. For instance, there is no evidence that boys' and girls' performance has been closely scrutinised or compared.

55. At present, the delegation of management responsibilities is unsatisfactory and does not enable effective co-ordination of the curriculum. For example, the special educational needs co-ordinator, who works four days a week, also holds responsibility for English and mathematics, which is a very heavy workload alongside other teaching commitments. As a result, she has no

strategic role in managing the two subjects, as most of her time is taken up with teaching and administering the school's provision for pupils with special educational needs. The co-ordinators for all other subjects, except art and geography, are relatively new to the school. Discussions with co-ordinators show that they have a good awareness of what needs to be done but have not had the training or the time necessary to help them carry out their management role effectively. Although the school's policies are well written, embody worthwhile principles and encourage good practice, there are no systems in place for co-ordinators to monitor whether they are being implemented consistently throughout the school.

56. The school development plan is a very detailed and comprehensive document that sets out at length how funds will be used over three years to improve the school's provision for its pupils in terms of personnel, resources and action to be taken. It includes measurable targets for each year group throughout the school to achieve in the national end of key stage tests. What it does not do is show how these targets are to be achieved. For example, there is no mention of the need to review the school's approach to teaching writing, and no acknowledgement of the need to raise the attainment of more able pupils. Although the school development plan explains the role of subject co-ordinators, it does not identify the development of this role as a focus for improvement over the next three years.

57. A recent initiative is the introduction of year group assessment records, which show each pupil's progress in English and mathematics through National Curriculum levels as assessed in tests from year to year. These do not make any provision for tracking pupils' progress throughout Key Stage 1. The targets that are set for individual pupils to attain in the national tests at the end of each key stage have not been set in consultation with class teachers and are not reviewed often enough to ensure that pupils are on course to achieve them. There is insufficient analysis of why pupils do not meet their targets and the use of assessment information to identify and address pupils' needs is unsatisfactory.

58. The governing body carries out its statutory responsibilities appropriately. All statutory requirements are met, except for some minor omissions from the governors' Annual Report to parents. The chair of governors had a good working relationship with the former headteacher and is very supportive of the acting headteacher. The governors have suitably developed their role in monitoring the quality of education provided by the school. They observe lessons, hold discussions with teachers and, in the past, have received detailed reports from the headteacher, which have helped to keep them informed about developments. They have a good awareness of the difficulties the school has faced in recruiting and retaining staff and have been fully involved in discussions about how to address the situation. However, the lack of a sufficiently detailed analysis of the pupils' achievements, especially at Key Stage 1, and in writing, has left governors unaware of some of the issues that are currently facing the school. The governors' finance committee closely monitors expenditure throughout the year and governors ask challenging questions about spending decisions. They have brought about many improvements to the school grounds since the previous inspection.

59. The school fully meets the statutory requirements of the Code of Practice for special educational needs. A teacher and member of the senior management team has responsibility for the co-ordination of special educational needs for four days per week. She is well qualified and experienced and maintains careful records of all pupils, tracking their progress well. She regularly meets support staff on a formal and informal basis. No member of the Governing Body has been delegated to oversee the provision of special educational needs in the school. However, the special educational needs co-ordinator is a member of the governing body's curriculum committee and reports on matters concerning special educational needs to the full governing body. All funds allocated for pupils with special educational needs are used appropriately and to good effect. Learning support assistance for these pupils is good. The assistants are well qualified and experienced and most have participated in training within the school and in national and local authority courses. Resources are good and a separate room is available to teach small groups of pupils.

60. The day-to-day financial management of the school is run very efficiently by the experienced administrative officer, whose procedures for monitoring and recording expenditure are very effective. In the 1999/2000 financial year, the school carried forward a substantial

underspend, which amounted to approximately 16 per cent of its total budget. This consisted of funds for the alterations to the building and grounds and the installation of a computer suite, which have now been completed. The budget surplus has been reduced to a more acceptable figure, in the region of five per cent of the total budget. The governors are suitably concerned to ensure that they get good value for money when purchasing goods or services, obtaining competitive quotations where appropriate. However, there is insufficient comparison of the school's performance against that of other schools for governors to ascertain whether the school is giving sound value for money. A good example of well-planned and targeted use of funds is that made of the former East Kent Coalfield Grant to enhance literacy and develop the school grounds. This money has been used well to provide a part-time teacher who has implemented the 'Reading Recovery' programme for non-readers, which has produced good results. It has also helped to bring about significant improvement to the school grounds, including the creation of the 'Millennium Garden'. The school's use of information and communication technology is satisfactory.

61. The school has a good policy for ensuring that all pupils receive equality of opportunity, but this is not fully effective in practice as more able pupils are not provided for as well as pupils with special educational needs. As a result, they do not always reach their full potential. This means that the school's expressed aim of enabling all pupils to reach their full potential is not adequately met.

62. The match of teachers to the demands of the curriculum is satisfactory and is sufficient to meet the needs of the curriculum. While the school awaits the appointment of a new head teacher, the acting head plays a pivotal role in keeping the school on track and staff well motivated. There are good induction procedures and support for new staff, and appropriate support is provided for newly qualified teachers. There is a suitable number of teaching assistants who are well qualified. Although the efficient and effective use of these valuable members of staff varies from class to class, this has improved from the previous inspection when they were mainly employed to support reading.

63. The accommodation is adequate for the teaching of the curriculum. It is clean and maintained well on a day-to-day basis. The school is located in a rural setting and pupils benefit from the large grassed play areas and the pleasant grounds. The provision of several seating areas outside, an adventure playground and a sensory garden enrich this provision for pupils. The most significant deficiency in the accommodation is the lack of a fenced outdoor play area for use by children in the Reception class. This limits pupils' progress, especially in physical development. The library is small, office space in the school is limited and there is no first aid or welfare room. There have been some improvements to the building, as some windows have been replaced. However, other parts are in poor condition with rotten windows and cladding panels. The flat roofs leak in heavy rain and this has damaged interior decoration. The junior playground is in poor condition as its surface has deteriorated. This area is also used as an overflow parking area, which is unsatisfactory. The playground is not very stimulating and does not help to enrich pupils' play. The recent installation of a computer suite is having a positive effect on the teaching of information and communication technology.

64. The provision of resources to teach the curriculum is satisfactory. In mathematics, information and communication technology and science, the range and quality of resources are good. The school has also greatly enhanced the range of resources to support literacy. As in the previous inspection, the range of artefacts that reflect cultural diversity remains limited. The school has no large wheeled toys for children in the Foundation Stage to develop their physical dexterity. The library has been greatly reduced in size to make room for the computer suite and, whilst a very small non-fiction library remains, it is not used effectively to develop pupils' research skills. Classrooms have a good variety of fiction books and attractive book corners, which help to make reading an enjoyable experience for the pupils.

## **WHAT SHOULD THE SCHOOL DO TO IMPROVE FURTHER?**

65. In order to continue to improve the quality of education provided by the school the governors, headteacher and staff should:

### **1. Raise the standards of the pupils' work in English and mathematics throughout the school and science and history at Key Stage 2 by:**

- developing the pupils' listening skills and the extent and effective use of their spoken vocabulary;
- ensuring that sufficient time is given to extending pupils' competence and skills in written work;
- ensuring that the pupils develop their writing skills more fully in all relevant subjects of the curriculum;
- being certain that the pupils' work is marked in ways which help them to improve;
- raising teachers' expectations of what the more able pupils can achieve;
- reducing the use of worksheets across the curriculum and providing more opportunities for independent learning;
- developing pupils' mental strategies in mathematics to a higher degree;
- giving pupils more opportunities to plan and carry out scientific investigations;

(Paragraphs 2-5, 12, 15, 16, 19, 21, 23, 24, 27, 33, 43, 61, 80-90, 91-98, 99-103, 121, 122)

### **2. Improve the effectiveness of the strategic management of the school by:**

- ensuring that governors are kept fully informed about all aspects of the school's performance so that they have a clear understanding of what needs to be improved;
- reviewing the delegation of responsibilities to teachers to achieve a more balanced distribution;
- providing adequate training for subject co-ordinators to equip them for their role;
- providing opportunities for co-ordinators to monitor the standards of pupils' work and the quality of teaching and learning in their subjects;
- ensuring that effective action is taken to meet the targets for improvement set in the school development plan.

(Paragraphs 51, 53-58, 60, 90, 97, 106, 112, 118, 124, 130, 134, 140, 146)

### **3. Improve the monitoring of pupils' academic performance and personal development by:**

- making more effective use of assessment information to inform teachers' planning;
- ensuring that teachers and subject co-ordinators are fully involved in setting individual and year group targets and monitoring pupils' progress towards achieving them;
- reviewing pupils' targets more frequently to identify areas of underachievement.

