

INSPECTION REPORT

WORTH PRIMARY SCHOOL

Worth

Deal

LEA area: Kent

Unique reference number: 118404

Headteacher: Mrs B Sawers

Mrs Julie Hooper
15334

Dates of inspection: 24 - 26 September 2001

Inspection number: 196516

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

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INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Type of school:	Infant and Junior
School category:	Community
Age range of pupils:	4 - 11
Gender of pupils:	Mixed
School address:	The Street Worth Deal Kent
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Telephone number:	01304 612148
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Appropriate authority:	Governing body
Name of chair of governors:	Mrs M B Barber
Date of previous inspection:	March 1997

INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Team members			Subject responsibilities	Aspect responsibilities
15334	Julie Hooper	Registered inspector	English Science Art and design Music Physical education Religious education	What sort of school is it? How high are standards? – The school's results and pupils' achievements. How well are pupils taught? How well is the school led and managed? What should the school do to improve further?
12289	Susan Burgess	Lay inspector		How high are standards? – 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?
11810	George Logan	Team inspector	Mathematics Design and technology Geography History Information and communication technology	How good are the curricular and other opportunities offered to pupils? The Foundation Stage. Special educational needs. English as an additional language. Equality of opportunity.

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PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

The school is a very small school of its type and caters for pupils between the ages of four and eleven. It is a community school in the village of Worth, a mixed residential area, close to the Cinque Port town of Sandwich. About half of the pupils come from the village, and the rest travel from outside the village because their parents choose to send them to the school. The number of pupils who joined the school and left other than at the normal times in the last year was not significant. However, the number of pupils on roll has dropped significantly since the last inspection when there were 77 pupils on roll, and this has been because there are fewer pupils of school age in the immediate area. Currently, there are 49 pupils attending the school in three classes; 44 are of statutory school age. The children enter school with a wide range of experiences, and attainment overall is as expected of children of their age nationally. The school has identified ten pupils as having special educational needs, which, as a percentage of the total number of pupils in the school, is below the national proportion: none has a statement of special educational need. Although one child has an ethnic minority background, all pupils speak English as their first language, which is unusual when compared with most primary schools. Nine per cent of the pupils are eligible for free school meals, which is below the national figure. The school is part of the Kent and Somerset Virtual Education Action Zone which aims to form closer links between primary and secondary schools. The school gained Investors in People status in June 2000.

HOW GOOD THE SCHOOL IS

Worth Primary School provides a satisfactory education for its pupils in a warm and caring environment. Pupils are very well behaved and have very good attitudes towards their work, which has a positive impact on their learning. The test results of the Year 6 pupils in 2000 showed that standards in English, mathematics and science of this group were well below those in other schools. However, in 2001, results in all of these subjects were much better, although currently there are no published comparatives. Current standards in these subjects of Years 2 and 6 are generally in line with those expected for their age groups. The quality of teaching is good overall and there is some very good teaching, especially in the class of youngest pupils. The school meets the needs of most pupils appropriately and has effective strategies to promote inclusion and equal opportunities. The headteacher has a very clear and positive direction to the work of the school. Governors are very supportive and appropriately involved. The school provides satisfactory value for money.

What the school does well

- The school provides very well for the youngest children in the school and, as the quality of teaching is usually very good, children make good and often very good progress in their learning.
- Teaching is good throughout the rest of the school, promoting at least satisfactory, and more often good progress in pupils' learning.
- The pupils' very good behaviour, positive attitudes and enthusiasm for their work helps them to learn.
- The school provides very well for the pupils' personal development including their spiritual, moral, social and cultural awareness.
- The pupils are looked after very well.

What could be improved

- Standards in information and communication technology, design and technology and geography.
- The opportunities for pupils, especially the older ones, to develop their skills of enquiry and investigation in science.
- The governing body's management of the finances so the school does not go into a deficit budget.
- The appointment of a member of the teaching staff to be responsible for the running of the school in the absence of the headteacher.
- The development of the role of the subject co-ordinators so they play a full part in raising standards in their subjects.

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

HOW THE SCHOOL HAS IMPROVED SINCE ITS LAST INSPECTION

The school was last inspected in March 1997. Since then it has made satisfactory progress in its developments despite prolonged staff absences due to pregnancies and sickness, and currently is well placed to progress at a better pace. The school has successfully addressed, and is continuing to address, the key issues identified in the last report. The more manageable, comprehensive and well-constructed school development plan provides a clear way forward for the future educational direction of the school, with curriculum co-ordinators becoming increasingly more involved in its implementation. The provision for the education of the youngest children is now very good. Teaching has also improved considerably for these children and also, to a lesser extent, throughout the school. The school has developed appropriate assessment procedures for English, mathematics and science and is using these effectively to match work to the needs of the pupils. Most pupils now take a pride in their written work, presenting it in a neat cursive style to a good standard. In addition, there have been significant improvements in the accommodation, and these are ongoing. The information the school provides for parents is better. However, standards in information and communication technology and design and technology are not as good as they were at the last inspection. Attendance figures are also below those at the last inspection. The governors' financial planning, deemed to be sound at the last inspection, is currently unsatisfactory.

STANDARDS

The standards achieved by 11 year olds over the last three years, based on average point scores in National Curriculum tests, are not published in this report. There were fewer than ten pupils who took the tests and government legislation takes account of confidentiality of publication of results to protect individual pupils from being identified, as would happen if any comments or explanations were made on these results. Also, comparisons of trends in these tests very unreliable, due to the very small number of pupils taking the tests. However, in the 2001 tests the school exceeded its target in mathematics.

By the end of the reception year, almost all children are likely to achieve the expected standards in communication, language and literacy, mathematical and creative development, knowledge and understanding of the world and most aspects of physical development. In their personal, social and emotional development some should surpass these goals.

Evidence from the inspection shows that pupils in Years 2 and 6 are, in general, attaining average standards in English, mathematics and science. Pupils attain appropriate standards in basic numeracy and literacy for their age groups and accumulate good scientific knowledge. However, standards of scientific enquiry are not as good as they should be because pupils have too few opportunities to work independently and devise their own experiments.

Standards in religious education are in line with the locally agreed syllabus. Pupils achieve sound standards in most other subjects but standards in information and communication technology and design and technology are currently below what they should be because not enough time is spent on developing skills in these subjects. There was insufficient evidence to make secure judgements on standards in art, geography and music.

Pupils with special educational needs make steady progress towards the targets in their individual education plans, although when receiving individual help they make good progress. There were no pupils in the school who speak English as an additional language and no gifted and talented pupils have been identified, although the school is aware of the needs of such pupils.

Pupils' overall achievements are generally in line with their attainment on entry to the school and for a significant minority of pupils they are better.

PUPILS' ATTITUDES AND VALUES

Aspect	Comment
Attitudes to the school	Very good. A strength of the school. Pupils are happy to come to school and are eager to learn.
Behaviour, in and out of classrooms	Very good, in spite of restricted space. Pupils are polite and confident with adults. The school has had no exclusions.
Personal development and relationships	Personal development is enhanced by willingness to take on responsibilities including older pupils looking after younger ones. Older pupils devise and monitor their own targets. Relationships are very good.
Attendance	Satisfactory, but lower than in last report because more parents take their children on holiday in term time.

TEACHING AND LEARNING

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

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

Teaching observed was good overall and some very good teaching was seen in the class of the youngest children. Evidence from pupils' previous work indicates that standards in teaching are generally good, and especially so in literacy and numeracy, and the school has implemented the National Literacy and Numeracy Strategies well for the mixed ages of pupils in the classes. Teaching of English and mathematics is good overall, and pupils learn effectively because areas for development have been carefully identified and focused upon. For example, pupils learn to write in a variety of styles and for a range of purposes, in lessons other than literacy lessons, in order to extend writing skills further.

Pupils learn effectively because lessons are planned with a clear focus on what pupils are going to learn. Teachers frequently involve pupils in their own learning by telling them what they are going to learn at the beginning of the lesson and, at the end, asking them to demonstrate that they have achieved this. Class discipline is good and pupils listen attentively and respond thoughtfully to well-focused questions, which enhance and extend their learning. Teachers' subject knowledge is usually good and, in general, teachers have high expectations of what their pupils can achieve. However, some teachers knowledge in design and technology and information and communication technology is not secure. Teachers use assessment information effectively to help plan future lessons. This means that tasks are, in general, well matched to pupils' needs and enable them to learn effectively. There are a few weaknesses. Some lessons are cut short because teachers allow the previous lesson to overrun the planned time, and so pupils' learning is limited. Marking is also variable and does not always give pupils a focus for improving their work.

The teaching of pupils with special educational needs is satisfactory overall and good when pupils have individual support.

Support staff make a very valuable contribution to the pupils' education and are well briefed by teachers as to what the pupils are learning and how they should make their input. Voluntary helpers also provide very good help for teachers.

OTHER ASPECTS OF THE SCHOOL

Aspect	Comment
The quality and range of the curriculum	Unsatisfactory overall. The curriculum for children in the Foundation Stage is satisfactory. However, the curriculum for 5 to 11 year olds is unbalanced. The bulk of time is given to literacy and numeracy, and while this is having a positive effect on standards in those subjects, too little time is left to teach other areas of the curriculum properly. This limits pupils' learning opportunities and is the main reason why standards in some subjects are unsatisfactory.
Provision for pupils with special educational needs	Satisfactory. The school accurately identifies pupils with special educational needs and supports them effectively. This enables these pupils to make steady progress towards the targets set for them.
Provision for pupils' personal, including spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	Very good overall. There is very good provision for pupils' social and moral development. Pupils have a clear understanding of the difference between right and wrong. The provision for spiritual and cultural development is good. Pupils benefit from a range of outings and are gaining some awareness of other cultures.
How well the school cares for its pupils	Very well. The school knows its pupils well and provides a safe and secure environment.

Although the planned curriculum includes all subjects, and is enriched by the inclusion of introductory courses in French and Latin, there is a lack of balance in the time given to different subjects. This affects the depth to which they can be covered and, in consequence, the standards which are achieved, and is a fundamental weakness in the school's work.

Parents are generally supportive of the work of the school and appreciate the improved level of information. However, the impact of parents' involvement on the work of the school remains limited.

