

INSPECTION REPORT

DITCHLING (ST MARGARET'S) CEP SCHOOL

Ditchling

LEA area: East Sussex

Unique reference number: 114500

Headteacher: Helen Tipping

Reporting inspector: Paul Missin 19227

Dates of inspection: 10th – 13th June 2002

Inspection number: 196749

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

INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Type of school:	Infant and junior
School category:	Voluntary controlled
Age range of pupils:	4 to 11 years
Gender of pupils:	Mixed
School address:	Lewes Road Ditchling Hassocks West Sussex
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Appropriate authority:	The governing body, Ditchling (St Margaret's) CEP School
Name of chair of governors:	Margaret Moore
Date of previous inspection:	June 1997

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9446	Helen Griffiths	Lay inspector		Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development. How well does the school care for its pupils? How well does the school work in partnership with parents?
23434	Marie Gibbon	Team inspector	English, art and design, music, religious education.	How good are the curricular and other opportunities offered to pupils? How well is the school led and managed?
11982	Ray Morris	Team inspector	Mathematics, history, geography, physical education. Special educational needs. Equality of opportunity	

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PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Ditchling (St Margaret's) CE Primary School educates boys and girls aged from four to 11 years. There are currently 142 pupils on roll, 81 boys and 61 girls. There is a significant imbalance between the number of boys and the number of girls in most classes in the school. The school is smaller than most other schools of the same type. There are no pupils who speak English as an additional language. This is low. All pupils are from a white ethnic background. Eighteen pupils have special educational needs (12.7 per cent). This is well below average. Three pupils have statements of special educational need, (2.1 per cent). This is broadly average. In the last school year, nine pupils joined the school other than at the usual time of admission and 15 left other than at the usual time of transfer. This is high. Two pupils are known to be eligible for free school meals (1.4 per cent). This is well below average. At the time of the inspection, nine boys and 11 girls were in the Foundation Stage and were taught in the single Reception class. When they enter the school, most children are achieving standards that are above average for their age. At the time of the inspection, one teacher was on a temporary contract replacing the deputy headteacher who was on maternity leave, and illness necessitated the employment of a supply teacher for the time of the inspection. These were significant factors for this small school.

HOW GOOD THE SCHOOL IS

Ditchling (St Margaret's) CEP is a good school. The care and welfare of all pupils are high priorities and the school has a strong ethos and sense of community. The good teaching across the school, the very good leadership of the headteacher and the effective support provided by the governing body, enable the overall standards achieved by seven-year-olds and standards in mathematics and science at the age of 11, to be above those found in most schools. Most children make satisfactory progress. The school provides satisfactory value for money.

What the school does well

- The very good leadership of the headteacher and the good support provided by the governing body ensure that the school is continually seeking improvement.
- The effective and focused teaching ensures that, by the time they leave the school, pupils achieve standards in mathematics and science that are above those found in most schools.
- Pupils' very good attitudes and behaviour enhance the quality of the school community and the very good relationships established.
- The curriculum is enhanced well by very good extracurricular activities and the many additional opportunities offered to pupils.
- The aims of the school are met well through the good involvement of parents, the very good links established with the local community and the very good provision for pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development.
- Very good opportunities are provided for the development of pupils' aesthetic and creative development which help them attain above average standards in art and music.

What could be improved

- The standards that pupils in Years 5 and 6 achieve in information and communication technology and in writing are not as high they should be.
- The school's assessment procedures are not rigorous enough to provide a clear view of the progress which pupils make as they move through the school.
- Teachers' marking does not show pupils sufficiently clearly how to improve the standard of their work.
- Teachers' termly and weekly planning does not show clearly and consistently the work provided for the different levels of ability in each class.

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

HOW THE SCHOOL HAS IMPROVED SINCE ITS LAST INSPECTION

Since it was last inspected in June 1997, the school has made sound overall improvement despite several significant changes in staffing and leadership, including periods of acting headship. The key issues identified at that inspection have been addressed well. The school now has a clear, overall curriculum plan and the monitoring role of curriculum co-ordinators has been clarified. Most teachers' planning now identifies assessment opportunities but the use of targets and teachers' marking do not consistently show pupils how to improve their work. Broadly, the strengths in the quality of teaching identified at the last inspection and the standards achieved by pupils have been maintained, but there are some important variations in this overall picture. Considering the strength of leadership of the headteacher and the effective support provided by the deputy and acting deputy headteachers and the governing body, the school has a good capacity for these improvements to be continued.

STANDARDS

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

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

Key

well above average A

above average B

average C

below average D

well below average E

The table shows that, in 2001, standards in Year 6 were above average in English and mathematics and average in science compared with all schools, but average in mathematics and below average in English and science when compared with similar schools. The school did not meet its targets for attainment in English and mathematics in the 2001 tests, but is on track to achieve similar ones for 2002. In English, mathematics and science, standards are rising at least in line with the rise nationally. The findings of this inspection are that the current Year 6 are on course to achieve standards in mathematics and science that are above average, and average standards in English. Standards in speaking and listening and in reading are above average, but are average in writing. Overall standards in English are lower because of the effect of the inconsistent application of the National Literacy Strategy in Years 5 and 6 and shortcomings in the approach to older pupils' writing skills. Standards in information and communication technology are unsatisfactory. Pupils have insufficient opportunities to develop a wide range of concepts and skills. Standards are above average in geography, art and design, music and physical education, and average in all other subjects.

In Years 1 and 2, pupils achieve above average standards in reading, writing and mathematics. Standards are also above average in history, geography, art and design, music and physical education and average in all other subjects.

Children in the Reception year achieve above average standards in all areas of learning. Across the school, pupils with special educational needs make good progress and reach good standards relative to their previous levels of attainment.

Overall, pupils make sound progress and achieve satisfactorily across the school. Most children enter the school achieving standards above average for their age. The current Reception year make good progress considering that many of them are summer born and are still in their first term of full-time education. Pupils make good progress in Years 1 and 2. However, the progress slows down, in Years 5

and 6 towards the end of Key Stage 2 (Years 3 to 6), mainly because insufficient attention is given to the progressive development of pupils' writing skills.

PUPILS' ATTITUDES AND VALUES

Aspect	Comment
Attitudes to the school	These are very good. Pupils are attentive and enthusiastic and respond very well to the challenges provided.
Behaviour, in and out of classrooms	This is consistently very good. Pupils are friendly and polite to visitors and show respect for teachers and each other. This influences the quality of their learning very well.
Personal development and relationships	These are very good. Pupils are sensitive to one another's feelings and beliefs. The quality of the relationships throughout the school significantly influences the quality of the school as a community.
Attendance	This was satisfactory in the previous year. Indications are that it is below average in the current year. A significant reason for this is because several parents take family holidays during term time.

TEACHING AND LEARNING

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

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

During the inspection, nine per cent of the teaching observed was very good, 64 per cent was good and 27 per cent was satisfactory. No unsatisfactory teaching was observed. The strongest teaching was evident in the Reception year and in Years 1 and 2 which had the highest proportion of very good teaching and where over three quarters of the lessons observed were good or better. Strengths in teaching across the school, which enhance pupils' learning, are the positive way in which pupils are managed and the good learning environments that teachers create. Class displays are attractive and challenging and teachers use a good range of interesting resources. Activities are introduced clearly and pupils are involved well in their lessons. These strengths influence pupils' learning positively and encourage their commitment, concentration and motivation. Shortcomings, which limit the effectiveness of teaching, are a lack of consistent reference in teachers' planning to work provided for higher attaining pupils, and insufficient attention being given to the progressive development of pupils' writing skills, particularly in Years 5 and 6. The effectiveness of teaching in science in Years 1 and 2 and in information and communication technology in Years 3 to 6 is limited by the lack of application of a sufficiently detailed and progressive curriculum. Across the school, the quality of teaching of English, including literacy, is satisfactory and of mathematics, including numeracy, is good.

In Years 1 and 2, the quality of teaching and learning is good in English, mathematics, history, geography, art and design, music and physical education, and satisfactory in all other subjects. In Years 3 to 6, teaching and learning are good in science, geography, art and design, music and physical education and satisfactory in all other subjects except information and communication technology where they are unsatisfactory. Here, older pupils are not taught concepts and skills to a sufficient depth for average standards to be achieved. Teaching and learning in the Reception year are good. The curriculum is well planned, practically based and relevant to the needs and interests of the children. The teacher is knowledgeable, enthusiastic and well organised. As a result, children feel safe and secure; they are well challenged and learn effectively. Across the school, the good teaching of pupils with special educational needs enables them to make good progress towards their own learning targets.

OTHER ASPECTS OF THE SCHOOL

Aspect	Comment
The quality and range of the curriculum	This is good overall. The National Numeracy Strategy is being implemented well but there are some inconsistencies in the application of the National Literacy Strategy. Provision for extracurricular activities is very good. These add significantly to pupils' aesthetic and creative experiences. There are shortcomings in the curriculum for science and information and communication technology.
Provision for pupils with special educational needs	Provision is good and is managed well. Clear learning targets are set and the good level of support enables pupils to make good progress towards meeting them.
Provision for pupils' personal, including spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	This is very good and is an important strength of the school. Spiritual development is promoted well through collective worship, and social development through the school council. Pupils' cultural awareness is raised well, except in terms of appreciation of the multicultural diversity of British society.
How well the school cares for its pupils	The school is a caring community which has effective procedures to ensure the well-being and safety of all its members. There are shortcomings in the school's use of assessment data provided by national tests, entry to the school assessments, and the school's own tests. Assessment procedures in subjects other than English, mathematics and science are insufficiently developed.