(Paragraphs 44-46, 54, 57, 90, 103, 118, 124, 140, 146)



## **OTHER ISSUES WHICH SHOULD BE CONSIDERED BY THE SCHOOL**

- Continuing to seek ways to improve the pupils' attendance and punctuality.  
(Paragraph 14)
- Ensuring that the governors' Annual Report to parents fully meets statutory requirements.  
(Paragraph 49)

**PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS**

**Summary of the sources of evidence for the inspection**

Number of lessons observed	33
Number of discussions with staff, governors, other adults and pupils	36

**Summary of teaching observed during the inspection**

	Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
Number	0	1	17	15	0	0	0
Percentage	0	3	52	45	0	0	0

*The table gives the number and percentage of lessons observed in each of the seven categories used to make judgements about teaching. Care should be taken when interpreting these percentages as each lesson represents more than three percentage points.*

**Information about the school's pupils**

<b>Pupils on the school's roll</b>	YR – Y6
Number of pupils on the school's roll (FTE for part-time pupils)	132
Number of full-time pupils known to be eligible for free school meals	39
<b>Special educational needs</b>	YR – Y6
Number of pupils with statements of special educational needs	1
Number of pupils on the school's special educational needs register	58
<b>English as an additional language</b>	No of pupils
Number of pupils with English as an additional language	1
<b>Pupil mobility in the last school year</b>	No of pupils
Pupils who joined the school other than at the usual time of first admission	5
Pupils who left the school other than at the usual time of leaving	4

**Attendance**

**Authorised absence**

	%
School data	5.6
National comparative data	5.2

**Unauthorised absence**

	%
School data	0.5
National comparative data	0.5

*Both tables give the percentage of half days (sessions) missed through absence for the latest complete reporting year.*

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

		Year	Boys	Girls	Total
Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 1 for the latest reporting year		2000	8	5	13
National Curriculum Test/Task Results		Reading	Writing	Mathematics	
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys				
	Girls				
	Total	8	9	9	
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	62 (42)	69 (79)	69 (84)	
	National	83 (82)	84 (83)	90 (87)	
Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science	
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys				
	Girls				
	Total	10	10	12	
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	77 (79)	77 (95)	92 (89)	
	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 (Year 6)**

		Year	Boys	Girls	Total
Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 2 for the latest reporting year		2000	13	5	18
National Curriculum Test/Task Results		English	Mathematics	Science	
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys				
	Girls				
	Total	12	14	14	
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	67 (59)	78 (82)	78 (82)	
	National	75 (70)	72 (69)	85 (78)	
Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science	
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys				
	Girls				
	Total	13	13	11	
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	72 (53)	72 (65)	61 (65)	
	National	70 (68)	72 (69)	79 (75)	

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

**Where small numbers of pupils are involved, totals of boys and girls are not included.**

**Ethnic background of pupils**

	No of pupils
Black – Caribbean heritage	0
Black – African heritage	0
Black – other	2
Indian	0
Pakistani	0
Bangladeshi	0
Chinese	0
White	105
Any other minority ethnic group	0

*This table refers to pupils of compulsory school age only.*

**Teachers and classes****Qualified teachers and classes: YR – Y6**

Total number of qualified teachers (FTE)	6.8
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	19
Average class size	26

**Education support staff: YR – Y6**

Total number of education support staff	6
Total aggregate hours worked per week	97.5

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*FTE means full-time equivalent.*

**Exclusions in the last school year**

	Fixed period	Permanent
Black – Caribbean heritage	0	0
Black – African heritage	0	0
Black – other	0	0
Indian	0	0
Pakistani	0	0
Bangladeshi	0	0
Chinese	0	0
White	2	0
Other minority ethnic groups	0	0

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

**Financial information**

Financial year	2000/01
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	£
Total income	314540
Total expenditure	296160
Expenditure per pupil	2314
Balance brought forward from previous year	32401
Balance carried forward to next year	50781

### Recruitment of teachers

Number of teachers who left the school during the last two years	4
Number of teachers appointed to the school during the last two years	4
Total number of vacant teaching posts (FTE)	1
Number of vacancies filled by teachers on temporary contract of a term or more (FTE)	1
Number of unfilled vacancies or vacancies filled by teachers on temporary contract of less than one term (FTE)	0

FTE means full-time equivalent.

### Results of the survey of parents and carers

#### Questionnaire return rate

Number of questionnaires sent out	132
Number of questionnaires returned	41

#### Percentage of responses in each category

	Strongly agree	Tend to agree	Tend to disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know
My child likes school.	71	22	5	0	2
My child is making good progress in school.	65	25	5	0	5
Behaviour in the school is good.	46	26	21	0	7
My child gets the right amount of work to do at home.	31	41	21	3	4
The teaching is good.	51	37	5	0	7
I am kept well informed about how my child is getting on.	41	46	7	0	6
I would feel comfortable about approaching the school with questions or a problem.	76	22	0	2	0
The school expects my child to work hard and achieve his or her best.	51	44	0	0	5
The school works closely with parents.	41	39	10	0	10
The school is well led and managed.	37	41	10	0	12
The school is helping my child become mature and responsible.	49	44	5	0	2

The school provides an interesting range of activities outside lessons.

24	44	15	10	7
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## **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**

66. At the time of the inspection, there were 26 children in the Reception class, eight of whom were full time and 17 who attended only in the morning. The part-time children have only been in school for just over three weeks. Children are admitted to the school during the school year in which they are five. Some are admitted part-time during the summer term and then become full-time in the autumn. Younger children start part time in September and become full time after half term. Day-to-day liaison with parents is good and there are appropriate induction procedures before children attend school. There is good liaison between the adjoining nursery and the school. Some children from the nursery unit come into the school to share their lunch-time with the older pupils and children. The attainment of children on entry to the school is below average. No judgement was made on provision for children under five by the previous inspection, but it was then considered that, by the time they were five years old, attainment was almost in line with national expectations. The judgement of this inspection is that children are on course to achieve expected standards in all areas of learning, except for language and literacy and physical development, by the end of the Foundation Stage. This finding shows slightly lower standards than at the time of the previous inspection in communication, language and literacy and physical development.

67. The class teacher and part-time teaching assistant are experienced and well qualified. Both have a good knowledge and understanding of the needs of young children. Curricular planning conforms to the new national recommendations for the Foundation Stage and shows how children are expected to progress towards achieving the Early Learning Goals by the end of the Reception year. The children have a safe and secure environment, both indoors and outdoors, including a small paved area with direct access from the classroom. Children also have the use of the school hall, main playground and a brand new outside activity area. However, they do not have their own enclosed area and, although the outside facilities are large enough for small activities like sand and water, there is not enough room for large wheeled toys such as tricycles and scooters. Learning resources indoors are generally good and are well used by children and staff to provide many activities to further all children's learning opportunities. The teacher and support assistant work well together, planning, assessing and recording as a team, and ensure that all children receive a well-planned, safe, happy and appropriate start to their school life. Teaching and learning are judged to be satisfactory, overall, with several examples of good practice.

#### **Personal, social and emotional development**

68. Teaching and learning are good in this area of learning. All staff expect high standards of behaviour and this results in a quiet working atmosphere for most of the time. The teacher and assistant act as good role models for the children's social development and, even at this early stage in the term, the effect of this can be seen in the children's good behaviour. All available space is used well to organise a broad and stimulating range of activities in order to develop good progress in the children's personal and social development. Children make good progress in this area of learning and are on course to achieve the Early Learning Goals by the time they leave the Reception class. Children are developing confidence in choosing and trying new activities. They are able to initiate simple ideas, especially in role play activities in the 'Three Bears Cottage' play area. Children concentrate on their lessons and activities well and sit quietly and listen to the teacher when required. This is especially noticeable when they are listening to a story, singing or chanting rhymes. They wait their turn before talking or answering a question and most listen very attentively to other children without interruption.

69. All children, including those with special educational needs, are beginning to form good, trusting relationships with adults and with each other, and this leads to good progress in their

personal and social development. They are already able to work as part of a group or as a whole class, taking turns, and sharing fairly, and they understand the need for a code of good behaviour to enable them to work harmoniously. Children understand the classroom rules and behave well accordingly. When required to leave the classroom and move around the school, they act sensibly and quietly, showing good awareness of pupils working in other classrooms. Not all children are prepared to speak out confidently in discussions at this early stage of their learning, but during a Key Stage 1 assembly, one Reception class child spoke more clearly and confidently than others in Year 1 and 2. Most children are able to put on their coats and find their own snacks for playtime and most change quickly and sensibly for physical development lessons without needing help.