HOW WELL THE SCHOOL IS LED AND MANAGED

Aspect	Comment
Leadership and management by the headteacher and other key staff	Satisfactory. After a period of instability, mainly owing to long-term staff absences, the headteacher and staff now work together as a good team committed to providing the best education for the pupils and raising standards.
How well the governors fulfil their responsibilities	Satisfactory. Governors are very supportive and fulfil their statutory duties.
The school's evaluation of its performance	Satisfactory. The school monitors and evaluates its performance regularly and the governing body as a whole has a reasonable understanding of the school's strengths and weaknesses.
The strategic use of resources	Satisfactory. Finances have been managed well and have been used effectively to support school developments. However, governors are now having to take into account the implications to the budget of the on-going steady fall in the number of pupils on roll. The budget is close to going into a deficit; governors now have several options to consider to prevent this happening

Governors endeavour to operate the budget according to the principles of best value. The school is generously staffed with appropriately qualified and experienced teachers and support staff to meet the demands of the curriculum. The school is very lucky to have an excellent administrator. Currently, the school does not have sufficient funding to appoint a teacher to be in charge when the headteacher is away. Teachers are making a promising start in their roles as subject leaders and most have clear plans to raise standards in these subjects. Although significant improvements have been made to the accommodation and there are fewer pupils, classrooms are still cramped. However, the conversion of the air-raid shelter into an activity area should make more space for practical work. There are sufficient learning resources to enable the curriculum to be taught effectively.

PARENTS' AND CARERS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

What pleases parents most	What parents would like to see improved
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The school is well led and managed. • Teaching is good. • They would feel comfortable about approaching staff with questions or problems. • Their children like school. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The school does not work closely enough with parents and the information on topics to be taught is not detailed enough for parents to fully support their children's learning. • Some are not certain that appropriate amounts of homework are set.

The inspection team is in general agreement with the parents' positive comments, although it found the leadership and management of the school to be satisfactory rather than good. Inspectors found that the amount of information offered to parents had improved since the last inspection. The school is committed to establishing a closer partnership with parents and works hard to encourage their involvement. However, the response to these efforts is sometimes disappointing. The school has an appropriate homework policy with work given on a regular basis to support the curriculum.

PART B: COMMENTARY

HOW HIGH ARE STANDARDS?

The school's results and pupils' achievements

1. Nearly all children when they enter the school, in the September or January before their fifth birthday, have had some pre-school experience. They enter reception with average attainment overall. By the end of the reception year, almost all children are likely to achieve the Early Learning Goals¹ in communication, language and literacy, mathematical and creative development, knowledge and understanding of the world and most aspects of physical development. In their personal, social and emotional development some should surpass these goals.
2. Standards in reading in the national tests for Year 2 pupils improved greatly over the four years to 2000 when pupils were attaining standards well above the national average and other schools where pupils have similar backgrounds. There were improvements to a much lesser extent in the writing tests, although in 2000 pupils were still attaining standards below the national average and also when compared with pupils with similar backgrounds in other schools. Pupils' standards in the mathematics tests between 1997 and 1999 were below or well below the national average. They improved considerably in 2000 when standards attained were above the national average and when compared with schools where pupils have similar backgrounds. Teachers' assessments of standards in science at the end of 2000 for this age group were also above average. In 2001 the national test results dropped considerably in reading, writing and mathematics and also teacher assessments in science were lower due to a larger than usual number of pupils with special educational needs in the group. Overall, the seven-year-old girls have performed better than the boys in reading and writing over the last three years, but boys have performed better in mathematics.
3. In the tests for Year 6 pupils the results in English showed a significant improvement from 1997 to 1999 at which time pupils were achieving well above average. Over the same time, the test results in mathematics and science varied considerably from year to year. In 2000, standards in English dropped to below average and well below in mathematics and science and in all subjects standards were well below those of with pupils with similar backgrounds in other schools. Tracking pupils as they move through the school shows these pupils made at least satisfactory progress and the results reflect the pupils' attainment when they entered school. Over the last three years there has been no significant difference in the performance of girls and boys. In 2001, although there are no published comparatives, the standards pupils achieved in all three subjects were much better, especially in mathematics where all pupils achieved the expected Level 4 or above, exceeding the school's target. It is important to note that comparisons in trends are very unreliable when such small numbers of pupils in each year group take the tests. For example, in the 2001 tests a pupil, who was expected to attain the higher Level 5 in English, mathematics and science, was absent for the English and science tests, so the results in both of these subjects were depressed by 11 percentage points.
4. The majority of pupils make at least satisfactory over time and were frequently observed to be making good progress in lessons. Pupils are benefiting from the improved teaching and the generous level of stable teaching staff. Most pupils who are capable of attaining nationally expected standards do so, and those pupils with the potential for higher attainment go on to attain above average levels. The school has set challenging yet realistic targets for the English and mathematics tests for 2002. Pupils also make good progress in their personal and social development and this is a major factor in enabling teachers to establish calm interactive conditions in which good quality learning can take place.
5. The current pupils in Years 2 and 6 are attaining standards in English, mathematics and science expected for their age group.

¹ Early Learning Goals are what most children are expected to achieve by the end of the foundation year (reception year) in the following areas of their development: personal, social and emotional, communication, language and literacy, mathematical, knowledge and understanding of the world, physical and creative.

6. Most pupils speak confidently and articulately using an increasingly wide vocabulary as they move through the school. They communicate their thoughts and feelings well in lessons, and a minority of pupils show above average standards. Pupils listen attentively to their teachers and each other. Pupils' reading skills are average although in every year group there is a significant minority who read better than this. Pupils' skills in writing, although average, are less well-developed. In literacy lessons and useful weekly writing sessions, pupils write for an appropriate range of purposes and in a variety of styles. Pupils' use of grammar in their writing is satisfactory and most pupils write in a neat cursive script. Pupils' number skills are average overall, and most pupils in Year 6 show a satisfactory grasp of tables and of the strategies necessary for accurate mental calculations. In science, pupils undertake an appropriate range of work which gives pupils a good knowledge and understanding of scientific facts, but pupils' skills of scientific enquiry are not as well developed, as they have too few opportunities to devise their own experiments.
7. Standards in religious education are in line with the locally agreed syllabus. Pupils achieve sound standards in most other subjects but standards in information and communication technology and design and technology are currently below average because not enough time is spent on developing skills in these subjects. There was insufficient evidence to make secure judgements on standards in art, geography and music.
8. The provision for pupils with special educational needs is satisfactory. As a result pupils make satisfactory progress towards the targets in their individual education plans. Progress is better, however, when pupils, particularly those at Stage 3, are individually supported. There were no pupils in the school who speak English as an additional language and no gifted and talented pupils have been identified, although the school is aware of the needs of such pupils.

Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development

9. Pupils' attitudes and behaviour are very good and, as at the time of the last inspection, are a strength of the school. Pupils are interested in their work, enjoy reading and generally sustain their concentration during lessons, for example in writing a journal in Year 1. They work well in groups and pairs, for instance discussing in religious education what it means to value something, helping each other to find words relevant to Ancient Egypt or, in Year 6, exploring differences between fact and opinion. Older pupils shared resources sensibly during a sewing lesson for design and technology and even those who found it difficult persevered well with their stitching and designs.
10. Relationships between pupils and staff and between pupils themselves are very good. Pupils are polite and confident with adults and are happy to talk about their work.
11. Behaviour in class, in assemblies and around the school is very good. The school is justly proud of a letter received from an Isle of Wight coach company praising the exemplary behaviour of Year 5 and 6 pupils on their last school journey. Pupils play amicably together at breaktimes in spite of the very limited space available. Although in the past there have been isolated problems of bullying, parents at the pre-inspection meeting were confident that, should similar incidents occur in future, they would be dealt with well. There were no exclusions last year.
12. Pupils with special educational needs, like others in the school, are keen to learn and they form good relationships with one another and the adults who support them in lessons. Pupils with educational behavioural difficulties respond well to praise and clearly understand the code of conduct in the classroom. They respect the views of others in class lessons and pupils' personal development is reinforced by the satisfactory links between home and school. The local education authority Learning Support Service provides good support to the school and pupils.
13. When pupils are given duties they carry them out conscientiously. As pupils progress through the school they take on more responsibilities. Older pupils help younger ones in the playground, act as post monitors, check absentees for dinner numbers and help with other school routines. Class 3 pupils help to devise their own literacy and numeracy targets and monitor their progress. This process is also shared with parents. Even the youngest wait

quietly in line after break. Through the school council pupils take responsibility for decision-making.

14. Attendance, at 94.4 per cent, is satisfactory. This figure is exactly the national average and slightly lower than at the time of the last inspection. This is because more parents now take their children on holiday during term time. There was no unauthorised absence last year. Although punctuality is generally good, a small number of pupils are regularly late. Registration is orderly and efficient.

HOW WELL ARE PUPILS TAUGHT?

15. Overall, the quality of teaching is good and frequently very good especially for the youngest pupils and as a result pupils learn well and often very well. No unsatisfactory teaching was observed. Seventy-four per cent of teaching was good or better and 17 per cent very good. For the five to seven year olds, 82 per cent of the teaching was good or better and 27 per cent very good. Of the teaching of the seven to 11 year olds, 60 per cent of the teaching was good. In the small number of lessons observed for the children in the foundation year, the teaching was very good. Overall, this represents an improvement since the last inspection. However, as nearly all the teachers have only been in the school for just over a year, the improved teaching providing good learning, has not had time to make a significant impact on raising standards of pupils in Year 6. Care should also be taken when interpreting these percentages as each lesson represents over four percentage points.
16. Teachers are conscientious, enthusiastic and clear about what they expect pupils to learn. In the class of the youngest pupils, the significant strengths of the very good teaching which most effectively help the children to make very good progress in their learning are the quality of the relationships, a good understanding of what interests young children, clear instruction and effective questioning, and, in the main, high expectations. In all classes, teachers plan work appropriately to meet the demands of the National Curriculum and literacy and numeracy lessons are executed in line with the strategy requirements. Teachers have a good knowledge of the needs of the pupils in their classes and most cater very well for the wide range of ages and ability levels in their classes especially in English, mathematics and science. This ensures that most pupils make at least satisfactory and more often good progress in their learning. This is an improvement since the last inspection. For example, in a very good literacy lesson, the teacher, even though there were only six pupils in the Year 1 group, set different work for pupils in three ability groups, which challenged and promoted their learning. Also, the good working practice being built up with the pupils, enabled her to make a full and well paced input into teaching individual groups, including the children in the foundation year, whilst the others carried on with their tasks conscientiously. The classroom assistant made a valuable input in this lesson as she clearly knew what the children had to learn and how to communicate and promote this learning.
17. In nearly all lessons, teachers have high expectations of work and behaviour and the mutual respect that frequently exists between the teachers and their pupils creates a fruitful learning environment. This is particularly so in literacy and numeracy lessons as the quality of teaching is usually good or better. Teachers successfully provide a good balance between building on and reinforcing pupils' previous knowledge, and presenting them with new ideas and information. Also, in these lessons basic skills are taught effectively. For example, during a numeracy lesson the teacher of the Years 2 and 3 pupils was recapping on pupils' previous knowledge of the place value of two-digit numbers and addition of such numbers. She promoted learning effectively through skilful questioning to stimulate thought. By targeting questions well to the different ages and abilities of pupils in the class, to which pupils responded quickly and accurately, she also promoted learning successfully for all pupils.
18. Teachers' enthusiasm for promoting learning frequently shows in their lessons, reflecting the good teaching observed during the inspection in most subjects. In a geography lesson the youngest pupils were studying the environment of a village and in particular, Worth. The teacher had a very good knowledge of the subject, gave clear explanations and injected a sense of humour into the lesson. Hence, the pupils listened attentively and were enjoying gaining knowledge imparted in this exciting way.