The school's good links with parents and the very good links established with the local community strengthen the school's sense of community and support the good standards that are achieved.

HOW WELL THE SCHOOL IS LED AND MANAGED

Aspect	Comment
Leadership and management by the headteacher and other key staff	The headteacher's leadership and management of the school are very good. She has a clear vision for the school's improvement and has established an effective partnership with the acting and deputy headteachers. Performance management procedures have been fully implemented and staff are well informed about, and involved in, decisions made about the school. Most curriculum co-ordinators undertake their roles effectively.
How well the governors fulfil their responsibilities	Governors support and encourage the school well. Governors maintain a good view of the school's work and individual governors' own skills, interests and expertise are used positively.
The school's evaluation of its	The school evaluates its performance well. Clear and appropriate

performance	priorities are identified in the school development plan and these are at the heart of the school's work. The school does not use all assessment data to provide a sufficiently clear view of the progress pupils make as they move through the school.
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The strategic use of resources	The school makes good use of its strategic resources. Priorities in the school development plan are carefully costed and there are secure systems for devising the annual budget and monitoring spending. When building improvements are planned or major purchases made, the school ensures that it gets good value for the money it spends.
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The range of experience and the number of teaching staff are good. Teaching assistants support class teachers well. Their input into information and communication technology and their support of pupils with special educational needs are particularly good. The school’s accommodation is good. The buildings are attractive and well looked after. Overall, resources are sound. These factors effectively support the progress that pupils make.

PARENTS’ AND CARERS’ VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

What pleases parents most	What parents would like to see improved
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Good attitudes promoted by the school • Good provision for pupils with special educational needs. • Children’s behaviour is good. • The headteacher has settled well and is now effective 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provision for homework • Information provided about pupils’ progress • How the school works closely with parents

The findings of the inspection fully support the parents’ positive views of the school, but not the areas of concern. Homework supports work done at school satisfactorily, parents are provided with appropriate information about their children’s progress and the school works very well with its parents and the local community.

PART B: COMMENTARY

HOW HIGH ARE STANDARDS?

The school's results and pupils' achievements

1. There are a number of important factors which affect the interpretation of this school's national test results and other measures of standards achieved. Year groups in the school are small, and sometimes very small. The fact that one pupil can represent a five per cent change in attainment figures in the national tests makes the analysis of the school's national tests results unreliable. There is also relatively high mobility within the school. For example, in the previous year, nine pupils joined the school other than at the usual time of admission and 15 left other than at the usual time of transfer. There have also been some important staffing changes in the last two years which have affected the continuity of teaching. Since September 1999 there has been a new headteacher, a new deputy headteacher and, currently, an acting deputy headteacher covering for maternity leave. There was no evidence during the inspection that the imbalance between boys and girls throughout the school significantly influenced their respective levels of attainment.
2. By the end of the Reception year, most children achieve standards that are above those expected for their age in all areas of learning. This was also the judgement of the previous inspection and means that these high standards have been maintained well. Most children have successfully met the Early Learning Goals and are beginning work within the National Curriculum. The current group achieve well and make good progress, especially considering that over half of them have been in the school full-time for less than one term. Strengths in children's achievement are the way in which all receive a very good, practical foundation for their future learning, and in the overall breadth of the experiences provided. They have a very good knowledge and appreciation of their own place and the school's place in the local community. A weakness in children's achievement is that provision for the more formal aspects of learning required by movement into the National Curriculum are not sufficiently clearly planned or introduced.
3. In the national tests for seven-year-olds in 2001, compared with all schools, standards in reading, and mathematics were average and in writing, they were below average. When compared with similar schools, standards were well below average in reading, writing and mathematics. The assessments made by teachers in science were below average at the expected level, but well below average at the higher level. The trend in attainment since 1997 shows broadly average standards in reading and writing, with more fluctuations in mathematics. There was an all-round rise in standards in 2000 and a corresponding dip into 2001. There were no significant differences between the attainment of boys and girls.
4. The findings of this inspection are that, in Year 2, pupils achieve standards in reading, writing and mathematics that are above average. Standards in science are average. The improvement since 2001 has been achieved with a different group of pupils but is also a reflection of the good teaching evident in Years 1 and 2 (Key Stage 1). Standards are lower in science because topics are not taught and recorded in sufficient depth for higher standards to be achieved. Standards are above average in history, geography, art and design, music and physical education, and average in all other subjects. Compared with the findings of the previous inspection, standards have improved in history and physical education, have dropped in science and design and technology and have remained the same in all other subjects. Standards in science are lower because teachers do not teach and record work in sufficient detail for higher standards to be achieved. Standards in design and technology are lower because of the emphasis now placed on developments in literacy and numeracy in the school and because the quality of teaching has dropped since the last inspection.
5. In the national tests for 11-year-olds in 2001, compared with all schools, standards in English, and mathematics were above average and standards in science were average. When compared with similar schools, standards were average in mathematics, but below average in English and science. The trend in attainment since 1997 shows that standards overall have risen in line with the national average, but there

have been significant fluctuations between years. English has been consistently above and well above average but with more fluctuations in mathematics and science. There was an all-round dip in attainment in 2001. As a result, the attainment targets set for the percentage of pupils achieving Level 4 and above in the national tests in 2001 in English and mathematics were not met. However, the school is on course to meet its targets in 2002. There were no significant differences between the attainment of boys and girls.

6. The findings of this inspection are that in Year 6, pupils achieve standards that are above average in mathematics and science and average in English. Since the 2001 tests, standards have remained above average in mathematics, have improved in science but have dropped in English. Standards in science have been improved as a result of the effective teaching but have dropped in English because of shortcomings in applying the National Literacy Strategy in Years 5 and 6, and teaching in those years which does not sufficiently meet the needs of all pupils. Standards are also above average in geography, art and design, music and physical education, and average in all other subjects except in information and communication technology where they are unsatisfactory. Compared with the findings of the last inspection, standards have been improved in art and design and have fallen in English, design and technology and information and communication technology and remained the same in all other subjects. Standards in information and communication technology are unsatisfactory because of the lack of depth in the curriculum and inadequate teaching of specific skills, particularly in Years 5 and 6.

7. Pupils with special educational needs achieve well and make good progress, with many attaining national averages in some subjects. These good standards are achieved because of the carefully targeted support provided by teachers and support assistants. Teachers use a variety of methods and they set learning targets that are appropriate for the pupils' needs and development. Teachers work effectively with their teaching assistants. Small groups are organised so that pupils have more concentrated help. For example, there are groups which promote good learning for those pupils who find literacy more difficult and groups taken within class lessons by the special educational needs co-ordinator or teaching assistant. They are well prepared, develop good relationships with pupils and support the good progress that pupils make.

8. Most pupils make satisfactory progress as they move through the school and the school meets the needs of all pupils soundly. The progress made by pupils with special educational needs is good. The needs of higher attaining pupils are met well through the enhanced opportunities provided through the master classes in science and art, through the 'challenge group' and extension groups in English and mathematics. However, teachers' medium and short term planning does not consistently show work intended for all the different ability groups within each class. Most pupils enter the school achieving standards that are above those expected for their age. The progress made by the current Reception class is good considering the high proportion of very young children in that group. Most pupils make good progress in Years 1 and 2, as a result of the good, focused teaching they receive. Overall progress in Years 3 to 6 is satisfactory. It is good in Years 3 and 4, but slows down in Years 5 and 6. This is because of shortcomings in teaching that are concerned with a lack of clear planning for pupils' varied abilities, and an approach which sometimes aims unrealistically high.

Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development

9. Attitudes to learning are very good throughout the school. Behaviour and personal development are very good. This is an improvement on the findings of the last inspection. In nearly all lessons observed, attitudes and behaviour were good. Parents at the meeting and in response to the questionnaire felt very strongly that behaviour was good and that the school was helping their children to become mature and responsible. The school provides many important opportunities to develop pupils' personal development, such as through school visits, by participating in the several extracurricular activities and through the work of the school council.

10. Pupils' attitudes to learning are very good. They are keen to come to school and punctuality is good for the majority. Pupils concentrate very well and pay close attention to their teachers. Very occasionally, older pupils become inattentive if lessons are too challenging. However, in the great majority of lessons,

pupils are enthusiastic and work hard. They respond very well to an appropriate challenge and follow instructions very well. They are very keen to put forward their own ideas and work very well independently and in groups. They take a real pride in their work. Participation in extracurricular activities is very good.