### **Communication, language and literacy**

70. The quality of teaching and learning is satisfactory and enables children to make sound progress in this area of learning, although the present standards attained indicate that they are not on course to meet the nationally agreed standards by the time they leave the Reception class, especially in writing. Adults encourage children to speak by asking questions, responding positively and giving encouragement to their answers. However, although most children talk about their experiences, they find it more difficult to express their thoughts to convey meaning. Literacy work is appropriately structured and the format of the literacy hour is being used in a shortened form. In one lesson, the teacher captured children's interest at the beginning of the lesson by getting them to take objects out of a box and say what they were. The class was then shown pictures of other items beginning with the letter 'd' and the teacher asked, "What did you notice about all those words?" The letter 'd' was then introduced and most children were able to write 'd' in the air using their 'magic finger'. The children demonstrated sound manual control when using the pens on white boards. Some recognised 's', 'a', 'n' and 'd' and over half of the class formed letters correctly when writing on their boards. The teacher then provided a good range of activities to develop pupils' awareness of sounds, which included writing activities and making letters from dough.

71. Children's listening skills are enhanced by listening to story tapes in the reading area. Opportunities are provided in the role play area, and at the beginning and end of the morning and afternoon sessions, for children to develop their ability to talk about their experiences, and adults sometimes use this opportunity to participate in the role play, to support children's learning. In one lesson, the children enjoyed the opportunity to be one of the bears or Goldilocks. Spoken language is generally immature in classroom conversation, both to the teacher and in role play activities. Stories are used well during the literacy time and at the end of the morning and afternoon sessions to develop the children's love of reading. Adults also share books with individuals or small groups to encourage children to enjoy books and handle them carefully. Children listen attentively to stories and most can talk about their favourite extracts. Some are able to predict the end of the story. Some are beginning to read but very few can read independently. There are varying levels of skill in writing words but few are able to write without using copying and tracing techniques at this stage of the term. Most children can recognise their names but only a few are able to write them.

### **Mathematical development**

72. The quality of teaching and learning is good in this area of learning and children make good progress. This is because all children are given the opportunity to practise what they have learned in whole class or group sessions. The children are on course to achieve the Early Learning Goals in mathematics by the end of the Reception year. Learning resources are organised well to give all children the opportunity to participate in the various planned activities, including those that involve sand and water. Children are encouraged to talk about their work and to use their developing mental abilities. In one lesson, the children matched differently sized bowls to the Three Bears. Most children can count to five and can recognise numbers to ten. The teacher used wooden Russian and Indian dolls to encourage children to count to five. When she asked, "Who can show me three fingers?" nearly all the class showed the correct number of

fingers. Children are also introduced to larger numbers during registration when the teacher counts how many are present or absent.

73. Their use of mathematical language is limited but number rhymes and counting games are used successfully to introduce this language. A few children understand the concepts of 'bigger than' and 'smaller than' when comparing the sizes of the Three Bears. They are beginning to develop a sound understanding of how to record their work by drawing pictures of three items or making three differently sized chairs and beds out of multi-link cubes. Imaginative play in the 'Three Bears' Cottage' gives children the opportunity to lay the table for the Three Bears' breakfast. In their work on sorting, most children can identify colour and some are beginning to develop the ability to recognise simple two-dimensional shapes, including squares, rectangles, triangles and circles.

### **Knowledge and understanding of the world**

74. The quality of teaching and learning is good and children make good progress in this area of learning. Most children have some general knowledge and experience of the world around them on entry to the Reception class. They are on course to achieve the recommended goals in this area of learning by the time they leave the Reception class. Children are provided with a range of opportunities to explore their class and school environment. A wide selection of objects, materials and equipment is provided for children to use and handle in their everyday activities, including computers and tape recorders, to further their knowledge and understanding of their immediate locality and the world around them. Most show a developing awareness of, and interest in, how things change, as illustrated in their work on dwellings as part of the 'Three Bears' topic. In the lesson observed, the teacher showed the children photographs and pictures of different types of dwellings, including cottages, houses, caravans and a block of flats. She used the session well to introduce the topic of roof coverings, for example, thatch and tiles, and compared roof coverings here with those in Africa. All the children were eager to answer questions and were able to contribute to the group discussion. The lesson moved on to other parts of houses including windows, doors and chimneys and, in the final part of the lesson, the teacher asked, "What other stories do you know about different types of houses?" The children answered, "The Three Little Pigs."

75. Most children are developing sound control of the mouse when using the computer and are able to operate tape recorders to listen to their favourite stories. In the cooking lesson observed, groups of children, working with the teaching assistant, were given the opportunity to make flapjacks with oats, margarine and honey. All children stirred the mixture and spooned it into small paper cups before baking. The finished product was eaten at the end of the day. Good attention was given to health factors during the cooking lesson, such as washing hands and making sure that utensils were clean.

### **Physical development**

76. The quality of teaching and learning is satisfactory, and appropriate use is made of the available resources, equipment and materials. However, standards are below average by the end of the Reception year, because children do not have an outdoor play area or large wheeled toys to help them develop control and co-ordination. Children are managed well when using tools and equipment and staff show a suitable awareness of health and safety factors when the class is performing any physical activity. During the observed physical development lesson in the hall, most of the older children were able to change quickly and quietly. The teacher used the story, *We're Going on a Bear Hunt* to stimulate the children's imagination and encouraged them to use these ideas when moving around the hall. When working on mats, children explored different ways to get over the mat by rolling and jumping, using different parts of their bodies. The teacher asked some children to demonstrate what they had achieved, and this gave them confidence in their activities.



77. Adults support and work with children effectively to develop dexterity in their use of tools and equipment and to help them gain confidence in using the space and equipment imaginatively and safely. The Reception class has a small, uncovered area with direct access from the classroom but this is unsuitable for the use of large outdoor equipment. Children of all abilities are learning to handle tools, objects and construction materials safely. Children are given many opportunities to develop manual dexterity by using pencils, crayons, paintbrushes and simple tools like scissors.

### **Creative development**

78. The quality of teaching and learning is good and the many activities for this area of learning are well resourced and organised to ensure that children of all abilities have the opportunity to participate in creative work. Both adults give good demonstrations of the activities before the children begin their tasks, without being too prescriptive. The children make good progress in developing their creative skills and most are likely to achieve the recommended level of attainment by the time they leave the Reception class. This is due to good use of plentiful resources and opportunities for independent work, for example, in their use of dough, small rolling pins and imprint shapes to mould the material into the shapes of the 'Three Bears'. Creative development is also encouraged by children using their own ideas to construct a cardboard model of the Three Bears' cottage. They all enjoy learning and singing new songs and taking part in imaginative play associated with well-known stories. There are good examples of the children using paintings to express their own ideas in the colourful displays of work in the classroom. They have also explored texture, shape and form in using different materials and paints in their artwork. Children enjoy playing with a variety of construction kits and they make good attempts at designing differently sized chairs and beds.

79. In the music lesson observed, the teacher began by slapping and clapping together using knees and hands. Most children were able to follow the rhythm pattern. Children were then sent to the music trolley to choose from a good range of musical instruments. The teacher asked, "What kind of sound do they make and what are they made from?" Some children knew that the instruments were made of metal or wood. Most children found it difficult to play any sort of rhythm on their instruments. Each child was given the opportunity to demonstrate on his or her instrument and then instruments were passed round so that they had the opportunity to play a selection. The teacher then showed the group how to play softly and then get louder, and the children followed her example well. The teacher's very calm, quiet, manner created a good atmosphere for learning.

### **ENGLISH**

80. Although pupils' achievement is satisfactory overall, standards in English are below average in Year 2 and Year 6. These judgements are the same as those made by the school's previous inspection. Pupils' progress over the past three years has not always been satisfactory. Pupils in the present Year 6 have experienced several changes of teacher, and their records show that this has had an adverse effect on their progress. They began to make better progress in Year 5 when two permanent teachers were appointed who have worked hard to raise their standards of achievement. The high turnover of staff has also affected pupils' progress in other year groups.

81. In Year 2, standards in speaking and listening are below average. Many pupils enter the school with low language skills. Their listening skills are weak and teachers often have to interrupt the flow of the lesson to stop pupils chatting or calling out inappropriately. Even when they are sitting quietly and apparently listening, some pupils are not actually taking in what the teacher is saying. Consequently, they do not know what to do when they begin their activities. This was evident in a Year 2 science lesson, where some pupils were not able to follow the teacher's clear instructions when carrying out their investigation. Pupils enjoy listening to stories and more able pupils respond well to the teacher's questions about what they have read together. Others sit passively and do not readily offer answers or show enthusiasm. More able pupils speak clearly in well-formed sentences, but less able pupils need considerable prompting to formulate a response and often reply in one or two words. Few pupils are able to speak

clearly and articulately using grammatically correct sentences. Teachers do not always ensure that less confident speakers have enough opportunity to make a contribution in whole class sessions.