19. The early identification of pupils' special educational needs ensures that pupils make a good start to school. They make steady progress overall because of challenging targets in their individual education plans and the good teaching in most lessons. Teachers' lesson plans in literacy and numeracy lessons ensure that the work is planned to meet the needs of the different ability groups. However, when planning activities in subjects other than English, mathematics and science, account is not taken of the pupils' targets in their individual education plans. Teachers and support staff work closely together when planning activities to help pupils with special educational needs. Teachers have high expectations for good behaviour and their good questioning skills challenge the pupils to think.
20. There are some weaknesses in teaching. Some lessons are cut short because teachers allow the previous lesson to overrun the planned time, and so pupils' learning is limited. This was so when a physical education lesson did not finish on time and pupils missed part of their religious education lesson. Also, teachers do not always allow long enough for the class activity at the end of lessons, particularly in literacy and numeracy lessons, so pupils can revise, share and consolidate what they have learned in the lesson. Sometimes, lessons become slow and the pace and the quality of learning deteriorate. For example, in a science lesson, a great deal of time was spent by pupils in recording their work as an artistic collage, gaining little scientific knowledge in the process.
21. Marking is variable. At its best teachers achieve a good balance between making encouraging comments and suggestions for improvement and development. However, too often work is just ticked with a minimal supportive comment. Homework is frequently used well to support learning. For instance, most pupils have homework diaries in which they record what they have to do at home in support of their work in class. All pupils are encouraged to read at home, and even the oldest pupils are aware that they should read at home for at least 20 minutes every day.
22. Support staff make a very valuable contribution to the pupils' education and are well briefed by teachers as to what the pupils are learning and how they should make their input. Voluntary helpers also provide very good help for teachers.

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

23. When the school was last inspected, the curriculum was generally broad and balanced, although the provision for children under five was not fully appropriate. The school has successfully dealt with this weakness and the curriculum planned for children under five in the Foundation Stage is now satisfactory, with some strengths, and provides a broad range of experiences for the children. It is based on the areas of learning recommended for young children, with good support for the development of basic skills. As the year progresses, the most able children in the reception class begin to work within the Key Stage 1 curriculum. The provision prepares children effectively for the National Curriculum and the next stage of learning, with the majority of children making good progress across the curriculum, in relation to their broadly average attainment on entry to the school.
24. Although the planned curriculum for the older pupils satisfactorily meets the requirements of the National Curriculum for pupils aged five to 11, the implementation of these plans is inconsistent and not all subjects are taught to an appropriate depth. This is unsatisfactory. The school has placed considerable emphasis upon the teaching of mathematics and literacy, and this is leading to improving standards in these key areas. Time constraints, however, limit the depth to which pupils access the wider curriculum. Information technology skills are not developed sufficiently. The provision for the development of investigative skills in science is limited. There are weaknesses in the standards achieved in design and technology and geography and to a lesser extent, art and history. On the other hand, the school has been successful in developing initiatives to provide pupils with access to other languages. This includes French and, for the oldest pupils, a recently-introduced primary Latin course.
25. The allocation of curriculum time to individual subjects in planning is satisfactory. However,

time is used less rigorously in practice. Lessons occasionally overrun and this causes subsequent sessions to be foreshortened. The scrutiny of pupils' past work indicates that over time, too little emphasis has been given to some elements of the curriculum. Sometimes, sessions lose pace and the quality of learning deteriorates. On the other hand, the allocation of increased time to the physical education curriculum, together with the use of good quality facilities, is contributing to the improving standards which are evident across the subject.

26. Religious education is taught in accordance with the locally agreed syllabus. A good curriculum has been developed to support pupils' personal, social and health education. All necessary elements are in place, including sex education, drugs awareness and citizenship. Some elements are taught discretely, or in circle time, where pupils have an opportunity to discuss their concerns and to listen to others. Other aspects, such as sex education or health education, are more closely linked to the science or physical education curricula. Overall, the school prepares pupils successfully for the next stage of their education.
27. The quality of the curriculum has improved since the last inspection, particularly in the provision for literacy, numeracy and for Foundation Stage children. The school has adopted the strategies for teaching the basic skills of literacy and numeracy with success. The National Literacy Strategy is securely established with good practice evident at both key stages. The school has implemented the National Numeracy Strategy effectively. This has had a positive effect upon standards in mathematics. Many pupils have secure number skills. The application of numeracy skills is evident in science and occasionally in design and technology.
28. There are satisfactory policy documents in place for all statutory subjects. Customised and fully-updated mid-term planning has been implemented. These are closely aligned to the school's particular needs. The school now intends to focus on the identification of and planning for cross-curricular links, so that time is used efficiently. In time, art activities may thus be more closely aligned to work in history, for example. The school has developed a whole-school plan that provides an overview of what is to be taught to each year group. Planning is effective, provides a clear framework for the teaching and is supportive to teachers.
29. All pupils have satisfactory equality of access and opportunity to the curriculum, although there are weaknesses in relation to the less well-established subjects. The opportunities provided for pupils with special educational needs in the main school are satisfactory and the school implements the Code of Practice² fully. Pupils on the register of special needs have appropriate focused targets in their individual education plans and are provided with an relevant range of experiences to meet their needs. The in-school support for pupils with statements of special educational need is satisfactory. There are no children with special educational needs in the Foundation Stage.
30. The programme for extra-curricular activities is good, particularly in the context of a small school. The range of activities includes games, gardening, arts, cookery, chess and computer studies. The curriculum is enhanced by an imaginative programme of visits outside school and a good range of visitors to the school. The school has good links with the community, and particularly with neighbouring schools and partner institutions. Procedures for welcoming new children to the school are well established and there is effective sharing of information with parents.
31. The provision for the pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural awareness remains a strength of the school.
32. Provision for the spiritual development of pupils is good, although the promotion of pupils' spiritual development across the curriculum is incidental rather than coherently planned. Pupils have a close knowledge of nature and are very responsive to the silence of the village and the birds and small animals which they see. The spiritual dimensions of some areas of the curriculum, such as music and dance, remain underdeveloped. Opportunities are provided for the study of beliefs both through the religious education curriculum and some daily assemblies.

² Code of Practice - this gives practical advice to schools and local education authorities about their responsibilities and tasks to ensure that pupils who have special educational needs receive the most appropriate help to further their learning and personal development. This is a statutory duty under the 1993 Education Act.

The acts of collective worship are satisfactory, and provide adequate time for reflection and prayer. The acknowledgement of festivals from other cultures is well-developed throughout the school.

33. The provision for pupils' moral development is very good and pupils are clearly taught the principles of right and wrong and of care of property and the school environment. The school has comprehensive personal, social and health education provision, which includes the teaching of moral and social issues. Teachers actively promote opportunities for such discussions, encouraging pupils to develop a caring and tolerant attitude.
34. Provision for pupils' social development is very good and they are given encouragement to relate effectively to others. Social relationships within the school are excellent. Pupils learn to take responsibility for themselves and others. They elect representatives to the School Council. They undertake jobs such as taking registers and learn to care for others. The school works hard to build up pupils' confidence and self-esteem. Pupils raise money for charity and learn about caring for those less fortunate than themselves. They have been closely involved with local developments, such as the Cycle Path, and some have attended local government ceremonies, such as the Mayor-Making.
35. The provision for pupils' cultural development is good and the school provides good opportunities for pupils to appreciate the cultural traditions of others. The curriculum provision of French and Latin enables pupils to extend their awareness of other cultures. The school provides access to a range of experience in the arts and pupils go on a number of trips and visits. They also participate in performance opportunities such as concerts and religious festivals.

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL CARE FOR ITS PUPILS?

36. There is a welcoming, friendly atmosphere in the school, with very good relationships between pupils and staff and between pupils themselves. The whole staff work well as a team, know the pupils well as individuals and provide good role models.
37. First aid and medical matters are efficiently managed, although there is nowhere for pupils to lie down if they feel unwell. Break times and lunchtimes are well organised to overcome the difficulties of eating lunch in very cramped classrooms. Supervision is good throughout the day and pupils are encouraged to make the best use of the very small playground by the provision of interesting play equipment.
38. The school aims to reward kindness to others as well as good work, behaviour and manners, with various incentives offered for achievement. Bullying is actively and consistently discouraged.
39. Child protection matters are well organised and staff training is up to date. There are efficient procedures to monitor attendance and punctuality with termly visits from the education welfare officer. Attendance has fallen slightly since the last inspection because an increasing number of holidays are being taken in term time. The school has yet to formalise a policy on this matter.
40. Although procedures for monitoring pupils' progress were considered to be good at the last inspection, the systems were inconsistent across the school. The quality of marking was variable. The weaknesses identified have been resolved and the school now has good systems, effectively implemented, for assessing the quality of pupils' work in English, mathematics and science. Pupils are tested on entry to the school and, subsequently, towards the end of each school year. The information derived from these tests is used to choose groups and to support planning. Appropriate procedures have been identified for assessing pupils' attainment and progress in the key areas of English, mathematics and science. These arrangements meet statutory requirements. Those for assessing and recording pupils' language skills have been implemented well and are contributing to the improved standards being achieved. In the other subjects, the school has yet to put such arrangements into practice. There is limited information as to the progress which pupils have made. Consequently, teachers cannot be sure that they can keep track of how well pupils are

learning. There is clear evidence that teachers make appropriate use of the information they gain from the assessments they make of pupils' attainment and progress in English and mathematics to change their planning as needed. The quality and rigour of assessment procedures, together with the use made of that information, is a particular strength in the Foundation Stage where it is very good. However, the use of assessment information in other subjects is not securely established. Standards are not being monitored effectively. As a result, teachers cannot always be sure that they are setting tasks for pupils that match their learning needs well. Teachers make some use of pupils' individual education plans when planning work for pupils with special educational needs, but do not consistently identify the individuals concerned in planning, particularly in relation to subjects other than English, mathematics and science.