11. Behaviour is always very good, in lessons, assemblies and when pupils are moving around the school. Because teachers manage their classes well and use praise very well to reinforce good behaviour, pupils know what is expected of them and respond very well. Behaviour in the playground is consistently very good. Older pupils play well with younger ones and boys and girls play together. On a recent residential trip, the coach company wrote to the school to commend the pupils' good behaviour. On a history lesson investigating village buildings, pupils were responsible and mature in their behaviour as they moved round the village. Pupils appreciate the school rules and feel that they are treated fairly. They are friendly and polite to visitors. There was no evidence of bullying, but pupils are confident it would be dealt with fairly.

12. Relationships within the school are very good. Pupils are sensitive to one another's feelings and beliefs. Teachers offer consistent examples of courtesy and fairness. Pupils are courteous to one another. Because relationships are good, pupils feel confident to offer opinions and work purposefully.

13. Children in the Reception year show good, and sometime very good, attitudes to their work. The teacher and her assistant work hard to encourage children's personal development. The children enjoy coming to school and settle quickly to their activities in class. This means that little time is lost in moving between activities and time for learning is maximised. Children co-operate well and demonstrate good commitment to their learning. They take part enthusiastically and are keen to investigate new areas of learning. Opportunities for them to sit in a circle and talk about issues that concern them provide good chances for taking turns. This also helps children to appreciate the importance of listening carefully and respectfully to the views of others. They do this very well. Children all share in several class responsibilities as they give out equipment, take the register to the school office and willingly help to clear away resources at the end of a lesson.

14. Pupils with special educational needs have a positive attitude to school and their work. Teachers' careful planning, the additional support of teaching assistants and sensitive teaching generally ensure they are fully involved in lessons. On the few occasions during the inspection when their attention drifted, it was quickly dealt with by teachers or support assistants and they responded positively to the encouragement given them. The quality of their personal relationships is also good, including a few pupils for whom social relationships can pose a problem. The positive manner in which staff have managed and provided for these pupils has had a significant effect on their personal development and behaviour.

15. Although levels of attendance were satisfactory last year, the indications are that rates in the current year are below average and that rates of authorised absence are high. This is despite the school's efforts, and is due partly to a very small number of pupils. However, it is mainly because parents take their children on extended holidays in term time. There have been no exclusions for many years. Registration takes place promptly and ensures that there is an orderly start to the day.

HOW WELL ARE PUPILS OR STUDENTS TAUGHT?

16. Across the school, the quality of teaching is good. This was also the judgement of the previous OFSTED inspection and means that the strengths in teaching identified then have been maintained. This has been achieved despite changes in leadership and teaching and the fact that a supply teacher was in school during the time of the inspection. No unsatisfactory teaching was observed and nine per cent was very good. This was broadly similar to the findings of the school's previous inspection.

17. Across the school, the most important strength in the teaching is the quality of teachers' management of pupils. Teachers consistently create a very positive learning environment in their classes. This is done through the way that they involve pupils in their own learning by sharing with them the learning intended in the lesson. Lessons are introduced quickly and effectively and teachers ensure that no time is lost at the beginning of lessons or when pupils change activities. Pupils are treated fairly and firmly and their contributions to class discussion and the work that they produce are valued and praised. The result of

these strengths positively influences the quality of pupils' learning. They are consistently well motivated, keen to initiate new learning and are highly committed to their lessons. The main weaknesses in teaching are related to the identification of work for the higher attaining pupils and in the too high expectations of some pupils in Years 5 and 6. The quality of marking is inconsistent across the school. Teachers' comments on pupils' work are too often celebratory and do not show them sufficiently clearly how they could improve the quality of their work. The school has made satisfactory improvement on the key issue from the last inspection which identified the need to make clearer reference to assessment opportunities in teachers' daily lesson planning. Homework is used satisfactorily to support and extend work done at school. Across the school, the National Numeracy Strategy is being implemented well and this is raising standards. Teaching of the National Literacy Strategy is satisfactory.

18. The quality of teaching in the Foundation Stage is good. Of the four lessons observed in the Reception class during the inspection, one was very good, two were good and one was satisfactory. No separate judgement was made about the quality of teaching of this group at the last OFSTED inspection. The teacher's use of praise and encouragement, and her warm and welcoming attitude to children, help to create an environment where children feel safe and secure and are ready to learn. Teachers' planning is sound. Group learning targets are set in literacy and mathematics and these are clearly displayed. This ensures that expectations are made clear and involves children well in their own learning. A further strength is the way in which the positive contribution of the teaching assistant adds to the quality of children's learning. In a lesson in the hall which combined aspects of pupils' creative and physical development, the teacher's skills led to good progress in pupils' learning. The activities, which involved clapping and moving in different sequences and moving expressively to different rhythms were well chosen and clearly explained. Children thoroughly enjoyed the lesson and several grew markedly in confidence and made good progress in their expressive movement.

19. In Years 1 and 2, the quality of teaching and learning is good. During the inspection, 15 lessons were observed at this key stage. Two were very good, ten were good and three were satisfactory. At this key stage, teaching and learning are good in English, mathematics, history, geography, art and design, music and physical education, and satisfactory in all other subjects. Where clear comparisons can be made with the judgements of the last inspection, the quality of teaching has been broadly maintained in all subjects except in mathematics and physical education where it has improved from satisfactory to good, and in science and design and technology where it has fallen. The quality of teaching has dropped in science because topics are not now taught and recorded in sufficient depth. In design and technology teachers now spend an appropriate amount of curriculum time on the subject and teach the subject satisfactorily.

20. A literacy lesson to pupils in Year 2 illustrated several further features of good, effective teaching. The focus of the lesson was based on the nursery rhyme 'Humpty Dumpty' and the class explored the rhythm and rhyme in the song and were encouraged to make up their own similar song using nonsense words. The teacher's clear explanation and enthusiastic approach enlivened the introduction and enthused the pupils. The way in which the current work was related to the class' literacy targets was clearly and helpfully explained. Good use was made of the interactive whiteboard and the teaching assistant provided important help and support to individuals as they worked. These strengths positively influenced the quality of pupils' learning so that, by the end of the lesson, they had had great fun in sharing their ideas and their appreciation of rhyme and rhythm was developed very well.

21. In Years 3 to 6, the quality of teaching and learning is satisfactory. During the inspection, 25 lessons were observed. One was very good, 16 were good, and eight were satisfactory. At this key stage, the quality of teaching and learning is good in science, geography, art and design, music, and physical education, and satisfactory in all other subjects except information and communication technology. Here, teaching is unsatisfactory. Teachers do not ensure that, by the time they leave the school, pupils have had access to sufficient concepts and skills to enable them to reach at least average standards. Where clear comparisons can be made with judgements made at the last inspection, the quality of teaching has been broadly maintained in all subjects except in mathematics, art and design and physical education where it

has been improved. It has dropped in English, design and technology and information and communication technology.

22. A history lesson to Year 4/5 illustrated several further features of good and very good teaching at this key stage. This lesson was a follow up to a previous lesson where pupils had been on a village walk to gather evidence about different buildings. The task, to devise a village quiz sheet and details for a village guide, was interesting and challenging and was introduced clearly by the teacher. The following discussion about what pupils had seen and learned was managed very well, with some important contributions by the pupils. They co-operated very well in the group activities and demonstrated good note taking and arrangement of their written work. The lesson ended with a clear summary of what had been learnt. Overall, this was an effective lesson which developed pupils' understanding of chronology and how it had influenced the life of their village very well.

23. The teaching and learning for pupils who have special educational needs are good. They are identified quickly and methods used are appropriate and enable pupils to learn well. All staff have high expectations of pupils' work and behaviour. Pupils respond consistently well to this approach. Teaching assistants work well with teachers and focus on those pupils who require individual help either at the times when the whole class works together, or in group-work. Teaching and learning in the small groups of pupils withdrawn from lessons are very good. Teachers devise clear individual learning plans for pupils which show appropriate small steps for their development. The provision for gifted and talented pupils is good when teachers clearly identify these pupils in their planning, and provide different levels of activities. For example, children in Years 1 and 2 were given carefully thought out tasks to complete with a computerised robot. Skilful questioning by a Year 4/5 teacher extended talented pupils in numeracy by constantly asking them to justify their reasons for giving a particular answer. Additional opportunities were provided by the headteacher in a 'challenge group' in which particularly able pupils are encouraged to find imaginative solutions to open-ended literacy and numeracy problems. There is an extensive action plan for developing this aspect of the school's work.

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

24. Overall, the school provides a good range of relevant and worthwhile opportunities that promotes its aims well. A similar judgement was made in the school's previous inspection. It includes all subjects of the National Curriculum and religious education is taught according to the locally Agreed Syllabus. Statutory requirements are fully met. Total weekly teaching time meets the needs of the curriculum and time allocations are appropriate for different subjects, including pupils' personal and social education. Appropriate schemes and policies are in place for all subjects and have been recently reviewed to ensure that they meet the requirements of Curriculum 2000. Key issues in the school's previous inspection identified the need 'to develop a whole school curriculum plan to ensure continuity and progression' and 'to clarify and refine the role of curriculum co-ordinators in monitoring and evaluating the coverage of National Curriculum requirements'. The school has addressed these issues well. There is now a whole school curriculum map in place which uses as a framework the National Literacy and Numeracy Strategies, the Agreed Syllabus for religious education and units from the Qualifications and Curriculum Authority for other subjects. However, detailed schemes of work in history and information and communication technology have not been devised. There is appropriate provision for the mixed age classes in the school and for further adaptation and refinement as indicated through the monitoring of subject co-ordinators. The role of the co-ordinators has been further strengthened by the appointment of partners in the each key stage. This helps to ensure that the provision for pupils' learning is monitored throughout the school and provides for absences of staff when they occurs.