82. In Year 6, standards in speaking and listening are also below average. Sometimes, pupils listen attentively and participate with enthusiasm in whole class sessions. At other times, they sit passively and do not listen carefully enough to what the teacher is saying. Occasionally, this is because the teacher does not give them enough opportunity to contribute to the lesson. Sometimes, teachers' questions are phrased in a way that encourages pupils to give brief answers rather than more lengthy explanations. In some lessons, the teacher talks for too long and pupils lose concentration and motivation because they are not actively involved in their learning. Few pupils speak clearly and articulately, adapting their use of spoken English to suit different contexts. For most, language is colloquial and often grammatically incorrect.

83. Pupils' reading skills are below average in Year 2. Although most pupils are on course to achieve the standards expected of seven year olds, there are few higher attainers. Pupils enjoy sharing books together in the literacy hour, both as a whole class and in smaller groups. In a lesson in Year 2/3, pupils showed great enthusiasm and enjoyment as they read the words spoken by the different characters in *Owl Babies* with good expression, responding well to exclamation marks by varying the tone and volume of their voices. Average attaining pupils read simple texts accurately and fluently and use a range of strategies to help them. More able pupils are developing independence in reading and can make appropriate observations about their books. Less able pupils try hard to use their knowledge of sounds and familiar words to help them in their reading but they do not understand the context and cannot explain what the story is about.

84. Standards in reading in Year 6 are below average. Average attaining pupils are keen to read and do so with appropriate expression and understanding. Less able pupils are often more reluctant to read and their reading is stilted and hesitant. Few pupils are able to explain in detail what they have read or discuss the plot and characters in a story. Pupils' independent research skills are underdeveloped because there are not enough opportunities for them to read texts and carry out research by finding and communicating information in different forms. Too often, pupils simply copy out sections of text without any real understanding of what they have read or written. A lesson for Year 5/6 was successful in capturing pupils' interest in reading and motivated them well to read aloud together. They read a humorous 'spoof' science fiction script, which appealed to both girls and boys, with suitable expression and obvious enjoyment. Although they were sometimes slow to appreciate the humour that arose from puns and references to *Star Trek* and *Star Wars*, their enthusiasm grew as they became engrossed in the play.

85. Standards in writing are below average in Year 2. Many pupils can write simple sentences and a few are beginning to string sentences together to form a short narrative. However, there are too few opportunities for pupils to write independently and at length as most of their written work is done during the literacy hour. They rarely get the chance to develop their ideas, compose a full-length story or write a detailed account of something they have done. Pupils' work from the previous year illustrates that, although they made satisfactory progress in learning spellings and grammatical rules, they were given too few opportunities to use these in their own writing. Most work was done on worksheets and there were few examples of pupils writing at length. Writing skills are not developed well in other subjects, where there is also an over-reliance on prepared worksheets.

86. Standards in writing are well below average in Year 6. Here, too, there is a great emphasis on learning spellings and the conventions of grammar, but few opportunities for pupils to develop their writing skills and to use this knowledge in different contexts. More able pupils do not receive enough challenge. This was also noted by the previous inspection. Throughout Key Stage 2, extended pieces of writing are few, as are opportunities for pupils to draft, redraft and proofread their work. Many pupils have only a limited range of vocabulary, show little imagination in their writing and find it difficult to express and extend their ideas. Their output is small because almost all writing is done in the literacy hour when time is limited. The school has identified the

need to allocate more time to developing writing skills in order to raise standards. There are generally few examples of pupils developing literacy skills through other subjects. However, one good example was seen in Year 3/4, where pupils wrote the next chapter of an exciting Viking adventure as part of their work in history. Although pupils spell words correctly and show they understand grammatical conventions when completing sentences in exercises, this does not always carry over into other written work.

87. Throughout the school, standards of handwriting and presentation are weak. Pupils are taught to use a neat joined style in handwriting exercises, but they do not reproduce this in the rest of their work. At Key Stage 2, pupils use handwriting books with widely spaced lines that require large writing. This is inappropriate for pupils of this age and inhibits the development of their own neat, fluent style.

88. The quality of teaching and learning is satisfactory throughout the school, as it was at the time of the previous inspection. In this inspection, four of the five lessons seen were good and there was no unsatisfactory teaching. This is encouraging and shows that the training and support that teachers received during the past year has had a positive impact. However, an analysis of the pupils' work over a longer period indicates that the quality of teaching and learning is no better than satisfactory, because of the lack of emphasis on developing fluency in writing. Although the teaching meets the needs of less able pupils, it does not always challenge and extend the more able pupils sufficiently. In all of the lessons seen, the teachers' clear reading of a shared text provided a good model for pupils to imitate. In Year 1, pupils modified their voices well to suit the different characters in *Where's My Teddy?* and showed good understanding of the story. The teachers' skilful management of pupils helps to create a good environment for learning, and teaching assistants also contribute well to maintaining a purposeful working atmosphere in the classroom. Teachers use a variety of resources well to stimulate pupils' interest in reading, including 'big books', large posters and overhead transparencies. At Key Stage 2, teachers use poems and play scripts well to provide a stimulus for writing. Activities in the lessons observed were well planned to meet the needs of different groups of pupils. Although insufficient time is devoted to writing across the curriculum, in the lessons seen, teachers provided well-structured activities to develop specific aspects of writing. For example, in Year 1, less able pupils sorted objects into sets according to the final sound in the word, then wrote the sounds. More able pupils composed sentences using words they had learned to spell correctly. Less able pupils in Year 3/4 added the suffixes '-ing' and '-ed' to verbs after doubling the final consonant, while more able pupils wrote poems in the style of one they had read earlier.

89. There is a suitable emphasis on developing pupils' reading skills in the literacy hour and at other times when pupils read alone, in pairs or to an adult. However, pupils do not have enough opportunities to develop their writing skills, either in the literacy hour or across the curriculum. There are also insufficient opportunities for pupils to improve and use their research skills.

90. The National Literacy Strategy has been implemented throughout the school, but has not been modified to meet the school's needs. Although it is being supplemented appropriately by additional literacy programmes and suitable additional support for the high proportion of pupils with special educational needs, not enough time is given to developing style, fluency and imagination in writing. In the past, the headteacher has monitored pupils' work and the quality of teaching and learning throughout the school. The English co-ordinator has too many other responsibilities to be fully effective in the role. She monitors the progress of pupils with special educational needs in the subject, but there has been insufficient monitoring of the progress of other pupils, notably the more able. In general, the procedures for assessing pupils' attainment are satisfactory, and include standardised testing procedures for each year group except Year 1. However, the information gained from these assessments is not used effectively to diagnose problems or plan future work. The marking of pupils' work is inconsistent in quality. The best marking shows pupils clearly how to improve their work, but some is purely congratulatory and does not give constructive comments. Resources are satisfactory, overall, and those to support shared reading in the literacy hour are good. Classrooms have attractive book corners with an appropriate range of fiction. However, the non-fiction library is small and is not used effectively to develop pupils' research skills. The subject is enhanced by visits to theatres, as when pupils in

Years 4, 5 and 6 went to the Marlowe Theatre in Canterbury to see *Oliver* and those in Years 5 and 6 went to London to a performance of *Cats*. This also makes a good contribution to pupils' cultural development.

## **MATHEMATICS**

91. Pupils in Year 2 attain below average standards in all areas of the mathematics curriculum. This finding is an improvement on the results of the national assessment tests in 2000 when pupils' attainment was considered to be well below the national average. This is due to a more settled teaching staff in Year 2 classes and the successful introduction of the National Numeracy Strategy. The judgement of this inspection is similar to the findings of the previous inspection. Results in performance in the years from 1997 to 2000 indicate an upward trend broadly in line with national results. There are no significant variations in attainment between boys and girls. All pupils, including those with special educational needs make satisfactory progress in the subject and their achievement is sound.

92. Pupils have a sound knowledge and understanding of two-dimensional shapes, and can sort these shapes into sets and use the appropriate mathematical vocabulary to describe them. They order two digit numbers and count on in fives and tens. Comparative weaknesses are their use of mathematical knowledge and skills to solve problems and their understanding of quarters in their work on fractions. Pupils are beginning to use information and communication technology to represent data in the form of bar charts.

93. Standards in Year 6 are also below average. This judgement is similar to the findings of the previous inspection. This present judgement shows a decline since the last national assessment tests in 2000 when standards were close to the national average. This is because nine of the 11 pupils currently in Year 6 are on the school's register of special educational needs. Performance targets have been set to raise the standards of mathematics in Year 6 but these are not on course to be achieved for the same reason. There are no significant variations in the attainment of boys and girls. Progress and achievement, including that for pupils with special educational needs, are satisfactory at this key stage.