41. Individual education plans have accurate and specific targets with personnel identified to give support to these pupils. Assessment and review of individual needs is good and undertaken rigorously by the special educational needs co-ordinator.
42. The school provides a safe environment for pupils and gives a high priority to health and safety. For instance, building work was in progress on the old air-raid shelter during inspection week and the whole of the immediate area was made secure with appropriate fencing. Security arrangements have been improved since the last inspection and are now very good.

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL WORK IN PARTNERSHIP WITH PARENTS?

43. Parents are in general very supportive of the school. Of those who expressed an opinion, most feel confident that it is well led and managed and that the teaching is good. A similar proportion would feel comfortable about approaching staff with questions or problems. However, some do not think that the school works closely enough with parents and a significant number are not certain that an appropriate amount of homework is set.
44. Inspectors found that the amount of information offered had improved since the last inspection and that the school has an appropriate homework policy with work given on a regular basis to support the curriculum. The school is committed to establishing a closer partnership with parents and works hard to encourage their involvement. However, the response to these efforts is sometimes disappointing. Only three parents came to the annual meeting of parents and governors, and a drugs awareness presentation was poorly attended. Less than 50 per cent of the pre-inspection questionnaires were returned and only six parents, two of whom were parent governors, came to the meeting with the registered inspector. The opinion of the majority of parents about the school is, therefore, unknown.
45. Twenty per cent of parents do not attend consultation evenings with their child's teacher and none now helps regularly in school. It is difficult to fill parent governor posts and the parent teacher association relies on a small number of active members to organise fund-raising events such as the summer fete. Practical support from parents is thus substantially less than it was at the time of the last inspection. This is due in part to the number who live some distance from the school. However, just under £1000 was raised last year. This is used to benefit pupils by, for instance, supplying the leavers' books, buying play equipment for the playground and subsidising the cost of hiring coaches. A certain amount will also be put aside for refurbishing the old air-raid shelter as an activities room.
46. Parents and their children with special educational needs are involved to some extent in the review of individual education plans. However, practice has been inconsistent and the school is seeking to improve the consistency of approach. Comments and records are thorough and regularly updated by the special educational needs co-ordinator.
47. Information to parents is good. This is an improvement since the last report. The prospectus, incorporating the home/school agreement, is detailed and informative. However, some elements are missing from the governors' annual report to parents which on the whole is rather brief. Copious newsletters are sent home with full details about forthcoming events but the format of these is unimaginative. Each class teacher also produces a termly letter to parents outlining the topics that will be studied. However, as at the time of the last inspection, parents

would like these letters to be more detailed so that they feel more involved in their children's learning. Annual reports are clearly written, accurately describe attainment, and include targets for improvement. There are suitable opportunities for the exchange of information at the end of the school day and personal target books for pupils in Years 4, 5 and 6 go home regularly for parents to add their comments.

HOW WELL IS THE SCHOOL LED AND MANAGED?

48. The leadership and management of the school are satisfactory overall, and would appear to be similar to the last inspection, although no clear judgements were made. The headteacher, appointed just before the last OFSTED inspection has overseen steady improvements in the quality of the curriculum, the quality of lesson planning and of teaching through an appropriate monitoring and evaluation programme. However, the progress of these improvements has been greatly hindered because of unfortunate changes in circumstances. Not long after the last inspection, due to financial restraints, the headteacher had to take on a full-time teaching commitment, which restricted considerably the amount of time she could devote to her managerial responsibilities. Also, prolonged staff absences due to pregnancies and sickness meant that the headteacher was not able to delegate responsibilities to other members of the teaching staff. However, more recently the governing body has employed new teachers and a good team spirit has been built up so there is now a shared, whole-school determination and capacity to succeed in the pursuit of raising standards in line with the school's wholly appropriate aims. This has had a significant impact on improving standards, especially in English, mathematics and science, over the last year. To celebrate this more stable atmosphere in the school the school applied for Investors in People status and gained this in June 2000.
49. Governors are very supportive and fulfil their statutory responsibilities. For example, the process of performance management is well in hand with appropriate targets set for the headteacher and all eligible teachers. Most governors make regular visits to the school as part of a timetable of programmed visits and some give valuable help in the office and classrooms. The chair of governors is a valuable source of support and advice to the headteacher. The school monitors and evaluates its performance regularly and the governing body as a whole has a reasonable understanding of the school's strengths and weaknesses. Governors make good use of the detailed analysis of assessment results and compare them with other schools both locally and nationally. The comprehensive and well-constructed school development plan provides a clear way forward for the future educational direction of the school. This is an improvement since the last inspection. However, currently there are no formal procedures in place to monitor and evaluate the progress of these initiatives, and their effects on the education the school provides. For example, there is no programme to monitor the possible improvements the refurbished air-raid shelter will have on the standards of the more practical subjects.
50. Recently, the governing body had to give careful consideration to managing its expenditure and handling contingencies due to the number of pupils of school age in the immediate area steadily decreasing. In addition, the number of pupils that it is seen to be safe for the school to house has been decreased from 12 to eight pupils in each year group. This has resulted in a predicted carry forward of income over expenditure this financial year of £52 compared with over £15,000 last year. As a result, the budget is very close to going into a deficit. Since this became clear, the governors have sought advice and have several options to consider to prevent this happening. In addition, the school does not have sufficient funding to be able to appoint a teacher to be in charge of the school when the headteacher is away. Nevertheless, governors endeavour to operate the budget according to the principles of best value; for example, through careful tendering processes, the governing body makes sure it obtains the best value for money for all contracts. Specific grants are used appropriately; for example, the school uses the 'small schools' grant very effectively to enhance the physical education provision and provide a good gymnastics programme for pupils at a local sports hall.
51. Because of staffing problems, the school has made a slow but promising start on monitoring and evaluating the curriculum and teaching and the impact it has on pupils' learning. This is

especially so in English and mathematics, through the classroom observations undertaken by outside agencies, the headteacher and some teachers. Although teachers in their roles of subject co-ordinators have worked hard to update policies and review and update planning programmes in line with curriculum changes, the school recognises that the co-ordinators' role in the overall management of the school is very much in its infancy and needs to be developed.

52. Leadership provided by the special educational needs co-ordinator is good. The governor who oversees special educational needs provision shows an active interest in monitoring the progress pupils make towards their targets. Resources including classroom assistants are used satisfactorily to support pupils' learning and have a positive effect on the standards achieved by the pupils. Statutory requirements of the Code of Practice for special educational needs are met. The school receives good support from the local education authority and from outside agencies.
53. The school is generously staffed with appropriately qualified and experienced teachers and support staff to meet the demands of the curriculum. Good induction procedures are in place for all staff new to the school including newly qualified teachers. Teachers are well supported by non-teaching assistants who work very well with them to support pupils in the classroom. The school is very lucky to have an excellent administrator. She works extremely hard, and far beyond the expectations of her duties, for the benefit of the school.
54. Some aspects of accommodation have improved since the last inspection especially as there are currently a third fewer pupils. Developments include the provision of better toilet facilities for the pupils, a designated staffroom and a small library. Building work is under way to turn the old air-raid shelter in the playground into a much-needed art, design and technology and storage area.
55. However, even with fewer pupils than at the time of the last report, accommodation remains barely satisfactory. The cramped classrooms make it extremely difficult for the whole school to meet even though folding doors now open up two rooms and it is no longer necessary to move furniture around to hold assemblies. For physical education, pupils walk a short distance to the parish hall or they travel to Deal. A new library has been created from an old cloakroom but, with little storage available elsewhere, this area has quickly become so cluttered with resources, artefacts and spare chairs that most of the books are inaccessible.
56. The playgrounds are too small for clearly defined areas to be created but there is now a quiet corner with seating. The only available space for the planned Foundation Stage play area is a tiny site behind existing fencing around the old pond. It is difficult to see how this will usefully add to the provision for the youngest children. The degraded paintwork of the exterior window frames does not enhance the appearance of the school as a whole.
57. Learning resources are very much the same as at the last inspection and for all subjects they are at least adequate to meet the needs of the curriculum. Although information and communication technology resources are better, with four desktop and four relatively new lap-top computers, this improvement has not yet had a positive impact on improving standards in the subject. However, the school uses information and communication technology effectively to support its management.
58. The school has made satisfactory improvements since the last inspection and school development planning indicates a capacity to improve further. Although the cost of educating individual pupils is similar to other small schools, it is very high compared with that nationally. Nevertheless, the school is currently giving satisfactory value for money.

WHAT SHOULD THE SCHOOL DO TO IMPROVE FURTHER?

59. The governors, with the headteacher and staff should take the following actions:
 - (1) Improve standards in information and communication technology* and design and technology and give pupils a greater depth of study in geography, by: (Paragraphs 7, 24,

- 76, 98, 114, 117)
- ensuring that an appropriate amount of time is spent developing pupils' skills in these subjects;
 - developing teachers' expertise in information and communication technology and design and technology so they feel fully confident to teach them.
- (2) Provide opportunities for pupils, especially the older ones, within the science curriculum and in teachers' planning, to develop their skills of enquiry and investigation in science. (Paragraphs 6, 24, 92, 93)
 - (3) Ensure that governors take the best and appropriate action in order to prevent the budget going into a deficit without adverse effects on the pupils' education through seeking advice as necessary. (Paragraph 50)
 - (4) Appoint a member of the teaching staff to be responsible for the running of the school in the absence of the headteacher. (Paragraph 50)
 - (5) Develop the role of the subject co-ordinators* so they play a full part in raising standards in the subjects for which they are responsible. (Paragraphs 51, 93, 97, 101, 113, 117, 119, 124, 127)

In addition, the school might like to consider addressing the following minor issues in their action plan:

- Develop assessment procedures for all subjects. (Paragraphs 40, 106, 112)
- Develop pupils' writing skills across the curriculum, especially in history and geography. (Paragraphs 76, 105, 109)

* The school has identified these areas for development on the school development plan.

PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS

Summary of the sources of evidence for the inspection

Number of lessons observed	23
Number of discussions with staff, governors, other adults and pupils	35

Summary of teaching observed during the inspection

	Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
Number	0	4	13	6	0	0	0
Percentage	0	17	57	26	0	0	0

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

Information about the school's pupils

Pupils on the school's roll	YR – Y6
Number of pupils on the school's roll (FTE for part-time pupils)	49
Number of full-time pupils known to be eligible for free school meals	4

Special educational needs	YR – Y6
Number of pupils with statements of special educational needs	0
Number of pupils on the school's special educational needs register	10

English as an additional language	No of pupils
Number of pupils with English as an additional language	0

Pupil mobility in the last school year	No of pupils
Pupils who joined the school other than at the usual time of first admission	4
Pupils who left the school other than at the usual time of leaving	2

Attendance

Authorised absence

	%
School data	5.6
National comparative data	5.2

Unauthorised absence

	%
School data	0
National comparative data	0.5

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

There were fewer than ten pupils who took the national assessment tests at the end of Key Stages 1 and 2 in 1999 and 2000 and government legislation takes account of confidentiality of publication of results to protect individual pupils from being identified. Therefore the results of these tests are not published in this report.

Ethnic background of pupils

	No of pupils
Black – Caribbean heritage	0
Black – African heritage	0
Black – other	1
Indian	0
Pakistani	0
Bangladeshi	0
Chinese	0
White	43
Any other minority ethnic group	0

This table refers to pupils of compulsory school age only.

Exclusions in the last school year

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

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

Teachers and classes

Qualified teachers and classes: YR – Y6

Total number of qualified teachers (FTE)	3.7
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	13
Average class size	16.3

Education support staff: YR – Y6

Total number of education support staff	2
Total aggregate hours worked per week	13.75

Financial information

Financial year	2000/2001
	£
Total income	168,659
Total expenditure	171,240
Expenditure per pupil	2,854
Balance brought forward from previous year	17,616
Balance carried forward to next year	15,035

Recruitment of teachers

Number of teachers who left the school during the last two years	2
Number of teachers appointed to the school during the last two years	3
Total number of vacant teaching posts (FTE)	0
Number of vacancies filled by teachers on temporary contract of a term or more (FTE)	0
Number of unfilled vacancies or vacancies filled by teachers on temporary contract of less than one term (FTE)	0

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Results of the survey of parents and carers

Questionnaire return rate

Number of questionnaires sent out	54
Number of questionnaires returned	25

Percentage of responses in each category

	Strongly agree	Tend to agree	Tend to disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know
My child likes school.	48	48	4	0	0
My child is making good progress in school.	28	60	8	4	0
Behaviour in the school is good.	48	44	8	0	0
My child gets the right amount of work to do at home.	8	44	44	4	0
The teaching is good.	48	48	0	4	0
I am kept well informed about how my child is getting on.	36	52	8	4	0
I would feel comfortable about approaching the school with questions or a problem.	56	36	0	8	0
The school expects my child to work hard and achieve his or her best.	44	48	4	4	0
The school works closely with parents.	24	52	12	12	0
The school is well led and managed.	36	64	0	0	0
The school is helping my child become mature and responsible.	44	48	0	0	8
The school provides an interesting range of activities outside lessons.	16	76	8	0	0

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

60. Children enter reception in the September or January before their fifth birthday. They attend part-time in the morning for the first term. At the time of the inspection there were five reception children on roll, of whom four were still under five. A small number of children are admitted in the January term.
61. Nearly all children have had some pre-school experience. They enter reception with average attainment overall. Since the previous inspection, mathematical development, the opportunities for role-play, the quality and effectiveness of planning and the quality of teaching of the children in the Foundation Stage have been a major focus for development in the school. There has been a significant improvement in all those areas identified as relative weaknesses at the last inspection.
62. When children enter the school, the staff complete initial assessments within the first few weeks. This gives them an overview of the ability of the children. They use the information well to provide a broad, balanced and relevant programme, which meets the needs of each individual. Overall provision in reception is good, with children taking part in a wide range of activities. There are good planned opportunities for the children to spend time with teachers, support staff or other adults. By the end of the reception year, almost all children are likely to achieve the Early Learning Goals in communication, language and literacy, mathematical and creative development, knowledge and understanding of the world and most aspects of physical development. In their personal, social and emotional development some should surpass these goals.
63. The quality of teaching and learning are very good. The adults work closely together as a team. The quality of relationships both within the reception group, and with the older pupils in the class, is a significant strength, providing a very positive social experience for the younger children. Effective learning takes place and children are assessed regularly. Outcomes from assessment are used well to identify individual needs and to inform planning. The teacher maintains detailed and informative records. Learning resources are good to support all six areas of learning, although there are some shortcomings in the provision for aspects of physical development. They are well-organised and easily accessible to adults and children. They support learning well.

Personal, social and emotional development

64. Children enter reception, in most cases, with well-developed skills in personal and social development. By the time they leave the reception class they achieve, and some exceed, the Early Learning Goals in this area. This shows good progress and reflects the very good teaching in the reception class. Children are constantly encouraged to feel confident about what they can achieve. They share toys and resources well, for example when playing together in the construction site. They take turns and tidy away equipment. They are independent, for example when using the toilet and washing their hands, and when changing for physical activities. Children concentrate well and persevere with tasks set. They help one another and show concern for each other. For example, one child helped another when the computer failed to respond as expected.
65. The quality of teaching in this area is very good, enabling all children to make good gains in their learning. The adults have high expectations of how children should behave towards each other. These are reinforced and praise is used well to enhance children's self-esteem. Good manners are promoted well. The adults create a warm and secure environment where children learn to respect and show consideration for each other. Opportunities are provided for children to select activities independently and they are encouraged to take responsibility for tidying away resources at the end of each session.

Communication, language and literacy

66. Children enter the class with average levels of communication, language and literacy skills. Their knowledge of phonics is less secure than, for example, their mathematical awareness. The quality of teaching and learning in this area are very good and this helps children to make good progress. By the end of the reception year, all children are likely to achieve the Early Learning Goals. Speaking and listening skills are built upon well. There are many opportunities for children to engage in conversation and extend their speaking skills. The small numbers in the class means that children interact frequently with adults, who place particular emphasis on the quality of spoken language. They question children with considerable skill, encouraging them to extend their vocabulary and sentence structure. Their skills are developed well through literacy work. Teachers and support staff plan the main activities well and this has a good effect on learning. They have high expectations of children's attainment and behaviour and make good use of questions to encourage a response; for example 'How many more bears do I need to make seven?' Children listen attentively to each other and are keen to respond. They enjoy listening to stories and use letter sounds to identify simple words. Books are prominent in the classroom. Children enjoy looking at books and understand how books are organised. They understand that the books they choose have a story and most children are able to predict what might happen from looking at the illustrations. They understand that print conveys meaning and books are taken home regularly to share with parents. Almost all are able to tackle simple texts by the end of the year and some are further advanced than that.
67. Children are given good opportunities to practise writing their names and letters. Good use is made of name cards for children to copy. Independent writing is encouraged from an early stage and there is evidence of very good progress in writing during the reception year. Children have many opportunities to write letters during free play. Speaking and listening are well developed through structured role-play. All children make good progress.

Mathematical development

68. When children enter reception their attainment in mathematics is generally above that of children of a similar age. Both the provision for the development and awareness of mathematical language and the teaching are very good. This helps children learn and make good progress. Mathematics is well taught and by the end of the year almost all the children are likely to achieve the Early Learning Goals. They experience a wide range of practical activities, such as counting the children in the class and the numbers of bears in a line. They sing counting rhymes. The most able children can already count within ten and can recognise some numerals. They have a growing understanding of shape, colour and size. As the year progresses, children follow the numeracy strategy and the analysis of work indicates there is very good progress during the year. Basic counting skills are taught well. Children deal confidently with tens and units and can add and subtract in steps or randomly. They recognise simple shapes and coins, measure in centimetres and weigh objects and can draw a pictogram of their favourite objects. The least able children extend their numbers to 20. The quality of teaching is very good. Good planning and organisation and involvement of support staff help all children to make good gains in their learning. Tasks are matched well to ability and children with particular needs are well supported.

Knowledge and understanding of the world

69. Children's knowledge and understanding of the world is average when they start school and they make good gains in learning during their time in reception. Most are likely to achieve the Early Learning Goals by the end of reception. Children cover three termly topics during the year. Many activities are science-based, for example, looking at how materials change. They grow bulbs and flowers and consider the differences between living and non-living things in the minibeast topic. They are studying 'Bodies and Health' in the current term. They use construction bricks and join them together to make a range of models. They enjoy practising their cutting, joining and sticking skills when making collage pictures and they enjoy dressing up during role-play. They make good progress with their computer skills, controlling the mouse well, and produce creditable pictures from a 'Paint' program. They develop their skills well in cutting and sticking and older pupils use scissors confidently and cut shapes accurately. They show increasing awareness of festivals and events in the year such as Christmas and Easter. They extend their knowledge of Bible stories.

70. The quality of teaching is very good. Effective use is made of resources, particularly the rich local environment, to support children's learning. A good balance of directed and free choice activities promotes independence in building, joining, sticking and cutting for a range of purposes.

Physical development

71. Teaching is very good and children of all abilities make at least satisfactory progress overall in their physical development. By the end of the reception year, most children are likely to achieve the Early Learning Goals. There are opportunities for both supervised play and formal physical education sessions in the playground. This is not an extensive area, but adequately meets the needs of such a small group of children. There is no dedicated and appropriately resourced outside play area because of the constraints on space. This limits the range of opportunities which can be provided, such as regular access to climbing and balance equipment and to large wheeled toys. However, some compensation is provided when children are able to visit the village hall, where a range of balance and physical education equipment is available. They show a growing awareness of space and play safely. They throw and catch with confidence. Children's dexterity is developed well through threading, working in sand and water, rolling and cutting. They piece together jigsaws and learn to work out things for themselves. They make good progress in developing skills with construction kits. Children demonstrate satisfactory control over a range of tools for writing and painting. Scissors are used with skill and most control the mouse well when using the computer. Reception children change independently for physical education and use the playground with increasing awareness of space and safety. Basic routines are reinforced well by the teacher and skills of jumping, hopping and throwing are carefully taught. Children run, jump, and skip with at least the expected level of competence and they demonstrate good co-ordination.