25. The National Literacy Strategy has been satisfactorily implemented and most teachers are confident in its management and adaptation to meet the needs of pupils in the school. The literacy hour is having a positive effect on pupils' attainment in Years 1 to 4 and part of Year 5 but literacy lessons in the Years 5 and 6 class do not follow the same format as other literacy lessons in the school. As a result, there is a loss of coherence in some aspects of pupils' learning, particularly in the development of their writing

skills. Literacy skills are developed soundly across the curriculum in subjects such as art, where pupils write poems and descriptions based on their observations of paintings by Picasso and Augustus John. Other pupils keep diaries of their activities during science week, write about their findings in history and compare their lives with the lives of people in the past. The National Numeracy Strategy is well established and is having a good effect on the standards achieved by pupils in mathematics. Numeracy skills are developed well across a range of subjects. For example, pie charts and graphs are used in geography when pupils are considering the distribution of employment in St Lucia and, in their preparation for a Jubilee party, Year 4 and 5 pupils calculated amounts of food needed and the length of bunting.

26. The school takes care to ensure that all pupils enjoy equality of opportunity and access to the curriculum. Classroom resources and books are carefully chosen to promote positive images of other cultures. The school is inclusive and welcomes children and their families from all backgrounds, and pupils are encouraged to treat all people with respect and tolerance. Praise for all pupils, whether for work, positive social behaviour or achievement outside school is considered fundamental to raising their self-esteem. The school's equal opportunities policy is comprehensive and carries a separate statement on racism, as required by the recently introduced regulations. Although none have been reported, the policy makes provision for all racist incidents to be recorded and an annual return made to the Local Education Authority.

27. The curriculum offered by the school is enhanced by a very good range of additional opportunities which include the provision made for the creative and performing arts. This has been recognised by the school's recent award of the Artsmark Gold Award. The inclusion of drama into the taught curriculum, whole school musical and drama productions and opportunities such as Arts Weeks ensure that pupils have wide and varied experiences and that they develop their skills and understanding confidently. The school participates in the music tuition offered by the Local Education Authority's peripatetic teachers and pupils have the opportunity to learn brass instruments, the violin and the recorder. Other areas of the curriculum are effectively supported by programmes in literacy such as the additional literacy and the early literacy support programmes and in numeracy by the Springboard programme. The school also provides effective opportunities to extend and develop selected pupils' thinking skills and extension classes for older pupils before their national tests in Year 6. Older pupils have the opportunity of taking part in residential trips to Seaford, East Grinstead and the Isle of Wight. These visits not only extend the curriculum but also enable pupils to develop their independence and their social skills. Focus weeks have included a Science Week which involved a good range of visitors from the local community, such as the visit from a university lecturer on moon rock and medical specialists who brought in a scanning machine to explain how the images could be understood. More able pupils in science have the opportunity of taking part in a master class, organised by a local secondary school.

28. The school has a very good range of extracurricular clubs and activities for pupils of all ages. These include a drama club where older pupils develop production and performing skills, cycling proficiency, maypole dancing, chess and Latin. Pupils participate in both local and national chess competitions and local schools' infant and junior music festivals. There is also a school choir and recorder groups, although these were not taking place during the inspection due to the illness of the music co-ordinator. Younger pupils have opportunities to take part in a computer art club, in chess and in swimming. There is also a wide range of sports clubs for both boys and girls which include hockey, netball, football and rounders. They are taught by school staff and visiting specialist teachers. These opportunities add significantly to the interest and experience of pupils and improve their all-round learning.

29. There are very good links with the local community that make a positive contribution to pupils' learning and wider experiences. The way that the school is linked closely to the local community is one of its strengths. This approach successfully addresses and strengthens the ethos of the school. Pupils regularly visit the local parish church and the vicar plays an active part in school assemblies and visits. They visit the Ditchling museum and use the local village as an interesting focus for local history and the children's farm to support work in geography. Visitors to the school include parents with special interest and expertise such as a local potter and silversmith, and a local historian. Pupils take part successfully in

local Rotary Club poetry and art competitions and representatives from the local services such as the police and the school nurse visit regularly. Pupils participate in local festivals and celebrations and take part in Christmas and Easter services in the church. There are useful links with the local playgroup, which helps pupils to make a smooth transfer into school, and there are strong links with the two local secondary schools which pupils attend. The school participates regularly in events with other primary schools in the area and this range of links helps older pupils to move into secondary school confidently.

30. The school effectively promotes pupils' personal, health and social education. The well-structured programme emphasises a healthy lifestyle and incorporates drugs and sex education for older pupils. In an interesting debate on smoking, Year 5/6 pupils discussed peer pressure in a mature fashion and could express their arguments confidently and coherently. The programme is covered well in timetabled lessons. Good use is made of circle time and assemblies. There is good input from local police. The programme makes a good contribution to pupils' personal development.

31. Curricular provision for children in the Reception year is good. The teacher plans a good range of interesting and challenging activities which fully meet children's needs. A strength in curricular provision is the way in which parents, members of the local community and the local environment are used to make children's learning interesting and relevant. Curricular planning is sound. Termly plans show how each area of learning is addressed and the teacher devises appropriate weekly plans which show the detail of different sessions. The planned movement of emphasis from the Early Learning Goals to work in the National Curriculum is insufficiently clear.

32. Curricular provision for pupils who have special educational needs is good, and the school takes great care to ensure that pupils of all levels of attainment are fully included. Teachers generally provide appropriate work for higher attaining pupils, as well as care and support for those pupils who need extra help. Small groups have been formed for extra support in literacy for a few pupils, and these are very well taught. Pupils are well supported by teaching assistants. The targets set in pupils' individual learning plans help to focus their development and they make good progress towards them. The needs of the very few pupils who have statements of special educational need are met well, and care is taken to follow the requirements set out in the provision. The requirements of the new Code of Practice for special educational needs have been fully implemented.

33. Provision for pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is very good and is an important strength of the school. This is an improvement on the findings of the last inspection. The school's aims emphasise its Christian foundation. Good opportunities for pupils' spiritual development are given in assemblies, religious education lessons and in church services. For example, in a Year 4/5 assembly, pupils gave a striking modern enactment of the parable of the Good Samaritan in a variety of ways, including dance and interviews, which brought home the message very well. Good links are being established with the local church through the new vicar, who led a good assembly on Christianity giving light to help people through darkness. Prayers are said each day and there are opportunities for reflection. Good displays remind pupils of different versions of Creation myths.

34. Provision for pupils' moral and social development is very good, through everyday teaching and through the ethos that pervades the school. Pupils clearly understand the difference between right and wrong. The 'circle of friends' approach helps pupils to help others at playtime. The school council gives all pupils the opportunity to discuss issues seriously: these have included snacks at playtime and the home/school agreement. There are other good opportunities for pupils to take responsibility, as monitors and helping with assemblies. Older pupils go on a residential visit each year and there is a very good range of visits. Pupils are encouraged to think of others less fortunate than themselves and raise very good sums for charity.

35. Pupils' cultural development is promoted well. Good use is made of music in assemblies. Pupils can take instrumental lessons and there are good displays of art around the school. Pupils participate in local music festivals. Good links are being established with a school in the United States of America. There are good links with the arts within the local community. Parents have visited the school to talk about life in other parts of the world. During Arts Week, many visitors contributed to pupils' understanding of other

cultures overseas. However, little evidence was seen during the inspection of opportunities for pupils to learn about the richness and diversity of other cultures within the United Kingdom.

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL CARE FOR ITS PUPILS?

36. The school is a caring community, which has effective procedures to ensure the health, safety and welfare of its pupils. It has a warm and friendly atmosphere. This is similar to the findings of the last report. Child protection procedures are good. The Local Education Authority's guidelines have been adopted. Both the headteacher and deputy headteacher have been trained and procedures have been shared with all staff. There are good links with other schools in the local cluster, but support from social services has been ineffective. There are clear policies to ensure health and safety within the school. Two members of staff have received full first aid training and a good number of others have undertaken short training. Arrangements for dealing with pupils' medical conditions and with accidents are effective. Risk assessments are undertaken regularly. There is good health and safety practice in science, design and technology and physical education. Supervision at playtime is satisfactory. Security is good.

37. Procedures for promoting good behaviour and eliminating bullying are very good. There is a clear and comprehensive behaviour policy and the school's rules are given to parents in the home/school agreement, as well as being displayed around the school. Certificates are awarded for hard work and acts of kindness and helpfulness, and are given out in assemblies. Pupils are encouraged to show their work to other classes. House points are given to pupils, contributing to the award of the house cup each term. Procedures for monitoring pupils' personal development are satisfactory, through teachers' personal knowledge, class records and reports. There are many good ways in which pupils' personal development is promoted, but these are not recorded and monitored on a systematic basis. The school council offers pupils good opportunities for personal development and there are many other good chances for pupils to take responsibility.