94. Pupils use their understanding of place value to multiply and divide whole numbers by ten and 100. They also use this understanding to order four digit numbers and add decimals to two decimal places. Most are able to convert improper fractions to mixed fractions and the other way round. Weaknesses include pupils' knowledge of the multiplication tables to ten and their limited use of mental strategies in solving problems. They find difficulty in explaining the terms factor, multiple and square number. Most pupils are unable to use simple fractions and percentages to describe proportions. The use of information and communication technology is limited but pupils have produced pie charts to represent the data they collected to show the most popular games.

95. At Key Stage 1, the quality of teaching and learning is satisfactory. In the Year 1 lesson observed, the lesson was planned and managed well. The mental numeracy beginning was well paced and well timed. The teacher used pupils standing at the front of the class well to illustrate addition and equals signs. However, the use of number lines and marker pens, while pupils sat on the carpet, was cumbersome and slowed down progress. The learning support assistant worked with a group of six pupils with special educational needs and enabled them to make sound progress. In the Year 2 lesson, pupils were encouraged to work out mentally addition problems involving number bonds from zero to five. The pace and challenge of the initial session were slow, but the pace of learning increased during the main activity, when pupils used mathematical vocabulary to describe two-dimensional shapes and their features. The lesson was planned well to provide appropriate activities for pupils at differing levels of attainment, although the work for the more able pupils was undemanding. The teacher encouraged pupils to use the appropriate mathematical vocabulary and used resources well to motivate the pupils. A scrutiny of past work in this key stage indicates an over use of worksheets and poor presentation of pupils' work. However, all the relevant mathematical topics are covered and varied work is evident for pupils of differing capabilities. The planned work for more able pupils mostly lacks sufficient challenge to enable them to reach above average levels of attainment.

96. The quality of teaching and learning in Key Stage 2 is also satisfactory overall, with an example of good teaching in the Year 5/6 class. The main strengths in teaching at this key stage are that all teachers are using the format of the National Numeracy Strategy in their lessons, although sometimes the structure of the lesson is too rigid. Teachers' planning is good and contains different tasks that match pupils' abilities. Pupils are organised and managed well during numeracy lessons to ensure concentration and satisfactory progress. Weaknesses evident from an analysis of previous work and lesson observations include low expectations for more able pupils' performance and the use of assessment information to set meaningful targets for individual pupils. Fewer worksheets are used by teachers in this key stage but teachers do not insist on sufficiently high standards in pupils' books. In the Year 5/6 lesson observed, the objectives of the lesson were written on the board and shared with pupils. A lively pace and good level of challenge was apparent in the mental activity, which was timed to encourage fast thinking. Questions were aimed at pupils at differing levels of attainment, some rounding to ten, others to 100 and the most able to 1000. The lesson was organised well so that a group of four pupils with special educational needs was supported by an assistant. A pupil who speaks English as an additional language worked independently and achieved good progress during the lesson.

97. The subject is managed satisfactorily. A senior teacher has assumed the temporary role of mathematics co-ordinator due to a large turnover of staff during the previous two years. She has not had time to monitor standards or the quality of teaching and learning in the subject because she has too many other responsibilities. Indications show a rising trend in standards due to the successful introduction of the Numeracy Strategy and a more settled staff. The co-ordinator has produced a good action plan for the continued development and improvement of the subject. The school has been well supported by the Local Education Authority and this has resulted in greater confidence in the teaching of mathematics amongst members of staff. An appropriate subject policy is in place which contains a useful section on mathematics teaching for pupils with special educational needs. Half term and weekly planning sheets have been introduced, which are linked effectively to the Numeracy Strategy and the National Curriculum to ensure full coverage of the statutory requirements for the subject. Learning resources are good, are well used and are appropriately situated in the classrooms.

98. The effectiveness of strategies for teaching numeracy skills is satisfactory. The National Numeracy Strategy has been introduced into all classrooms and all teachers are confident in teaching the subject. However, there is insufficient use of mental strategies and using and applying mathematics to further all pupils' mental numeracy development. In some cases, the pace and challenge of the numeracy hour is insufficient, especially during the mental session at the beginning of the lesson. Numeracy is used soundly across other areas of the curriculum including history, geography, science, and information and communication technology by all year groups. Pupils use their mathematical skills to present data in the form of charts and graphs, sometimes by using information and communication technology.

## **SCIENCE**

99. The findings of the inspection are that standards in Year 2 are broadly in line with the national average, which is the same as teachers' assessments of pupils' attainment in 2000. It represents an improvement since the previous inspection, when standards were below average. This is because teachers are focusing more effectively on scientific enquiry and investigation, and have higher expectations of what pupils are able to achieve. Standards in Year 6 are below average, as they were at the time of the previous inspection and in the national tests in 2000. An analysis of previous years' test results shows that few pupils reach above average standards (Level 5). In 2001, 86 per cent of the pupils in Year 6 achieved Level 4, which represents a very good improvement since 1997, when only 45 per cent reached this level. However, only ten per cent of pupils reached Level 5, which is low. Overall, pupils make sound progress in science and their achievement is satisfactory. Pupils with special educational needs receive good support in science lessons from teachers, assistants and other pupils, which helps them to work effectively alongside others. There are no significant variations in the attainment of boys and girls.

100. The quality of teaching and learning in the subject is satisfactory at both key stages, but half of the lessons seen during the inspection were at least good, and one of these was very good. Pupils are given plenty of opportunities to participate in investigations. For example, pupils in Year 1 find out how heat changes materials, while those in Year 2 explore how water and light help plants to grow. In Year 4, pupils investigate how water evaporates and find out what happens when water vapour cools down. In Year 5, pupils test the effect of exercise on pulse rate and carry out a survey of how the same plant grows in different locations. The main weakness in the quality of teaching and learning is that these investigations are often too directed by the teacher with insufficient opportunities for pupils to devise and plan their own experiments. Teachers also, for the most part, provide carefully structured worksheets on which pupils record their findings. These provide a useful framework for less able pupils and help them to learn how scientific experiments should be recorded. However, they are too restricting for more able pupils and they inhibit the development of pupils' investigative as well as literacy skills. Pupils' work from the previous year shows that they made and tested predictions about what might happen in an investigation and explained how they set up a fair test by controlling variables. They drew conclusions from their findings and older pupils made generalisations from them. However, the work of pupils at all levels of attainment is very similar, which indicates that it was closely directed by the teacher and was not tailored to meet the needs of different groups of pupils.

101. Teachers place a good emphasis on developing pupils' knowledge and understanding of life processes and living things, materials and their properties and physical processes as they progress through the school. Pupils in Year 2 know that roots are important in helping plants to grow, and that plants need light and water to sustain growth. In Year 6, they are able to identify the reproductive organs of a plant and understand how seeds germinate. In Year 2, pupils examine materials and identify their properties, such as appearance, texture and hardness. By Year 6, pupils are able to classify materials as liquids, solids and gases and know that some make better thermal insulators than others. It is difficult to evaluate standards from pupils' previous work because of the way it is recorded. Where pupils write information directly into their books, much of this is the same in all pupils' books, copied from worksheets or other sources. This limits some pupils, particularly the more able, and does not adequately develop their independent research skills. It is one of the reasons why few pupils achieve the higher levels of attainment by the age of 11.

102. A very good lesson for pupils in Year 2/3 illustrated the best features of science teaching. After reinforcing pupils' earlier learning about how forces act on objects, the teacher's skilful questioning prompted pupils to think about how to formulate an investigation: "Who has got any ideas about how we could use the car, the truck and the tape measure to find out how things move?" The teacher explained clearly to pupils about how to make a prediction and then asked them to suggest whether the car or truck would travel furthest when pushed and give their reasons. This helped pupils to think scientifically and provided a good degree of challenge for more able pupils who began to make connections between the weight of the vehicle and the distance it might travel. It also provided good opportunities for pupils to learn about fair testing as they considered how to give each vehicle the same amount of 'push'. The teacher provided well for pupils at differing levels of attainment. For example, more able pupils measured the distance travelled in centimetres while less able pupils used straws. There were also opportunities for independent learning as the teacher encouraged pupils to organise themselves in their group, while she supported those who needed a more structured approach.