Creative development

72. This area of learning is well taught and most children should achieve the Early Learning Goals by the end of reception. Children enter school with average brush control. They make good progress and their pictures of wolves and whales show increasing maturity when using paint. Teaching is very good and the children learn about colour, pattern and texture. They enjoy expressing their own ideas in painting and most control paint well. They create collage flowers and countryside pictures. They produce a jointed man, having measured the strips of card. They can create a gritty texture on paper, using sand and glue. They enjoy singing rhymes, joining in enthusiastically. They follow instructions well and learn to handle simple percussion instruments correctly in music lessons. They make good progress with imaginative play as they use equipment in the construction corner. Dialogue is developed well in the Farm Shop. As in the other areas of learning, high quality teaching results in the children making good gains in learning.

ENGLISH

73. Standards in English are similar to the judgements made at the last inspection and continue to be typical for pupils in Years 2 and 6.
74. Overall, speaking and listening skills of pupils throughout the school are generally in keeping with their age. However, there is a significant minority of pupils in all age groups who display above average standards in speaking and listening. Most pupils speak clearly, and communicate their thoughts and feelings well in lessons. They speak confidently and articulately using an increasingly wide vocabulary as they move through the school. Teachers are good role models and speak clearly, enunciating their words properly. They also value the contributions pupils make when answering questions or making comments, giving them a greater confidence. Pupils improve their speaking skills through group and class discussions. For example, pupils in Years 2 and 3 were discussing confidently the importance of having rules in school and the necessity of not breaking them. Pupils listen attentively to their teachers and each other and this contributes greatly to their learning.

75. Although reading skills are average overall, in most year groups there are pupils who read above the norm for their age. Throughout the school pupils read a variety of appropriate texts, and discussions with pupils and observations at both key stages indicate that they use non-fiction books effectively for research for topic work. In a literacy lesson, Years 2 and 3 pupils used index and contents pages well to look for information. Pupils in the class of older pupils were using these skills instinctively in their history lesson to find information about the Ancient Greeks. The Year 1 pupils associate sounds with different letters and many read simple texts, making good use, when necessary, of letter sounds, pictures and the meaning of the sentence to help them decipher unfamiliar words. Reading *We're going on a Bear Hunt* with their teacher, they learned the way to make a story come alive, by imitating her very good intonation, expression and pronunciation of the words. Pupils in Year 2 read accurately from increasingly more difficult books as they get older, talk knowledgeably about characters in the stories they have read and discuss other stories they have heard. Quicker learning pupils in this class frequently predict what might happen next in the story. By the time they are 11 years old, most pupils are fluent readers and show a good understanding of the text. For instance, one pupil gave a clear, succinct précis of the beginning of the story she was reading and referred to the text when explaining her ideas. Many pupils confidently discuss books they enjoy reading and their preferred authors. They choose books carefully, often on the recommendation of the teacher or friend, by scanning the text or by reading the blurb on the cover. Because they enjoy reading so much, many pupils borrow books from the public library to supplement their reading at school.
76. Writing skills are less well developed and although most pupils in Years 2 and 6 are likely to attain average standards for their age, only a very low proportion are likely to achieve beyond this. The school is well aware of this and extra writing lessons are built into the timetable. Within these and the literacy hour pupils develop their writing skills appropriately and learn to write for different purposes and audiences. Pupils in Year 1 were writing in their journals and making good progress due to the high level of support. The quicker learning pupils were attempting to write in sentences but had to be reminded to put capital letters and full stops in the correct places. Some were making very good use of the alphabet friezes and other aids around the classroom walls to help with their spelling. Work on display showed that Years 2 and 3 pupils had used skills previously learnt to list facts about the village hall. Year 6 pupils were rewriting an entry from Samuel Pepys' diary with varying levels of success as some found it difficult to interpret the meaning and language of the text. During this session there was a good level of collaboration as the pupils discussed the text and helped one another to a greater understanding. Although pupils throughout the school develop their writing skills further in some areas of the curriculum, for example science, this is not evident in their history and geography work. The work scrutiny showed that Year 2 pupils last year in science had built up a bank of descriptive words to describe their feelings before and after a physical education lesson. Year 6 pupils had written some interesting accounts on the Tudors in their history project. Overall, standards of spelling and grammar are satisfactory. Throughout the school, pupils use dictionaries effectively to help with their spellings. Most of the Year 2 and 3 pupils use capital letters and full stops to punctuate their sentences correctly. In their work, older Key Stage 2 pupils, by the end of one lesson, had a clear understanding of homophones and gave simple explanations of what they are, reinforcing this through examples. Nearly all pupils take a pride in their written work, presenting it in a neat cursive style to a good standard. This is an improvement since the last inspection when standards of writing were judged to be poor. Most teachers provide good examples of writing when they write on the board. However, there were only a few examples of pupils using their word processing skills to produce final copies of their work.
77. In general, most pupils, throughout both key stages are making satisfactory and often good progress in their knowledge and use of English, generally through the consolidation and reinforcement of previous learning. Often, during literacy hours, pupils were observed to be making good progress in their learning owing to the high expectations of the teachers and brisk pace to lessons. Overall, the pupils with special educational needs make satisfactory progress in relation to their prior attainment with work that is matched to their particular needs. When they have help from classroom assistants their progress is often better.
78. The quality of teaching varies but is good, overall, and occasionally very good. Teachers plan

their lessons in line with the requirements of the National Literacy Strategy. They nearly always share with the pupils what they want them to learn and often ask them at the end of lessons whether they have achieved this. For instance, at the end of their lesson, Year 5 pupils were very keen to show they had a much better understanding of homophones, illustrating this with some good and varied examples, correctly spelt. Most teachers ensure the work is matched to the varying ages and attainment levels of pupils in their classes but is challenging enough to make sure pupils maintain a good rate of learning. However, occasionally, pupils need help with their work and when there is no extra support, although they struggle to do their best, the progress they make is often limited. In the introductions to lessons, teachers use skilful questioning techniques to revise and review work covered in previous lessons, and they value the contributions made by their pupils. Also, they give clear instructions and explanations for follow-up work and have high expectations that pupils produce their best work. They build effectively on pupils' enthusiasm for their work and eagerness to learn, so that from an early age, pupils sustain concentration even when not directly supervised by an adult. The better standards of handwriting throughout the school are also an example of teachers expecting the best. In all classes, teachers monitor pupils' reading carefully, both through the guided reading sessions in the literacy hour and through pupils' independent reading. Pupils regularly take their reading books home to share with their parents and the reading record book is used as an effective vehicle for a two-way dialogue between staff and parents, especially those of the younger pupils.

79. The school has a clear and detailed policy statement for English with comprehensive guidelines which has been updated to be in line with the National Literacy Strategy. All teachers have adapted the National Literacy Strategy lessons appropriately to meet the needs of the mixed age classes. The school is working towards raising standards in writing throughout the school, as national assessment test results over the last two years have not shown the same improvement as other aspects of English. The headteacher, the co-ordinator and outside agencies have undertaken some monitoring of the effects of the National Literacy Strategy on pupils' attainment through direct classroom observation. The small library, which has recently been set up, has a suitable range of fiction and non-fiction books. It should provide a valuable space for pupils' independent research, but during the inspection was very cluttered with physical education and other resources.

MATHEMATICS

80. Pupils in the current Years 2 and 6 are attaining standards in mathematics which are at least in line with those expected nationally. This is a reflection of the relatively low levels of pupils with special educational needs in both of these year groups. The last inspection report indicated that attainment in mathematics was average at the end of both key stages, with progress improving as pupils moved through the school. Overall, standards have improved steadily in the last four years. This reflects the clear improvement in the quality of teaching (particularly in the Foundation Stage and Year 1, where the provision is now very good), the benefits arising from stable, and generous levels of staffing, the significant amount of time spent on mathematics, the commendable depth of coverage achieved and the structure and consistency provided by the numeracy initiative.
81. The school has implemented the numeracy initiative successfully and teachers are using the structure well. Pupils have access to the breadth of the National Curriculum in mathematics and there is a good balance of experience through the school. In Key Stage 1 pupils acquire a secure foundation in mathematics, particularly number. They add and subtract accurately with numbers of increasing size, successfully perform simple multiplication calculations based upon familiar tables and estimate and measure accurately. They recognise time and clock faces, understand symmetry and produce simple tally and bar charts. There is a strong emphasis on practical mathematical activities throughout Key Stage 1. Most of the current Year 2 pupils are working at or towards level 2, although a few are still working within level 1.
82. The emphasis upon number continues in Key Stage 2. The work sample indicates that the oldest pupils from the last school year covered a creditable range of work. They have had experience of fractions, decimals and percentages, long multiplication, bracket rules, primes and factors, the attributes of two- and three-dimensional shapes, area and perimeter of regular

shapes by formula, co-ordinates in four quadrants, reflective and rotational symmetry, negative numbers, mean/mode/median and range, travel graphs and grouped frequency bar charts. There is a satisfactory balance between the elements of the curriculum. The quality of presentation is systematic and thorough across the key stage.

83. By the end of Year 6, pupils are familiar with, and can interpret confidently, bar charts and line graphs. These activities are linked appropriately to other areas of the curriculum. There is good use of practical activities. Provision for investigative work remains a positive feature.
84. The quality of learning is good at both key stages. Teachers have a clear grasp of the standards which pupils should be achieving, and progress is increasingly brisk, although this varies according to the make-up of each year group. There is evidence of increasingly challenging work being provided for the higher attaining pupils. The most effective learning is promoted by clear objectives identified in planning, high expectations by teachers and the lively pace of the better lessons. These factors, together with the satisfactory support provided for pupils with special educational needs, underpin the improvement in standards in mathematics over recent years.
85. The oldest pupils show a satisfactory grasp of tables and of the strategies necessary for accurate mental calculations. Teachers recognise the importance of these skills and provide regular opportunities for practice. The development of mental mathematics is well-established, for example in Years 5 and 6 where pupils were successfully recalling times tables facts when doing speed recall of simple division facts.
86. Pupils have very positive attitudes towards mathematics. When the teaching is stimulating they are attentive and co-operative. They work well together. This was seen, for example, in Key Stage 2, where pupils support each other well.
87. The quality of teaching of mathematics is consistently good across the school and this includes the work of learning support staff. Teachers' subject knowledge is good. Expectations are high. Where teaching is best, teachers communicate their enthusiasm for the subject, so inspiring pupils to greater efforts. There is effective use of both whole-class teaching and group work within each class. The quality of teachers' planning is good. Learning objectives are often shared with the pupils as the session begins. This was seen used very effectively in both key stages.
88. Teachers provide some opportunities for the use of mathematics in science, design and technology and geography. Information technology is beginning to make a contribution to the data-handling element of the mathematics curriculum. Procedures for assessing pupils' progress are good. This has been a recent area for development. There is regular use of standardised and other test materials, to support teachers in their planning. The marking of pupils' work is generally thorough and developmental. There has not been a consistent emphasis upon the systematic presentation of written work, but this is improving, as pupils' mathematical understanding becomes more secure. Targets are identified for groups and for individual pupils. The co-ordinator provides strong leadership for the subject and has a clear view of the standards being achieved. There has been a significant input into the monitoring of mathematics teaching, the establishment of shared planning and an effective homework policy. The school is well-resourced for teaching mathematics.
89. The success of the many initiatives which the school has undertaken is now evident in the improving standards being achieved across the school.