38. Overall, the procedures for assessing pupils' attainment and the progress they make are satisfactory. Some analysis of the results of the statutory testing for seven and eleven-year-olds has been carried out, but this information is not sufficiently used by co-ordinators to plan for further work in their subjects. There is insufficient analysis of the results of the Local Education Authority's assessment on entry to the school programme and the school is only just beginning to use this data to provide a clear view of the progress that pupils make as they move through. Detailed assessment information, in English and mathematics, is available and is used to set challenging targets for improvement for whole year groups and individual classes and pupils. This is beginning to have a positive effect on standards. The good practice observed in Years 1 to 4, where the pupils' attention is drawn to their literacy and numeracy progress by means of short-term targets in the back of their exercise books has not been extended to other years in the school. Without this, pupils particularly in Years 5 and 6, are not sufficiently involved in their own learning. The use of marking to assess pupils' work is also inconsistent across the school. Teachers' comments are often celebratory but rarely show pupils how to improve their work. Teachers usefully evaluate the success of individual lessons and these are used to modify future work. Procedures for monitoring and recording the progress that pupils make in English and mathematics are good, but they are insufficiently developed in other subjects.

39. There is good care and welfare provision for the children in the Reception year. All children are treated respectfully and their contributions to classwork are consistently valued highly. An example of the teacher's caring and sensitive approach was seen when she organised a class discussion in a circle to enable the children to talk confidentially about an issue that occurred during the previous day. Children are welcomed warmly when they arrive at school each morning and all adults in the class have the same caring approach. Procedures for assessing and monitoring children's attainment and progress are good. Careful records are maintained of the progress that children make through the recommended areas of learning. These include individual assessments in writing, children's recognition of the names and sounds of words, and some of the key words that they can read. Appropriate assessment records are maintained of the progress that children make through the individual elements of the Early Learning Goals. However, a weakness in the assessment procedures is that insufficient attention is given to the results of the data

shown in the Local Education Authority's assessment on entry to the school programme. Thus the school does not yet have a clear view of the baseline from which data can be added to show the progress that pupils make as they move through.

40. The care and concern given to pupils who have special educational needs are very good. Pupils with learning difficulties are identified early, and their progress is monitored by the special educational needs co-ordinator. She co-ordinates provision effectively. All pupils are provided for very well, including most of those who have higher attainment and those who do not warrant a place on the special educational needs register. The assessment of pupils with special educational needs is very good and meets the requirements of the new Code of Practice. In addition to information from standardised and National tests taken by all pupils, the co-ordinator uses a variety of more detailed assessments to identify pupils who have a special learning need. These include reading ages, phonic checklists, evidence drawn from examples of the pupils' work and reports from outside agencies such as the school psychological service which are used to good effect. Targets on pupils' own learning plans are regularly reviewed and fine-tuned and a detailed record is kept of progress. The co-ordinator has put in place a system for tracking for all pupils considered to have a special educational need which provides an overview of their progress. Small groups of pupils who need extra help are very well organised and cared for. A strength in provision is the way in which the school successfully identifies pupils who might require additional social and emotional support and these are carefully tracked by the special educational needs co-ordinator in a nurture group. The school plans to introduce further procedures to enable it to evaluate the progress of pupils receiving support in the nurture group to ensure that the time allocated provides good value.

41. Procedures for promoting good attendance and punctuality are good but are not successful in improving the school's attendance figures. Registers are properly kept and are monitored very regularly by the administrative staff and headteacher for patterns of lateness and absence. There are good links with the educational welfare officer.

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL WORK IN PARTNERSHIP WITH PARENTS?

42. Parents who responded to the questionnaire or attended their pre-inspection meeting were very supportive of the school and all that it does for their children. A very high proportion felt that their children liked school and made good progress, that behaviour was good and that the school had high expectations of children. They were strongly supportive of the teaching and of the management of the school. A significant minority did not feel well informed about progress, were dissatisfied with homework and did not feel that the school worked closely with parents. The findings of the inspection support the parents' positive views. The information supplied to parents about pupils' progress was found to be good. Homework is given consistently to support pupils' learning, although there have been some inconsistencies when supply staff have been uncertain about timing, and homework diaries are not always used consistently.

43. The school has good links with parents. The information it supplies for them is regular and clear. The prospectus and governors' Annual Report to parents are easy to use, if brief. The latter does not include information about school security or progress on the action plan. Advance information on the curriculum to be followed by each class is given each term to parents. Newsletters are frequent and friendly in tone. Reports are satisfactory in their coverage, but do not give a full picture of the pupils' targets for improvement. They now offer parents and pupils the opportunity to comment. The majority of parents have signed the home/school agreement. Homework and reading diaries are mainly used well as a means of dialogue between school and home. Arrangements for admitting new pupils are very good. Home visits are made and open meetings held. A good range of consultation meetings is held each term and teachers are accessible for informal consultation at any time. A good number of parents help on a regular basis in school and very good numbers help for special events such as Arts and Science weeks. The Parent Teachers' Association runs a good series of social and fund-raising events and has raised very good sums to support pupils' learning, including, most recently, the computer suite.

44. Parents are involved well with the work of children in the Reception class. The procedures to help children new to the school to settle in are effective. There are appropriate links with the local playgroup

and good opportunities for parents to get to know the school's routines and expectations. Appropriate documentation is provided for new parents and they attend school with their children for introductory sessions. The main strength in this area is the effective programme of home visits whereby the Reception teacher, by agreement, visits the home of all new children. This provides good support and first-hand information about the school for parents and also gives the class teacher an important insight to each child.

45. Parents of pupils with special educational needs are very well informed about the school's provision for their children. They know what targets are set, and that there is a part for them to play at home in the individual education plans. Parents attend annual reviews for those pupils who have a statement of special educational need. Their views are sought and recorded for these reviews. They take an active part in the school's provision for their children.

HOW WELL IS THE SCHOOL LED AND MANAGED?

46. The headteacher's leadership of the school is very good. A significant strength has been the way in which she has created a clear vision and ethos based on the Christian principles which guide the school. Staff and governors work effectively together to develop the provision the school makes for its pupils and to maintain the school at the heart of the community from which the pupils come. She has worked hard to maintain and sustain staff morale during a period of significant change. This has worked well and teachers and support staff are fully committed to the school's work thus ensuring that the school has a good capacity to improve. The headteacher works very effectively with all staff, governors and pupils to develop a supportive and caring environment where the contributions of all members of the school community are valued and respected. This good level of interaction gives her a high profile within the school and her decision to teach the 'challenge group' enables her to have a useful view of the working of the school and to provide a very good model of teaching for the other staff. The headteacher has a thorough knowledge of pupils and their families and this provides a secure basis for the school's good relationships with parents of pupils.

47. The headteacher's management of the school is also very good. Her appointment, following an unsettling period in the leadership of the school, has created stability and confidence which has enabled the school to manage effectively changes in senior staff and long term illness. This stability has been well supported by a good partnership with the deputy, who is currently on maternity leave, and the acting deputy headteacher, who has been involved well with school monitoring and development. Their respective strengths are well used to ensure that good communication takes place both formally and informally at all levels in the school and with all staff. Regular full staff meetings, meetings of the senior management team and a very good level of informal liaison within a small school ensure that staff are well informed about, and involved in, decisions made about the school's work. The monitoring of teaching and learning is thorough and a rigorous approach is developing. The headteacher monitors teaching in the classroom regularly and she has been joined by representatives from the Local Education Authority's advisory team and subject co-ordinators in monitoring English, mathematics and science. Performance Management procedures are well established and are closely linked to raising attainment and priorities in the school development plan. They are used effectively to ensure that teachers' professional development needs are appropriately met.

48. A detailed school development plan which is closely linked to the key issues for action identified in the school's previous inspection provides a clear basis for the school's work. Governors and staff have identified additional priorities which have been adapted and developed as the work of the school progresses. It has the standards pupils achieve and the quality of the school's provision at its core and there has been a useful level of consultation with parents to help the school to ensure that their priorities are reflected in those identified by the school. However, the full effectiveness of the school's work is limited by shortcomings in the use of available assessment data. The school does not have a clear view of the progress that pupils make as they move through the school. Specific grants allocated to the school are used well to promote higher standards. The school's finances are managed well. The budget carry forward is above recommended levels, but it contains funds that the school has carefully earmarked for

forthcoming building improvements to the school library and administrative areas. Governors maintain a good view of the school's spending patterns. The school's finance officer, who is also the school secretary and the clerk to the governors, provides good support to the headteacher, the teaching staff and the governing body. In the most recent Local Education Authority office audit in September 2000, the school's financial systems and procedures were judged to have been good and the minor recommendations have been satisfactorily addressed.

49. The school has responded well to the key issue at the last inspection which identified weaknesses in the roles of the curriculum co-ordinators. These have been successfully redefined. The effectiveness of co-ordinators' monitoring of teaching and learning in their subjects has been strengthened by the support in shared observations which has been provided by the headteacher. The effectiveness of their work has also been increased by the appointment of 'shadow' co-ordinators in the each key stage. The school's induction of teachers new to the school and the profession are effective.