103. The co-ordinator for science has held the post for a year, during which time she has monitored the quality of teaching and learning throughout the school. There is a comprehensive policy for science, but this is not adequately reflected in practice. The scheme of work is used appropriately to cater for pupils in mixed age classes and ensures that teaching builds progressively on pupils' earlier learning. Sound assessment procedures are in place, but the information gained from these is not always used well enough to match work to the needs of pupils at differing levels of attainment. The subject is well resourced and meets the requirements of the National Curriculum. It is enhanced by visits and visitors to the school. Pupils in Years 5

and 6 went to the Science Museum and a scientist came to the school to demonstrate experiments. The school has close links with a local pharmaceutical firm which loans equipment to support pupils' learning. The development of the Millennium Garden greatly enhances the school's provision. There are appropriate opportunities for pupils to use and improve their numeracy skills, as when they take measurements in experiments and construct graphs to show their results. There is limited use of information and communication technology to support pupils' learning in science.

## **ART AND DESIGN**

104. The inspection took place three weeks into the new school year, when there was little evidence of pupils' completed work. It was possible to observe only one lesson due to timetabling arrangements. As a result, there was insufficient evidence to make overall judgements about the standards pupils achieve, the progress they make and the quality of teaching and learning throughout the school. An analysis of the work in pupils' sketchbooks completed during the previous year showed that they make satisfactory progress in developing their skills in observational drawing. Teachers' planning indicates sound coverage of National Curriculum requirements, and the two-year cycle of topics ensures that pupils in classes where there are two different year groups receive an appropriate range of experiences.

105. The lesson that was observed in Year 1/2 illustrated good teaching of basic techniques. The teacher explained clearly to the pupils what they were intended to learn and presented them with examples of artists' work so that they could study them and look at the way the pictures had been drawn or painted. Pupils identified thick, thin, straight and curved lines, and shapes, such as squares, circles and triangles. They went on to experiment with pencils, crayons and pens, exploring how to make different shapes and lines of varying thickness. This work forms the early stages of a topic on self-portraits and is preparing pupils well to use different techniques and to appreciate line and form. Pupils in Year 2/3 have been exploring pattern. They examined pieces of fabric and recreated the patterns they saw, and also studied the work of Mondrian and Kandinsky to see how they used pattern in their work. Pupils in Year 5/6 have begun a study of the Bayeux Tapestry in preparation for their own work in textiles, where they will create a picture from different materials using a variety of techniques to illustrate a story.

106. The subject co-ordinator has held the post for a year, during which time she has ensured that the scheme of work is appropriately resourced. She has identified the need to monitor the progression in the teaching of specific skills throughout the school to ensure that the pupils' learning builds constructively on their earlier experiences. There has been no formal monitoring of teaching and learning in art and design. However, the policy for the subject states that, when art is a priority for development in the school improvement plan, the co-ordinator is to be given time to observe colleagues and examine pupils' work. The subject makes a satisfactory contribution to pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. For example, the scheme of work shows that pupils in Years 5 and 6 study the culture and artistic traditions of South America, whilst those in Years 3 and 4 study African sculpture and the work of Australian Aborigines. A very comprehensive policy has been in place for almost a year, which provides very clear guidance for teachers. However, there are no mechanisms in place to ensure that it is being implemented consistently by all teachers. Teachers make effective links with other subjects, such as mathematics, English, religious education and science. Pupils use painting and graphics programs in information and communication technology to support their learning.

## **DESIGN AND TECHNOLOGY**

107. Standards in Year 2 are average, which shows an improvement on the judgement of the previous inspection when design and technology was incorporated into science or art. Pupils of all abilities make satisfactory progress and pupils with special educational needs achieve standards similar to other pupils, especially in the 'making' aspect of the subject. There are no significant differences between the attainment of boys and girls.

108. Pupils in Year 2 observe and produce repeating patterns in order to design a coloured pattern for Joseph's 'coat of many colours'. This work makes effective links between design and

technology, religious education and mathematics. Most pupils are able to generate some of their own ideas by using their developing knowledge of products and techniques. When designing and making a sandwich for a children's party, pupils discuss the various fillings available and the different types of bread on the market. Pupils have also investigated photograph frames, using a drawing to illustrate their designs. Year 2 pupils also discuss packaging in the form of a pizza container and suggest ways to improve it. Their ability to develop their own ideas for designing and making tends to be limited as lessons are too closely directed by the teacher.

109. Standards in Year 6 are also average and this judgement shows an improvement since the last inspection. Pupils of all abilities make satisfactory progress and achieve soundly in the subject and there are no differences between the attainment of boys and girls

110. Strengths in achievement in this year group are the pupils' ability to evaluate their work as it develops, for example, when making moving toys, where they use control and cam mechanisms. In their work on joining, they construct frames and frame corners and consider strengths and weaknesses in their designs. Pupils have designed and made their own biscuits, taking into consideration the different types of biscuit and their ingredients, and the type of biscuit suitable for different occasions. Weaknesses in their achievement relate mainly to their inability to gather information for themselves and to use it to generate further ideas in their designs.

111. The quality of teaching and learning is satisfactory, although teachers tend to over direct lessons without giving pupils sufficient opportunity to participate in independent learning. In a Year 2/3 lesson involving the design and making of Joseph's coat of many colours, the teacher linked the lesson well to religious education, mathematics and information and communication technology in relation to repeating patterns. A good range of activities was organised by the teacher to encourage pupils to use their ideas about coloured patterns. These included work on the computer where pupils used a graphics program to create a repeating pattern. Other pupils used boards and coloured pegs and multi-link cubes. However, in the painting task, there was no opportunity for pupils to design their own patterns, which restricted their progress. Pupils in the Year 3/4 class were organised to experiment with decoration techniques before designing a paper mock-up of a money container. The support assistant made a valuable contribution to this lesson by demonstrating sewing techniques such as running and over stitch. Pupils were also motivated by a display of her own work in tapestry and embroidery. The teacher provided a good supply of resources, which gave pupils the opportunity to experiment with several materials for their containers, such as fabric paints, pens, paper, sequins and sewing needles and thread. The teacher made all pupils aware of the safety factors involved with using glue and needles before starting the lesson. Occasionally, teachers talk for too long in the introduction to the lesson, which causes some pupils to lose concentration.

112. The subject is led satisfactorily by an experienced teacher and member of the senior management team. A comprehensive policy is in operation which gives teachers sound guidance on teaching the subject. There is also a suitable scheme of work that provides a two year cycle of activities to satisfy the needs of pupils in mixed age classes. Although the co-ordinator has not had the opportunity to monitor the quality of teaching and learning in the subject, she checks class displays and teachers' planning. Improvement in design and technology is good since the previous inspection as standards, curricular planning and teaching have all improved. Pupils' attitudes and interest in the subject have also played a large part in the rise in standards. Resources for the subject are satisfactory and are well used throughout the school.

## **GEOGRAPHY**

113. Standards of attainment in Year 2 are average and this judgement indicates an improvement since the last inspection when standards were below national expectations. Pupils of all abilities make satisfactory progress and their achievement is sound. The reason for this improvement is the implementation of the Qualifications and Curriculum Authority's recommended scheme of work, and an improvement in the quality of teaching. There are no significant differences in the attainment of boys and girls. No geography lessons were observed



in Year 2 during the inspection but an analysis of pupils' work and teachers' records leads to a judgement of average standards.

114. Pupils in Year 2 are able to identify features in their local area, such as where people live and the activities that are available. Using a good link with mathematics, they have discussed ways of representing how pupils travel to school and have planned their individual routes to school. Their moral and social development is enhanced by the project on 'Global Eye', when they discuss the effect of poor eyesight in Africa. In this same context, pupils consider re-cycled spectacles, and in a link with design and technology are able to design a simple container to collect re-cycled spectacles. Pupils have compared aspects of St Lucia with their own country, including housing, roads, land, schools, transport and weather. Although they are beginning to record their findings using drawing and writing, their written work is still under developed.

115. Standards in Year 6 are average, even though the vast majority of the class have special educational needs. This judgement matches the findings of the previous inspection. This judgement is based on an observation of a geography lesson in Year 5/6 and a detailed analysis of pupils' work books. Pupils make satisfactory progress and their achievement is also satisfactory. Pupils with special educational needs are effectively supported by teaching assistants and this helps to consolidate their achievement over time and their progress in individual lessons. There are no significant differences between the attainment of boys and girls.

116. The strengths of pupils' achievement include their ability to respond well, verbally, to a range of questions about their recent field trip to Sandwich by using their geographic skills to justify some of their observations and judgements of places. They understand the importance of location and are able to describe geographic patterns in their local area. In their previous work, pupils have studied mountain environments and can identify, on an outline map, some of the major mountain areas of the United Kingdom, Europe and the World. In this same context, they have discussed life and weather in the Swiss Alps, considering the effects of tourism and its problems and advantages. Pupils are beginning to identify symbols on Ordnance Survey maps and work out distances, making a useful link with mathematics. They used their map reading skills on a recent trip to London. The comparative weakness in the pupils' attainment is the quality of their written work.