SCIENCE

90. Currently, pupils in Year 2 and 6 are attaining standards expected for their age group. The quality of teaching and learning is satisfactory, overall.
91. In their work, Year 2 pupils were sorting materials, differentiating between those that were man-made and natural. Through useful discussions as to which category the materials

belonged, pupils gained a reasonable awareness of the difference between the two types of material. The quality of teaching was sound overall, and the teacher planned the lesson satisfactorily, reinforcing and building on pupils' learning and developing their scientific understanding appropriately. However, the pace of the lesson was slow at times, especially as pupils spent too much time recording their work as an artistic collage, gaining little scientific knowledge in the process.

92. Years 4, 5 and 6 pupils in Class 3, also studying materials, were undertaking an experiment to find out which type of cloth wrapped round a flask keeps a liquid cool for the longest time. Most worked well and many pupils were using their mathematical skills effectively to read the temperature on the thermometers as the liquids warmed up. By the end of the lesson most pupils understood the basic principle of the experiment. In this lesson the quality of teaching was sound. The teacher gave clear explanations and instructions and used questioning well to stimulate thought and learning. The lesson was well prepared and resources were readily available for pupils to use. However, the teacher prescribed the experimentation process so the pupils had no opportunity to set up the experiment, investigate for themselves and improve their enquiry skills. The only choice the pupils had was the way in which they presented their results. This was particularly inhibiting for the pupils who learn more quickly. This weakness in teaching was highlighted in the work scrutiny of last year's Year 6 pupils. Although pupils had undertaken an appropriate range of work giving pupils a good knowledge and understanding of scientific facts, there were very few opportunities for pupils to engage in investigative work. In both lessons, teachers did not provide for the wide range of ages and abilities in their classes.
93. Opportunities for teachers to assess pupils' progress and learning are built into their planning and records are kept which also give a clear overview of coverage of work by individual pupils. The co-ordinator has a very good knowledge of the subject. However, she has not had the opportunity to monitor teaching and learning in other classes to see how standards could be improved. However, she does realise the need to build more investigative work into lessons. She runs a weekly science club linked to a national scheme that extends pupils' skills and leads to awards. She has also developed good links with a local chemical business and pupils benefit from the expertise of chemists who come into school and work with them and also from the resources they loan.

ART AND DESIGN

94. There is insufficient evidence to make secure judgements on attainment and teaching and learning overall.
95. In the one lesson observed, pupils in Years 2 and 3 were at the first stage of making individual Viking shields. They used their observations of pictures in books effectively to draw and cut out circular shapes from cardboard to make the basic shape of the shield and added papier-mâché to make the central protrusion. Some used their own initiative sensibly when they used strips of newspaper to cover the protrusion after the brown paper strips ran out. The quality of teaching in this lesson was good. The teacher had planned the lesson well and the pupils clearly knew what they had to do. Resources were readily available. The adult helper was giving valuable assistance and both she and the teacher gave the pupils chance to experiment for themselves before giving them help.
96. Pupils in Years 4, 5 and 6 had made some three-dimensional masks from card that they had decorated and coloured effectively using curled paper and felt-tip pen and crayon. However, the basic mask shape was made to a teacher-directed formula and left little opportunity for pupils, especially those in Year 6, to develop their own designs. Work on display showed that the oldest pupils last year had studied and produced work in the style of other artists; for example, they had used different techniques imaginatively to paint skies similar to those of Van Gogh, and created colourful portraits in the 'cubism' style.
97. Pupils, other than those in Year 1, have to undertake their art work under rather cramped conditions. Also, there are no sinks in the classroom for washing brushes or painting equipment. However, the development of the air-raid shelter into an activities area should give the pupils more space and appropriate facilities. The co-ordinator is working hard to raise the profile of art in the school. Last year she organised an 'Art Day' when all the pupils worked

on a local environment theme with two artists from the village, undertaking, for example, sketching, decorating fence posts and painting self portraits on ceramic tiles. However, she has not had the opportunity to evaluate teaching and learning in classrooms in order to raise standards, although this is proposed in her development plan for the subject.

DESIGN AND TECHNOLOGY

98. Standards in design and technology are well below the standard expected nationally at age seven and below the standard expected at 11. At the previous inspection, standards were said to be broadly in line with those found for similar aged pupils in other schools. Consequently, the progress made since that time, even allowing for the changed priorities in the curriculum, has been unsatisfactory. Overall, pupils' experience of design and technology is spasmodic. This is a consequence of the high proportion of the timetable given to literacy and numeracy. Standards by the age of 11 are unsatisfactory because the planned curriculum has not been fully implemented. Pupils do not have the required input on basic craft techniques, or enough teaching about design and evaluative skills, that are necessary if pupils are to achieve higher standards by the age of 11. There was insufficient evidence to make a secure judgement on the quality of teaching and learning, although the low standards achieved by pupils suggest it is unsatisfactory.
99. By the age of seven, long-term planning indicates that pupils have undertaken a number of tasks, including wind-up toys, Joseph's coat, puppets, packaging, vehicles and creating sandwiches (food technology). While this represents a good range of opportunities, on paper, there was little evidence during the inspection of work having been covered in line with the curriculum defined by the school. There was a lack of artefacts and no design sheets or evaluations were located to indicate that work had been covered with any degree of thoroughness. Pupils do not, in consequence, make satisfactory progress through the key stage. Opportunities to build upon pupils' literacy skills through detailed design work and the evaluation of what they have done are not developed appropriately.
100. There is a similar picture for the older pupils. The curriculum outline indicates a broad range of coverage, in line with that recommended nationally. There is a clear plan for dealing with the various mixed age classes. However, evidence of work completed is very limited. No artefacts were available, but even the documentation in the form of design briefs, analyses of materials needed and evaluations of completed work were rudimentary. These included a plan for a buggy, a recipe for making biscuits and incomplete plans for a shelter, which appeared to belong to the previous school year. During the inspection, pupils in Years 4, 5 and 6 had begun to make fabric pencil-cases and were in the very early stages of stitching a design on binka material. It was evident that the skills of many pupils were low. The quality of teaching was sound overall in the lesson observed. However, planning does not fully take into account pupils' previous knowledge and the extent to which they are ready to build on their existing skills. Pupils lack challenge for example, through rigorous questioning, so they do not deepen their understanding of design and construction techniques limiting their learning considerably. Overall, pupils' experience of design and technology is spasmodic. This is a consequence of the high proportion of the timetable given to literacy and numeracy. Standards by the age of 11 are unsatisfactory because the planned curriculum has not been fully implemented. Much input on basic craft techniques, as well as to design and evaluative skills, is now necessary if pupils are to achieve higher standards by the age of 11.
101. The management of the subject is unsatisfactory at present. The subject has a low profile in the curriculum and there has been little development work recently. While good guidance and satisfactory resources are available to staff, there has been insufficient time to teach the subject regularly. There are no assessment procedures to provide staff with information which would guide their future planning.

GEOGRAPHY

102. No lessons were timetabled during the inspection week in Key Stage 2 as much of the geography curriculum is taught in the second half of each term. Judgements made are based

on the one lesson observed in Key Stage 1, discussions with teachers and the analysis of pupils' work.

103. At the last inspection standards were considered to be in line with national expectations at both seven and 11 years. Pupils made steady progress through the school. At present, there is insufficient evidence available to indicate what standards pupils are achieving. Only a very limited amount of work was recorded by the seven or 11 year olds during the last school year. There is significantly less evidence of the geography than of the history covered during the last school year. This suggests that the subject is less secure in the curriculum than it was at the last inspection, with pupils making erratic, but slow, progress. Pupils with special educational needs make similar progress to the others. While an agreed plan of work is in place which makes clear which aspects of geography are to be taught, the curriculum taught lacks depth of coverage, with insufficient time given to the subject to ensure that the curriculum is sufficiently balanced.
104. No secure judgements can be made on teaching and learning overall, as there is insufficient evidence. Teaching was satisfactory in the last inspection and was good in the one lesson observed in Key Stage 1 in the current inspection. In this lesson the teacher had effective questioning techniques that challenged pupils to think and high expectations for learning and behaviour. However, the quality of teaching over time, and particularly in Key Stage 2, has been less secure.
105. In Key Stage 1 pupils draw plans and trace routes. They draw maps and compare modes of transport available in Kent and those which might be available on the imaginary Isle of Struay. The only work recorded by Key Stage 2 pupils consists of four annotated maps, reflecting the continents and South America. None of this work was marked in the book seen. There is no evidence of the other elements of the curriculum. There are missed opportunities to promote literacy skills through geography. There is very limited use of structured fieldwork to support children's learning, although they have made a visit, as a school, to Sandwich Bay. Overall, pupils' knowledge and understanding about human and physical features are weak. Their use of geographical vocabulary is limited.
106. The curriculum is currently insufficiently balanced and assessment procedures are unsatisfactory. The time devoted to geography is insufficient and opportunities to teach the subject through the literacy hour are missed. There is a policy in place and a clear structure for medium-term planning. However, there is no strategy to ensure that sufficient time is given to the subject.
107. The subject has not been a priority in the school development plan. Resources are just adequate, but there are too few Ordnance Survey maps. Little use is made of information technology to support teaching and learning. The co-ordinator has insufficient awareness of the standards being achieved and has only recently started to collect work samples as evidence.