50. Governors provide good support to the leadership and management of the school. Through the work of the full body and the several active committees, governors maintain a good view of the school's work. Individual governors support the school well and bring their individual expertise to the school's work. The chair is knowledgeable and enthusiastic and is involved well. Governors are getting a good view of the working of the school through their involvement with aspects such as literacy, numeracy and special educational needs. When securing building improvements or when making major purchases, governors have a good understanding of value for money. The governors are aware that their responsibility to evaluate critically the school's work requires further strengthening.

51. The leadership and management of the work of the Foundation Stage are good. The co-ordinator, who is also the class teacher, has a clear understanding of the needs of these young children. The co-ordination of the planning, resourcing and the use of the teaching assistants are all managed well. Overall, the level of resourcing is satisfactory. Children have appropriate access to the computer suite and the equipment in the school hall, as well as the use of their separate outdoor play and activity area.

52. The school's arrangements for special educational needs are well managed and the leadership provided by the co-ordinator and responsible governor is very good. The co-ordinator has a clear overview, monitors teachers' planning and has established good relationships with parents and outside agencies involved with the pupils. The school employs six part-time teaching assistants who are managed by the co-ordinator. She supervises their work, ensures that they have adequate training for their job and has established a pattern of regular formal and informal meetings with them, including the beginnings of an appropriate performance management procedure. The co-ordinator has timetabled teaching sessions in which she covers a range of learning needs, including social skills development. In the lesson observed during the inspection, the teaching was good and pupils made good progress. The governors maintain an overview of provision and are themselves very knowledgeable about the needs of the pupils and the legal framework within which schools are required to work.

53. There is a good match of staff to the demands of the curriculum. There is a good range of interest, experience and expertise among the teaching staff. The level of support by teaching assistants is appropriate. Several of the teaching assistants demonstrate a good level of understanding of their role and they undertake their duties very effectively. This was seen during the inspection very clearly in information and communication technology work where teaching assistants took responsibility for groups of pupils in the computer suite. The level of professional competence shown was impressive. Teaching assistants also give good support to pupils with special educational needs. The overall impact of the teaching assistants positively supports pupils' learning.

54. Overall, the quality of the school's accommodation is good. The buildings are pleasant and are well looked after and their attractiveness is enhanced by the good quality of the displays in classrooms and in public areas. Classrooms are small, but several of them have adjoining shared areas where groups can work. One of these shared areas was being used as a classroom during the inspection because of the need to create an additional class in response to the limit on the number of pupils in infant classes. Imaginative use is made of a small partitioned area which is used as a special educational needs base.

The use of the school hall for some physical education activities is limited by the storage of equipment around its perimeter. A further weakness is the current size and position of the library. It is small and is not easily accessible by pupils. The school has building Improvement plans to redevelop this area. The outside facilities of the school are good. There is a large grassed area, a small hard-surfaced playground and separate outdoor area for children in the Reception year. The school has a small indoor heated swimming pool and an interesting environmental area with a pond. Overall, resources for the teaching of the National Curriculum are satisfactory in all subjects.

WHAT SHOULD THE SCHOOL DO TO IMPROVE FURTHER?

55. In order to continue to improve the quality of education offered to the pupils the headteacher, governors and staff should:

1. Raise the standards achieved in information and communication technology especially in Years 3 to 6 by ensuring that the curriculum is taught to a sufficient depth.*

See paragraphs 112 - 115

2. Continue to improve the quality of pupils' writing in Years 5 and 6 by: *

- i) fully implementing the National Literacy Strategy;
- ii) developing the range of pupils' vocabulary and expression and the quality of handwriting and presentation;
- iii) improving the accuracy of spelling and punctuation;
- iv) raising teachers' expectations of the rate at which pupils progress.

See paragraphs 72 - 82

3. Improve the effectiveness of the school's assessment procedures by:*

- i) improving the use of the data from assessments made on entry to the school, national tests, and the school's devised assessment tests;
- ii) setting clear targets for pupils' attainment in English, mathematics and science which show them the next stages in their development;
- iii) providing a clearer view of the progress made by pupils as they move through the school;
- iv) devising and implementing procedures for assessing the attainment and recording the progress pupils make in subjects other than English, mathematics and science.
- v) improving the marking of pupils' work so that it shows pupils more clearly how they can improve the standards they achieve.

See paragraphs 38, 39, 74, 78, 80, 93, 97, 102, 111, 120

4. Ensure that teachers' termly and weekly planning clearly identifies activities that are matched to the different abilities of pupils' in each class. *

See paragraphs 17, 87, 93

* Issues already identified in the school development plan.

OTHER ISSUES WHICH SHOULD BE CONSIDERED BY THE SCHOOL

- Ensure that science work in Years 1 and 2 is taught and recorded to an appropriate depth. See paragraphs 90– 93
- Continue with the school’s best efforts to improve pupils’ attendance. See paragraph 15
- Improve pupils’ appreciation of the lifestyle and culture of the ethnic groups that make up our own multicultural society. See paragraph 35

PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS

Summary of the sources of evidence for the inspection

Number of lessons observed	44
Number of discussions with staff, governors, other adults and pupils	23

Summary of teaching observed during the inspection

	Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
Number	0	4	28	12	0	0	0
Percentage	0	9	64	27	0	0	0

The table gives the number and percentage of lessons observed in each of the seven categories used to make judgements about teaching. Care should be taken when interpreting these percentages as each lesson represents more than two 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)	142
Number of full-time pupils known to be eligible for free school meals	2

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Special educational needs

	YR – Y6
Number of pupils with statements of special educational needs	3
Number of pupils on the school's special educational needs register	18

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	9
Pupils who left the school other than at the usual time of leaving	15

Attendance

Authorised absence

	%
School data	5.4
National comparative data	5.6

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.

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

Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 1 for the latest reporting year	Year	Boys	Girls	Total
	2001	10	9	19

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		Reading	Writing	Mathematics
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	*	*	*
	Girls	*	*	*
	Total	17	18	18
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	89 (89)	95 (95)	95 (95)
	National	84 (83)	86 (84)	91 (90)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	*	*	*
	Girls	*	*	*
	Total	14	16	17
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	74 (95)	84 (95)	89 (95)
	National	85 (84)	89 (88)	89 (88)

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

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

Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 2 for the latest reporting year	Year	Boys	Girls	Total
	2001	12	13	25

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys	8	10	11
	Girls	13	12	13
	Total	21	22	24
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	84 (85)	88 (90)	96 (95)
	National	75 (75)	71 (72)	87 (85)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys	8	10	10
	Girls	12	12	11
	Total	20	22	21
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	80 (85)	88 (90)	84 (89)
	National	72 (70)	74 (72)	82 (79)

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

* Data omitted because of small year group numbers.

Ethnic background of pupils

	No of pupils
Black – Caribbean heritage	0
Black – African heritage	0
Black – other	0
Indian	0
Pakistani	0
Bangladeshi	0
Chinese	0
White	122
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)	7.5
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	18.9
Average class size	23.6

Education support staff: YR – Y6

Total number of education support staff	7
Total aggregate hours worked per week	62.7

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Financial information

Financial year	2001-2002
	£
Total income	365237
Total expenditure	362015
Expenditure per pupil	2586
Balance brought forward from previous year	34868
Balance carried forward to next year	38090

Recruitment of teachers

Number of teachers who left the school during the last two years	3.3
Number of teachers appointed to the school during the last two years	6.2
Total number of vacant teaching posts (FTE)	1
Number of vacancies filled by teachers on temporary contract of a term or more (FTE)	1
Number of unfilled vacancies or vacancies filled by teachers on temporary contract of less than one term (FTE)	0

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Results of the survey of parents and carers

Questionnaire return rate

Number of questionnaires sent out	142
Number of questionnaires returned	83

Percentage of responses in each category

	Strongly agree	Tend to agree	Tend to disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know
My child likes school.	53	41	5	1	0
My child is making good progress in school.	42	47	5	0	2
Behaviour in the school is good.	43	48	1	0	5
My child gets the right amount of work to do at home.	25	47	14	4	6
The teaching is good.	49	42	1	0	7
I am kept well informed about how my child is getting on.	34	48	16	1	1
I would feel comfortable about approaching the school with questions or a problem.	63	31	5	1	0
The school expects my child to work hard and achieve his or her best.	57	41	0	0	2
The school works closely with parents.	30	53	10	5	2
The school is well led and managed.	42	48	1	0	5
The school is helping my child become mature and responsible.	49	46	1	1	2
The school provides an interesting range of activities outside lessons.	49	36	8	2	2

Other issues raised by parents

- The school promotes good attitudes.
- Provision for pupils with special educational needs is good.
- Children's behaviour is good.
- The headteacher has settled well and is now effective

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

56. At the time of the inspection, there were 20 children in the Foundation Stage. They are taught together in a single Reception class. When they enter the school, most children are achieving above average standards. The analysis of the school's assessment on entry programme shows a range of ability and important variations between different year groups.