117. The quality of teaching and learning is satisfactory at both key stages. This judgement is roughly in line with that of the previous inspection. In the Year 5/6 lesson observed, the teacher used information and communication technology very well to introduce the lesson. A good combination of equipment was used to reinforce and assess pupils' knowledge about their recent field trip to Sandwich. The class was managed and organised well to give pupils with special educational needs the maximum support. However, in a short lesson, the number of planned activities was ambitious. The teacher used a data projector, computer, video camera and coloured photographs imaginatively to stimulate and motivate pupils' interest. Teachers' planning at both key stages is good. Relative weaknesses in teaching include insufficient emphasis on the quality of pupils' writing and the presentation of their work. Also, more able pupils are not always given appropriately challenging tasks.

118. Leadership and management in the subject are sound. The co-ordinator is experienced and a member of the senior management team. The subject is monitored and evaluated mostly by scrutinising teachers' planning, but there has been no opportunity to observe lessons. A new policy has recently been introduced and the scheme of work is based on the Qualifications and Curriculum Authority's recommendations. Improvement since the last inspection has been good due to a rise in standards and pupils' progress at Key Stage 1. Sound procedures are in place for assessing pupils' attainment and progress, but the use of assessment information to plan for pupils' next steps in learning is in its early stages. Resources are satisfactory and pupils' learning is enhanced by field trips and visits to places of interest.

## **HISTORY**

119. Standards in Year 2 are average, which is an improvement on the judgement made by the school's previous inspection, when low standards were evident at Key Stage 1. All pupils make

satisfactory progress and achieve soundly. Pupils with special educational needs benefit from the effective support that they receive from learning support staff and this consolidates the progress that they make. There are no differences in the attainment of boys and girls.

120. Pupils in Year 2 are able to place events in chronological order, for example, events in the Great Fire of London. They show a developing knowledge and understanding of the events and people of this period. Most pupils are able to use secondary sources of information to answer questions about the past. Although they are able to record their findings by using a time line storyboard of key events, their use of writing in the subject is under developed.

121. Standards in Year 6 are below average, which is broadly similar to the findings of the previous inspection. Pupils make satisfactory progress and achieve soundly in line with their abilities. Pupils with special educational needs are effectively supported by teachers and assistants, and this helps to consolidate their progress in individual lessons and their achievement over time. There are no significant differences in the attainment of boys and girls.

122. Pupils in Year 6 demonstrate a sound factual knowledge and understanding of the social and educational reforms that took place during the Victorian period. They are starting to select and link information from secondary and primary sources, including books, pictures and artefacts from the time. They also know about other countries from the past including Ancient Greece and Ancient Egypt. The weaknesses in the subject mostly centre on most pupils' inability to carry out independent research and produce organised written work independently.

123. The quality of teaching and learning is satisfactory at both key stages which is an improvement since the previous inspection when three quarters of observed teaching was unsatisfactory. There were no instances of unsatisfactory teaching during this inspection. In the Year 2/3 lesson observed, the teacher began well by questioning pupils to ascertain what they had remembered from their previous lesson on the Great Fire of London. The teacher's skilful questioning and exposition showed a good knowledge and understanding of the subject and the period. Pupils' answers to the questions enabled the teacher to fill in a database about the event, which encouraged pupils to focus on the event and answer questions about where it happened, who was involved and what were the causes. The teacher then showed pupils how to construct a chronological sequence of the events that happened during the week of the fire. However, the lesson was over-directed by the teacher and pupils had to sit for a long period, which caused some to lose concentration. In the Year 5/6 lesson, pupils were made aware of the social and educational reforms in Victorian Britain by participating in research and independent learning. A wide range of resources was provided by the teacher, including books and photocopies for pupils to use in their research. The teacher's planning indicated that pupils would use software in the computer suite for further research later in the week. A display of Victorian toy artefacts was also used well to give pupils an impression of school life at the time. A group of pupils took the toys, including wooden tops and hoops into the playground to try them out. Pupils of all abilities were encouraged to talk about what they had found and one pupil with special educational needs became very enthusiastic when he found out that 3,000 children worked as street sellers in Victorian London.

124. The subject is co-ordinated by a well-qualified, enthusiastic teacher who has just started her first year in school as a qualified teacher. A subject policy has been produced and the scheme of work is organised on a two-year cycle, using the recommendations of the Qualifications and Curriculum Authority. The scheme of work is designed to meet the needs of pupils in mixed age group classes. Monitoring and evaluation of the subject are carried out by observing classroom displays and teachers' planning, but the co-ordinator has had no opportunity to monitor the teaching of the subject. Improvement in the subject since the school's last inspection is good as standards have risen as a result of an improvement in the quality of teaching. Procedures for assessing pupils' attainment are satisfactory, but the use of assessment information to plan future work is under-developed. The subject is satisfactorily resourced and these resources are supplemented by the use of loan services, visitors to the school and visits to places of historical interest.

## **INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY**

125. Standards in Year 2 and Year 6 are average. This judgement is the same as that made by the last inspection in Year 2 but shows an improvement in Year 6, where standards were below average. Four years ago, there was no timetabled programme for teaching information and communication technology. The recent installation of a computer suite, comprising 20 networked computers, has improved this, and every class is now timetabled to use the suite at least once a week. Pupils' achievement is satisfactory, overall, at both key stages. Pupils with special educational needs receive effective support from teaching assistants, which helps them to make sound progress in acquiring skills, knowledge and understanding.

126. The quality of teaching and learning is satisfactory, overall, and teachers are growing in confidence as they get used to teaching information and communication technology to the whole class in the computer suite. There are, however, variations in the pace of pupils' progress in different year groups, largely because of differences in teachers' expertise and the fact that, before September 2001, pupils at Key Stage 2 were not able to make satisfactory progress as they only had one computer per class. At Key Stage 1, teachers were able to give all pupils the opportunity to take turns on the computer to complete a given task. At Key Stage 2, pupils were not able to spend long enough on the computer to ensure that they covered the full range of work in sufficient depth. Currently, pupils in Year 6 are being taught by the co-ordinator for the subject, who also taught them in Year 5. Her own considerable expertise in the subject enabled these pupils to increase their skills and knowledge at a rapid pace. For example, when in Year 5, the pupils planned and costed a wedding using a spreadsheet, produced graphs to show the average temperature in Washington DC, used the Internet to find information about mountainous countries and made a multimedia presentation to the class, using a data projector, laptop, music and an overhead projector. They entered instructions on the computer to run a sequence of traffic lights and used a spreadsheet to solve mathematical problems, such as calculating the area and perimeter of different shapes.

127. Pupils in Years 3 and 4 are not reaching average standards for their age. However, in a satisfactory lesson observed during the inspection, they were given plenty of opportunity to investigate a word processing program and explore different styles and size of font. The teacher gave a clear explanation of the purpose of the lesson, and linked it effectively to the pupils' earlier work on calligrams, where words are written in a form that reflects their meaning, in the literacy hour. Both the teacher and assistant supported individual pupils well and helped them to master unfamiliar operations. Many pupils clearly had limited experience in using computers; for instance, they were unaware of how to delete or highlight words. However, a few who knew what to do did not receive sufficiently demanding work to further their knowledge and skills. In the early stages of using the computer suite, teachers have not worked out ways of planning suitably challenging work for more able pupils while supporting the majority who need to work at a slower pace.

128. In a satisfactory lesson for pupils in Year 2/3, the teacher explained clearly to pupils how their class target for improving handwriting and presentation linked well with using the computer. She demonstrated effectively the importance of having spaces between words by writing a sentence without any and asking the pupils to give reasons why spaces were needed. Through skilful questioning, she reminded pupils of the different keys that can be used to produce a capital letter and create a space. After transferring to the computer suite, the pace of the lesson slowed down as the teacher went over the work she had covered in the classroom. Pupils also had to wait until all computers were ready to use, which caused further delay. As teachers become used to a new way of teaching and become familiar with the technical complexities of a computer network, they tend to take the whole class through each stage, step, by step until pupils are actually working. They are then good at encouraging pupils to investigate what the computer can do and all teachers have sufficient knowledge and expertise to enable pupils to make sound progress.

129. In a good lesson for Year 5/6, the teacher introduced pupils to a graphic modelling program for the first time. After clear explanations and instructions, the teacher gave pupils time to investigate the program for themselves and experiment with different aspects. This enhanced the quality of their learning considerably as they became engrossed in the lesson, were well

motivated and learned independently. The teacher's own expertise and technical competency were used effectively to extend pupils' understanding, while her good management of the pupils ensured that all applied considerable effort to the task and achieved high levels of concentration. By the end of the lesson, pupils were able to use a variety of tools to create shapes, and colour, rotate and move them around the screen. Some created three-dimensional shapes and added shadow, while others inserted 'clip art' or added text.