HISTORY

108. Standards in history are similar to those being achieved nationally at age seven and 11. This is a similar picture to that reported in the previous inspection. The strengths of the subject identified at that time have largely been maintained and the progress made has been satisfactory.
109. Pupils in Key Stage 1 know the name of Florence Nightingale and of her compassionate work in wartime. Pupils in Year 2 remember some facts about the Fire of London. Some use is made of the parish church and the local area to extend pupils' understanding of the history of their community. However, although pupils are beginning to answer questions about the past they have limited understanding of how the past can be represented and why people acted in different ways. There is limited recorded work and opportunities to teach the subject through the literacy hour are missed.
110. Pupils in Key Stage 2 are currently studying Ancient Greece. They use their research skills to extend their knowledge of the origins of the Olympic Games. Pupils use the computer to find out information. They use reference books and begin to make inferences from reproductions of vase paintings. In previous terms, pupils have produced extended personal projects, for

example, on the Tudors. Some of these are of good quality and have taken considerable time to complete. Pupils are able to talk about living conditions at the time, about Henry VIII and Queen Elizabeth I and have a basic understanding of the importance of the voyages of exploration and discovery at that period. Further extended work on the Victorians appears to date from the previous school year. Not all written work is marked, other than superficially. However, although there are some good examples of work in Key Stage 2, it is clear that time constraints have affected the depth to which some elements of the curriculum are being covered. Pupils are, however, developing a secure sense of chronology.

111. Although the quality of teaching and learning in the one lesson at Key Stage 2 was good, there was insufficient evidence to make secure judgement on teaching overall.
112. There is a policy for history in place, linked to the recently-published national guidance. The planned curriculum is appropriately balanced. However, there are no assessment procedures to provide information as to pupils' attainment and progress and to support teachers in their planning.
113. The subject is managed satisfactorily by the co-ordinator and she has a secure perception of the standards being achieved. She feels that it is now important to accumulate a school portfolio, to ensure consistency of expectation across the school. Resources to support learning, particularly historical artefacts, are satisfactory, with a range of outings and visits, linked to the units of study, to extend pupils' understanding. The co-ordinator monitors teachers' planning and samples work. However, there is currently no monitoring of teaching. There has been no recent provision for the professional development of staff in history.

INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY

114. At the time of the last inspection, pupils were achieving standards in information and communication technology which were in line with those being achieved by pupils in other schools. Since that time, the context in which the subject is taught, and the opportunities available to pupils, have altered significantly. The provision for the subject in this school has not kept pace. At present, the standards achieved by pupils at seven are well below and at 11 are below those expected. The chief reasons are that pupils, other than in the Foundation Stage and Year 1, do not have sufficient access to the available computers, there is insufficient time and priority given to teaching the subject and some teachers lack confidence in teaching the information and communication technology curriculum.
115. Although the quality and range of computer equipment have improved since the last inspection, there are still not enough machines to ensure that pupils get sufficient time to develop and practise their skills. The number of pupils who must share the use of each computer is higher than in many other schools. Discussions with pupils showed that they do not work on computers often enough. However, the school has recently acquired several laptop computers and others will become available very soon. This will have a significant effect on the opportunities which are available to pupils. Teachers have not yet undertaken appropriate training for teaching information and communication technology skills, but intensive training for the whole staff is due to begin in the near future. The recently-appointed co-ordinator has drawn up a comprehensive programme for teaching the subject and provides support for colleagues, but this is not enough to ensure that teachers as yet provide opportunities for pupils to learn in as many lessons as they should, and in all the aspects of the subject. Teachers are not yet familiar with all the required elements of the curriculum and the school does not possess sufficient software programs to enable all necessary elements of the curriculum to be taught. As a result of these shortcomings, pupils' learning is affected and they do not make enough progress as they pass through the school. Inspection evidence, in particular the virtual absence of evidence of prior work in information and communication technology in the scrutiny of pupils' work, confirms that computers are underused to support pupils' learning across the curriculum.
116. Pupils in Year 1 have regular access to computers in their classroom and are confident in using the mouse, in simple word-processing and in the use of an art program. Pupils in Year 2 use an art program to produce drawings of their own choice and occasionally practise their

word-processing skills. However, they do too little independent work, and too infrequently, by the time they are seven. In Key Stage 2, there has been some word-processing and pupils were observed learning about basic operations such as copy and paste. What skills they have are largely the result of experience gained at home. A high proportion of pupils have access to computers outside school. As yet, pupils do not have easy access to the Internet or to e-mail facilities in school. However, this is set to improve when the planned network system is installed, later in the current term. Older pupils lack experience of various aspects of the programme of study, including putting together tables of information.

117. One lesson was observed during the inspection, in which the quality of teaching and learning was satisfactory. Those pupils spoken to had very positive attitudes to working with computers. The co-ordinator's role is not yet sufficiently developed in checking the effectiveness of planning, teaching, learning and the standards that pupils achieve. Not enough work is done in other subjects to help develop pupils' skills in information and communication technology.

MUSIC

118. During the inspection there were no music lessons on the timetable to be observed, so no judgements can be made on attainment or teaching and learning. However, Year 1 pupils during their assembly time were beating out accurately rhythmic patterns of their names and various phrases with great enjoyment. During a whole school assembly pupils sang a hymn tunefully, although it was without much enthusiasm. Whole school performances, such as the Christmas carol service and the summer concert, give pupils the valuable opportunity to perform to wider audiences. At the beginning and end of whole school assemblies, pupils have the opportunity to appreciate the music of different composers. A 'Concerto Grosso' by Handel had a very calming effect as pupils prepared for the act of collective worship.
119. The policy for music is out-of-date and the co-ordinator realises it needs updating in line with the new National Curriculum 2000 as indicated on the school's development plan. Teachers use a government-recommended scheme to help them with their planning and this helps them to build on pupils' skills progressively as they move through the school. The school also employs a pianist alternate weeks to help teachers with singing lessons. Although teachers know the capabilities of individual pupils well, there are no formal procedures for assessing or recording the progress pupils make, to avoid work being repeated unnecessarily. Also, the role of the co-ordinator as subject leader has not developed sufficiently in order for her to improve the teaching and learning and so raise standards.

PHYSICAL EDUCATION

120. Standards in physical education of pupils in Year 2 and Year 6 are average overall and in both groups there is a significant minority who achieve beyond this. This is a similar picture to the last inspection.
121. Pupils in Year 1 were developing their skills in underarm throwing. They sustained good levels of concentration, extending their skills well in both throwing and catching. The quality of teaching in this lesson was very good. The teacher had planned the lesson well indicating a clear knowledge of what she wanted the pupils to learn. She used pupils to demonstrate competence effectively, and gave pupils clear direction as to how they could improve so that they made very good progress in throwing and catching skills.
122. In their dance lesson, Year 2 pupils moved around the hall showing a good awareness of space. They moved in time to the music, using their bodies imaginatively to interpret the mood; for example, sauntering to 'summer' music, and using facial expressions when moving against 'wind and snow'. Where appropriate they changed the rhythm, speed and level and direction of their movements effectively. In another dance lesson, Year 6 pupils were developing imaginative movements and building up a dance sequence of a 'Street Scene'. They moved confidently, responding to the changes in the music, rehearsing and improving their performances. In both lessons the teaching was good. The teachers used taped radio lessons effectively to develop pupils' skills. They knew the structure of the lessons well, so

that they stopped the tapes at appropriate times to give further instructions and give pupils time to practise. They also used pupils effectively to demonstrate good practice and gave them frequent opportunities to appraise their own and each other's performances. At these times, older pupils especially gave thoughtful observations and made useful suggestions in their appraisals. The pupils in both lessons worked hard and were keen to improve, responding well to the teachers' high expectations of work and behaviour.

123. Pupils receive the full programme of physical education activities despite the lack of facilities within the accommodation. The village hall provides a satisfactory space for dance lessons and indoor games, although it is rather cramped for the larger class of older pupils. Procedures for walking the pupils the short distance to and from the school to the hall are safe. Pupils in Classes 2 and 3 have a weekly gymnastics lesson at a sports centre where they take advantage of the equipment and trained instructors to improve their gymnastic skills. The Year 5 and 6 pupils undertake adventurous activities on their residential trip and the co-ordinator is keen to develop this further, for example, taking advantage of local water sport activities. Swimming lessons are planned for the older pupils later in the school year.
124. Although the co-ordinator is keen to raise standards she has not yet been able to influence any improvements in teaching and learning through direct lesson observations.

RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

125. At the last inspection most pupils were judged to be attaining standards above those expected when compared to the criteria of the locally agreed syllabus. Currently, in Years 2 and 6 pupils' knowledge and understanding of religious education are in line with the expectations of the locally agreed syllabus and contribute well to pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. Standards achieved by groups of pupils vary from year to year and especially so when groups are small as they are in this school year groups. However, the quality of teaching and learning is good.
126. In their work leading up to Harvest Festival, Year 1 pupils had written short thank you prayers for the harvest. After they had heard the parable of 'Feeding the Five Thousand' one pupil wrote in a thoughtful reflection, 'Jesus is generous and nice. He gave people food'. Year 2 pupils in a good class discussion were very clear in their ideas of why we have rules and the reasons we must keep to them. After listening attentively to a story, they were quite sure what the moral was, and expressed with feeling how unkind the girl was in the story, recognising how their behaviour affects others. Year 6 pupils were very confident to discuss and share with others in the class the things that were important to them. They discussed their reasons sensibly and listened, generally with understanding, to others' valued special things. In both lessons, the quality of teaching was good. The teachers used skilful questioning and encouraged pupils to think for themselves. When pupils expressed their thoughts and opinions there was a clear expectation that other pupils respected these. The positive and sensitive attitudes promoted by teachers make an important input to the development of the very good relationships that exist in the school. However, one lesson was cut short because the teacher allowed the previous lesson to overrun the planned time, so pupils' learning was limited.
127. The co-ordinator is experienced and has a good knowledge of the management of the subject. She has developed a policy for the teaching of religious education clearly linked to the agreed syllabus. She has made an audit of resources and is building up boxes of artefacts, for example, to help teachers give pupils a better understanding of other faiths. Her role, however, is not yet sufficiently developed enough to evaluate the effectiveness of planning, teaching, learning and the standards that pupils achieve. Although teachers use the church as a valuable resource in their teaching of Christianity, pupils do not have regular opportunities to visit places of worship of other faiths.