57. By the end of the Reception year, most children make good progress in most areas of learning. The progress that the current group is making is particularly good considering that over half of the class are summer born children and are completing only their first term of full time education at school. At the time of the inspection, most children had already achieved the Early Learning Goals in their personal, social and emotional development, communication, language and literacy, mathematical development, knowledge and understanding of the world and in their physical and creative development. Many children are successfully beginning work in the National Curriculum. Standards achieved in writing are average. Analysis of the results of the assessment on entry to the school tests has shown that, although aspects of children's language skills such as speaking and listening are well developed, there are some weaknesses in the development of many children's early writing skills. As a result, standards in this aspect of children's development are not as high as others at the end of the Reception year. At the last inspection, children aged under five were also achieving above average standards.

58. An important strength in the provision is the broad and practically based curriculum which is provided. All areas of learning are addressed in an interesting and challenging way, and children have ample opportunity of direct, hands-on experience which improves their learning. This ensures that the needs of all children are being met well, and that more able children are being well challenged. Teaching is good. The teacher has a clear understanding of the needs of these young children and supports, encourages and challenges them well. She is well supported by effective teaching assistants. A minor weakness is that the transition into work in the National Curriculum is not sufficiently clearly planned.

Personal, social and emotional development

59. Children make good progress and achieve well in this area of learning. The quality of teaching and the quality of their learning are also good. Children are introduced well to school routines, and the warm way in which the teacher greets them each morning, helps to make them feel valued and welcomed. All adults use praise effectively to motivate the children. They are encouraged well to think and talk about the way they relate to each other in the class and around the school. For example, during the inspection, children gathered in a circle to explore together what it felt like to receive unkind words and how some children had been made to feel sad the previous day. The convention of speaking when they hold Nigel, the toy cat, helps them understand the importance of taking turns and of listening sensitively to others' opinions. This activity ended appropriately with all children sharing a smile with each other and their teacher.

60. The children are encouraged well to take responsibility for themselves and their possessions while at school. Most hang their coats up when they arrive, change quickly for physical education lessons and take good care of their clothes, with a minimum of supervision. Most help willingly to clear away equipment at the end of the lesson. Children are keen to take responsibility in class, such as taking the attendance and dinner registers to the school office after morning registration. The result of the teacher's warm and welcoming attitude and the positive way in which children's personal, social and emotional development is promoted ensures that children feel safe and secure. They are well motivated and are keen to explore and investigate their environment and extend their learning.

Communication, language and literacy

61. The good teaching in this area of learning enables most children to make good progress and achieve well. Children are given good opportunities to develop their speaking and listening skills. They listen carefully when required, for example, as the register is called each morning, and when the teacher gives instructions. They have good opportunities for speaking in more formal situations as they gather in a circle to talk about issues that concern them. Children answer questions willingly and have some good ideas in class discussions. For example, when the teacher asked the class what was interesting about the cover of a book they were looking at, one boy remarked, 'The book cover is like a skin'. Children enjoy listening to stories. During a literacy activity, when the class was reading together the story of 'The Gingerbread Man', children's attention was drawn well both to the story told in the pictures and the story told in the text. Many were able to read and understand the story. Children's understanding of the sounds of letters and the way that combinations are built up in words is satisfactory for their age. More able children read confidently and expressively and talk in simple terms about books and stories they have read. Other children enjoy books and understand the story from pictures and are able to read some key words.

62. Children's writing skills are average for their age. More able children write accounts of their recent visit to Foxhole farm and their own frog stories using simple words and sentence constructions in a recognisable handwriting style. Most write and recognise their own names. However, the range of writing opportunities is not sufficiently wide and the rate at which writing skills are developed is often too slow. A weakness here is that children are not introduced sufficiently quickly to further early writing skills to enable them to make more rapid progress in their learning. The importance of literacy is emphasised well through the setting of developmental targets for the class. These targets, such as to write your name correctly, to use capital letters and full stops appropriately, are displayed on the class noticeboard.

Mathematical development

63. This area is also taught well, and by the end of the Reception year, most children are on course to exceed the Early Learning Goals for mathematics. A strength in the provision is the way in which children are given good opportunities to explore the subject practically. For example, during the inspection, a good range of practical activities were organised to support an activity which involved identifying combinations of numbers which would make ten. Some children selected different groups of coloured frogs to put on a lily pad; some counted the number of animals in the farmyard, while others threaded beads on to a string. These activities helped to reinforce children's understanding and appreciation of numbers well. The singing of mathematical songs, such as Ten Fat sausages, challenges the children, creates interest and enjoyment and helps their learning. Other children count up to twenty as they play a dice game, and colour the pattern of two on their snake outlines. Some more able children were beginning to record formally number combinations up to ten. Children's appreciation of measures is developed well as they prepare the ingredients for making their own gingerbread men. Class targets, such as count and write numbers to 20, are displayed on the class noticeboard. A relative weakness is that the teacher's planning and provision did not show sufficiently clearly how the more formal work required by the National Curriculum was to be taught.

Knowledge and understanding of the world

64. By the end of the Reception year, children's knowledge and understanding of the world are above that expected for their age. The quality of teaching and children's learning is good. A strength in provision in this area of learning is the imaginative way in which children are encouraged to appreciate their own community. A very good number of visits and visitors to the school are planned. For example, children visit the nearby Foxhole farm to study its work, especially the lambs. Visitors from the community, such as a member of the local Morris dancers and the curator of the local museum to display a collection of toys of the past, are also invited to the school. Children develop a good appreciation of living things as they take part in pond dipping and observe and sketch a range of different plants at a local environmental centre, and do work in their own pond and wildlife area.

65. Children learn to take responsibility for living things as they observe and look after tadpoles in their classroom and grow beans in their outside activity area. Their understanding of materials is developed well as they search the school and its grounds for examples of different materials and then make a simple

classification of what they find. Most use the computer mouse confidently and use features such as fill, and stippling in art programs as they make colourful representations of 'The Gingerbread Man' in the computer suite. In religious education, children visit the local church and find out why features such as the lectern, pulpit and candles are important to Christians. They know some of the stories from the Bible, such as the Christmas and Easter events and details of the life of Noah.

Physical development

66. By the end of the Reception year, most children's physical development is above that expected for their age, and the quality of teaching and learning is good. Children have good opportunities to develop their hand co-ordination skills as they use building and construction equipment, and thread beads on to a string. Children have appropriate chances to use the outside and indoor facilities of the school for physical activities. While outside, children demonstrate good throwing and catching skills as they throw and roll a rubber quoit to their partner and they show good poise and balance as they move around the playground with the quoit on their heads. While indoors, children move confidently around the hall, with a good awareness of space and using different parts of their bodies. During some afternoon activity times, children are able to use a wider variety of small and larger equipment. They ride bicycles and tricycles, climb through apparatus and push wheeled toys around. This provides important social training as well as giving good opportunities to develop children's physical skills. Children take part in regular swimming activities during the summer months in the school's indoor swimming pool, although this was not timetabled to be done during the time of the inspection.

Creative development

67. The quality of teaching and learning in this area of development is good, and the standards most children achieve are above average. Children have the opportunity of experiencing a wide range of materials in their work. They explore simple tessellation and tiling patterns, look at some symmetrical pictures and produce effective bubble pictures as they blow paint through straws. They complete observational drawings of minibeasts they have found on a walk around the school grounds. These show good attention to detail for their age. Other children cut and stick pieces of coloured felt to make pictures of Joseph's coat of many colours. Children's sense of rhythm and their response to music are developed very well as they are encouraged to clap, stamp and move to the beat of their own names and to move expressively to a variety of styles of music. They do this confidently and successfully. Children have the opportunity of using a role-play area in their classroom. This is currently an 'under the pond café', and is dull and unimaginative. However, photographic evidence shows that the role-play area has previously been Goldilock's house and a garden centre. Children sing mathematical and other fun songs and they meet with other pupils in the school for assemblies and join in when they can with the songs that are sung.

ENGLISH

68. By the end of Year 2, pupils achieve above average standards, whilst at the end of Year 6, overall standards are average. Standards in speaking and listening and reading are above average across the school. Standards in writing are above average in Years 1 and 2, but average particularly in Years 5 and 6. At the last inspection, standards were judged to have been above average across the school. Standards in Years 1 and 2 have improved since 2001 as a result of the well-focused and effective teaching and learning which were evident. The achievement of pupils in the 2001 national tests for eleven-year-olds indicated that writing was the weaker element of the subject and this remains the case. The school has identified the improvement of writing as a priority across the school and successful strategies are already having an impact on the attainment of pupils in Year 2 but less so in Year 6. The school did not meet its targets for the percentage reaching the average Level 4 in the 2001 tests but is on course to meet similar targets for the 2002 tests.

69. Pupils achieve well in Years 1 and 2 as a result of good teaching and an effective focus on the acquisition of basic skills. Overall achievement in Years 3 to 6 is satisfactory. Analysis of the attainment on entry to the school tests show that children's attainment in language and literacy is a less well

developed area of learning. The current group of pupils in Year 6 reached average standards in the national tests at the end of Year 2 and achieved well in developing above average attainment in reading. However, achievement in writing and the rate at which pupils develop their skills in writing was not as good, particularly in Years 5 and 6. Pupils with special educational needs achieve well from their individual starting points because, with good support, their confidence and skills develop well. Across the school, pupils achieve well in their expressive and dramatic work. Pupils' experiences are developed very well through opportunities such as drama lessons, the weekly drama club and work on school productions. They develop their personal confidence, their poise in front of larger audiences and their awareness of dramatic conventions and discipline very well.