130. The co-ordinator has held the post for a year and has already had a significant impact on the development of the subject and on raising standards in the upper juniors. She provides very good leadership in the subject and has a clear idea of how it needs to develop. However, she has not had the opportunity to monitor and evaluate the quality of teaching and learning throughout the school, although she has maintained an informal overview and ensured that teachers receive support where necessary. There has been very good improvement in resources since the previous inspection, and a comprehensive policy and scheme of work are in place, which provide suitable guidance for teachers. Teachers make good use of information and communication technology to support pupils' learning in other subjects. For example, pupils in Year 2 explored a CD-ROM to find information about different countries and used the keyboard to explore the sounds of instruments.

## **MUSIC**

131. During the inspection, only one music lesson was observed, in Year 5/6, due to timetabling arrangements. In this lesson, the pupils were in the very early stages of their first topic of the year. It is not possible to make overall judgements about standards or the quality of teaching and learning in music throughout the school.

132. In the lesson observed, pupils discussed the *Planet Suite* by Holst, which they had listened to in a previous lesson, and suggested words to describe imagined feelings during a journey into space. The teacher encouraged them to think of the sounds they might use to compose their own 'soundscape' and gave them an opportunity to experiment with different instruments. The teacher showed pupils how to record their composition on a simple grid. The pupils investigated the sounds made by various instruments and began to consider how to put sounds together to recreate a space journey. Quite a few pupils lacked enthusiasm for the task and left it to others in their group to organise while they remained as passive observers.

133. Pupils sing well in assemblies. The acting headteacher, an enthusiastic and very competent musician, motivates pupils to sing with enthusiasm as she accompanies them on the piano, and is also developing pupils' ability to play a rhythmic accompaniment on percussion instruments. This is successfully raising the profile of music in the school.

134. The school is in the early stages of implementing a new scheme of work. A very comprehensive policy has been in place for almost a year but there are no procedures for checking to ensure that it is being implemented consistently. The enthusiastic co-ordinator has held the post for a year, during which time she has overseen the provision of resources to support the new scheme of work. The co-ordinator has not had any opportunity to monitor the quality of teaching and learning throughout the school, but offers informal advice and support to colleagues. The subject is satisfactorily resourced. It makes a good contribution to pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. For example, pupils in Year 3/4 study African music, and those in Years 4, 5 and 6 visited the theatre to see musical performances. A recorder club is planned to begin later in the term.

## **PHYSICAL EDUCATION**

135. Standards in physical education are average in Year 2 and Year 6. Pupils' achievement, including that made by pupils with special educational needs, is satisfactory. Standards have been maintained since the last inspection, when pupils' attainment was in line with national expectations at both key stages.

136. Pupils in Year 2 are able to perform simple balances using their previous knowledge of body positions and are developing the ability to link these actions. They have a sound

awareness of safety in their lessons and are beginning to understand the effect of exercise on their body by checking on their heartbeat during the lesson. They are willing and able to demonstrate their achievements to the rest of the class.

137. Year 6 pupils show a sound ability to practise and improve their performance in dance. They devise imaginative solutions to the challenge of creating their own dance routine to music. All are able to perform safely while working in small or larger groups. The weakness for this age group is their ability to observe and evaluate their own and others' performance, and to use it as a means of improving their work. Approximately, 90 per cent of Year 6 pupils are able to swim for 25 metres by the time they leave the school.

138. The quality of teaching and learning is good, as seen in all of the lessons observed during the inspection. Teachers' knowledge and understanding of the main aspects of the subject are good and lessons are planned well to ensure continuity in learning. In a Year 2/3 lesson, the teacher demonstrated a good awareness of health and safety factors by using a 'warm up' and 'cool down' period at the beginning and end of the lesson. Using a good link to science, pupils were encouraged to check on their heartbeat before and after exercise. The lesson was organised well and both the teacher and the assistant participated actively in the lesson to demonstrate good practice. The lesson was well paced, but no opportunity was given for pupils to observe and evaluate each other's performance. Pupils in the Year 3/4 class were invited to create and perform a gymnastics sequence on the floor and small apparatus. The teacher introduced a lively warm-up and asked pupils, 'Why do we warm up?' The lesson was organised and managed well, especially in getting out and returning mats and apparatus. The teacher, a physical education specialist, was actively involved in the lesson demonstrating good practice to enhance pupils' skills and performance. The main activity was stopped at appropriate times to ensure that all pupils understood how to perform a sequence. Pupils were used well to demonstrate to the rest of the class, but there was little opportunity for them to evaluate and comment on their own and others' performance.

139. A Year 5/6 dance lesson was introduced by the teacher showing the class an excerpt from the musical *West Side Story*. Pupils were encouraged to use their own imagination to participate in independent learning as part of a group. Pupils with special educational needs were particularly well integrated into the groups. The teacher and assistant supported the pupils very well by encouraging and prompting them to devise their own ideas and routines. A very good relationship between the teacher and pupils was apparent in the good behaviour and levels of concentration within the class. Minor weaknesses in the teaching of physical education throughout the school are occasional lapses in safety factors, for example, pupils wearing watches, girls with hair not tied back, and unsuitable footwear in the hall. The pace of lessons is sometimes slowed down by the organisation of getting out and returning apparatus and equipment.

140. The subject is well managed by the two co-ordinators, one for each key stage, who are well qualified to lead the subject, but have only been in post for a year. A comprehensive policy has been recently introduced and a scheme of work is also in place using national guidelines. There are sound procedures for assessing pupils' attainment and progress but the use of assessment information to guide curricular planning is relatively under developed. Neither co-ordinator has had the opportunity to monitor the teaching of physical education although they both monitor teachers' planning. The subject is well resourced and the physical education curriculum is enhanced by extracurricular activities, including a gymnastics club for both Key Stage 1 and Key Stage 2 pupils. A soccer club for boys and girls is currently being organised and run by the school site manager. An after school hockey club is due to be introduced in the near future.

## **RELIGIOUS EDUCATION**

141. Only one lesson was observed during the inspection due to timetabling arrangements. However, a good range of pupils' work was available for scrutiny and this, together with the work on display around the school and discussions with pupils, contributed to the judgements of the inspection. Standards in Year 2 and Year 6 are in line with the expectations of the locally agreed

syllabus. This is the same finding as that made by the previous inspection. Pupils make satisfactory progress at both key stages and their achievement is sound. Pupils with special educational needs benefit from the effective support that they often receive from teaching assistants, and this helps them to make satisfactory progress.

142. The quality of teaching and learning is satisfactory throughout the school. Teachers give pupils a wide range of experiences and increase their knowledge and understanding of different faiths. In Year 2, pupils learn about Jesus and some of the parables he told. They know some of the symbols associated with Christianity, such as a Christingle, and explain what each part represents. They know about different aspects of Judaism and draw and label the Seder plate. Pupils' work shows sound understanding of why churches are important to people. After visiting their local church, pupils wrote with understanding about the different things they saw.

143. Teachers give older pupils opportunities to explore values and beliefs in greater depth. For instance, pupils in Year 6 compare the values held by believers in Judaism, Islam and Christianity. They consider how people express their faith through the arts, after listening to Handel's *Hallelujah Chorus*. They know that art can be sacred and spiritual for believers and how symbols are used in different religions.

144. In the lesson that was observed in Year 2/3, the teacher told the story of *The Good Samaritan* and related it well to the pupils' own experience. She encouraged all pupils to participate in a discussion about times when they have helped someone. She made effective use of puppets to remind pupils about the story and to help them decide which characters were right or wrong to act the way they did. Pupils showed a sound understanding of the moral implications of the story and how it was relevant to their own lives.

145. The shortcomings in pupils' work stem mainly from its written aspects. There is an over reliance on prepared worksheets, which, although helpful for less able pupils, limit the development of more able pupils' literacy skills. Expectations of more able pupils are generally not high enough, in terms of both the content and presentation of their work.

146. The co-ordinator has only recently assumed responsibility for religious education and has, so far, ensured that each topic to be covered is adequately resourced. She has not had the opportunity to check pupils' work or evaluate the quality of teaching and learning in the subject. The school has a satisfactory range of resources to support teaching and learning. Sound assessment procedures are in place but assessment information is not used well enough to inform curricular planning. The subject makes a good contribution to pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. Pupils learn about different faiths and cultures and develop an understanding of how people express their faith through art and music. They visit the local church, but have had no opportunity to visit other places of worship or to learn from visitors representing faiths other than Christianity.