70. Across the school standards of speaking and listening are above average. Pupils in all classes listen carefully and productively to their teachers and to other pupils in the class. They pay good attention to teachers' explanations and listen attentively, for example, in school assemblies. Pupils are responsive to their teachers' questions and are interested and often enthusiastic in offering their ideas and opinions. Younger pupils are often able to make more detailed answers and contributions. Older pupils are confident and speak clearly when speaking to larger audiences as was seen in the whole school assembly taken by Class 4. These Year 4 and 5 pupils were able to use interesting and imaginative ideas to present both the traditional and their own modern version of the Good Samaritan. They spoke with confidence and a good awareness of their audience and maintained the momentum of their presentation well. Whole school productions, such as those at Christmas, in which all pupils take part, provide good opportunities for performance and confidence building. Older pupils are given good opportunities in lessons to discuss issues and ideas in small groups and pairs and to discuss and evaluate their work. They communicate their ideas thoughtfully and clearly using an appropriate range of vocabulary. Although most pupils use Standard English appropriately, few pupils use a wide range of complex or more formal vocabulary.

71. Standards of reading across the school are above average. Younger pupils in Years 1 and 2 handle books confidently and are interested in their reading. They talk about their reading explaining why they like some books more than others and higher attaining pupils identify their favourite books and sometimes their favourite authors. They have a good range of strategies to help them read unfamiliar words, using their knowledge of sounds and letter combinations effectively and their understanding of the context of the book. Older pupils read aloud confidently and often fluently and with good expression. They are able to give sometimes detailed summaries of events in the books they have read and identify reasons why they liked or disliked particular books. In their writing about their reading, pupils discuss characters in their books and their relationships with each other, often appreciating ideas and information which are not explicit. They refer to specific lines and phrases in their reading to support their ideas, sometimes using quotations appropriately. In their general reading, however, the range of pupils' reading is not sufficiently wide and, whilst most pupils are reading a good number of books, their range is centred on those they find most appealing and where the level of challenge is more comfortable. In the texts they study in class, there is a good level of challenge and interest. The library is bright and attractively maintained but it is currently too small and inappropriately positioned to be a central focus for pupils' learning. Pupils' understanding of how a library is organised is variable and too dependent on their experiences of public libraries outside the school.

72. The standard of writing of pupils in Years 1 and 2 is above average. Pupils practise their writing skills frequently and write for a good range of purposes. These include retelling stories they have read in class, accounts of visits from theatre companies and school productions, descriptions of an icy day and a dark night, simple narratives and writing instructions. Some higher attaining pupils write fluently and confidently and at a good length for their ages. They show a lively enjoyment of words and are often using language in an interesting way. Some pupils use descriptive language effectively in a story using phrases such as 'Darkness fell and the moon shone brightly in the long, long trees.'; '.... the sun glittering and sparkling behind the dark clouds.' Higher attaining pupils write with a good level of basic accuracy, spelling most simple, and some more complex, words correctly and using basic punctuation correctly. However, there is more variation in the accuracy with which average and lower attaining pupils use full stops and capital letters and in their knowledge and accurate use of spelling patterns. Above

average and average pupils generally use a neat joined style of writing taking care with the formation of their letters and maintaining a generally consistent size. A few lower attaining pupils are only just beginning to join although they take care with their work and present their written work neatly to a consistent format.

73. By the end of Year 6, pupils' writing is average. This means that the progress that pupils make in Years 1 and 2 is not sustained. Pupils write for an appropriate range of purposes which includes narratives and discussions based on their reading, informal and formal letters, persuasive writing on topics such as 'Should pupils be given homework?' and poetry writing such as their work on haiku style verses. Pupils are given good opportunities to draft and edit their work but sometimes this process is given too much time and the range of pupils' writing is narrower as a result. Some above average writers are developing their ideas and opinions clearly, with a useful but not always wide ranging vocabulary. They write with fluency and confidence and are beginning to use more formal language and complex structures in their persuasive writing and to use paragraphs regularly in their work. However, the level of accuracy of spelling and punctuation is sometimes variable, even in some higher attaining pupils' work. Average pupils communicate their ideas clearly and use a good range of connectives in their formal, persuasive writing. However, the momentum and impact of their writing are weakened because their ideas and opinions are not always effectively organised. Whilst most pupils express their ideas clearly, there is some variation in the accuracy of their expression and sentence structure and, as a result, their writing gives a disjointed impression. There are also some weaknesses in spelling and punctuation. Although a good number of pupils have a neat, joined and fluent handwriting style, there are a number of pupils, mainly boys, whose letter formation is weaker and whose work is sometimes difficult to read as a result. The presentation of older pupils' work is too variable. This was also referred to in the school's previous report. The school recognises the need to improve presentation and handwriting and has introduced a new scheme of writing to help pupils improve the quality of their presentation. This scheme has already had a positive effect on younger pupils' work but has not had a similar impact on older pupils' work. Opportunities for pupils to develop their presentational skills using information and communication technology are limited although good use is made of the interactive whiteboards in lessons.

74. Standards in literacy are above average in Years 1 and 2 and average in Years 3 to 6. Some aspects of pupils' work in Years 3 and 4 are above average. Overall, the use of literacy skills across the curriculum is satisfactory. In some subject areas, there are some good links with literacy which are effective in deepening pupils' understanding and in sharpening their perceptions. For example, pupils in Years 1 and 2 write out recipes and keep diaries of their work and experiences in science during science week. Pupils in Years 3 and 4 write poems about pictures such as Picasso's 'Weeping Woman' and pupils in Years 4 and 5 write character descriptions from their study of some of the portraits of Augustus John. However, there are some missed opportunities in the work of older pupils in subjects such as geography and religious education for them to explore a range of writing and to develop their responses and ideas in sufficient detail.

75. The quality of teaching and learning is good in Years 1 and 2 and satisfactory in Years 3 to 6. There was no unsatisfactory teaching observed during the inspection. In the school's previous inspection teaching was judged to be good throughout the school. In all classes across the school, teachers' good relationships with pupils and their effective management enable pupils to develop their confidence well and create a good level of involvement and response. All teachers have good subject knowledge and make good, and often very good, use of the school's recently installed electronic whiteboards. In the best teaching, lessons are well organised and structured. There are clear explanations and exemplification which help pupils to develop their skills and understanding well. Questions are used well to challenge and develop pupils' thinking.

76. A literacy lesson in Year 2 illustrated several features of good teaching and effective learning. The teacher quickly established the focus of the lesson by reminding pupils of their targets in literacy for the term and explaining how these linked with the learning objectives of the lesson, which was to create nonsense verse based on familiar nursery rhymes. This created a good basis on which to begin the lesson

and helped pupils to pay good attention and enjoy the poems. The teacher used the electronic whiteboard effectively to reproduce text from the book of poems and to highlight specific parts of the rhyming patterns she wished to draw to pupils' attention. She used questions very well to help pupils focus on the elements of the sound which formed the rhyming pattern. She was well supported by the teaching assistant who worked effectively with two or three lower attaining pupils, helping them to participate usefully in the whole class session. As a result of this introduction to their lesson activities, pupils were able to learn effectively and co-operated well to create their own rhyming verses.

77. A lesson to Year 4/5 pupils also illustrated several features of good teaching and the positive impact this has on pupils' learning. The focus of the lesson was for pupils to create their own advertisement using the persuasive language and devices of advertising. It was introduced effectively as the teacher led the class in a brainstorm on the meaning of the word 'persuasive' in order to reinforce the work done in previous lessons and as a way of establishing the framework for the current lesson. The lesson was well organised and moved at a good pace, which ensured that all pupils paid good attention. The teacher had high expectations for pupils' concentration and productivity and, as a result, pupils worked well on their tasks and, by the end of the lesson, were able to share and discuss their work with the rest of the class effectively. A useful summing up at the end of the lesson enabled pupils to discuss sentences and expressions they had used, and to consider how effective they were and how well they linked with the qualities discussed earlier in the lesson. Another feature of effective teaching is the way in which opportunities for pupils to discuss their work and evaluate their own progress is carried out. There is good use of ongoing assessment in most classes as teachers maintain appropriate records in their assessment folders.

78. There are some important weaknesses in teaching which limit the progress that pupils make, especially in their writing. These are shortcomings in otherwise satisfactory lessons. The National Literacy Strategy is not being implemented consistently in all classes in the school. Most teachers plan their work carefully and follow the general format of the literacy hour. However, lessons for the pupils in Class 5/6 do not follow the same format. The impact of this is that, although the elements of the National Literacy Strategy are represented in the planning for most classes, the change in format for these older pupils means that some aspects of their work in literacy do not link coherently with the work done in the previous class. This has an adverse effect on the rate at which these pupils progress. Sometimes, the explanations and instructions provided by teachers are not sufficiently detailed. As a result, several pupils need further explanations during the activity which slows down the pace of their learning. The quality of marking in pupils' books is variable and is not sufficiently consistent and clear in explaining how pupils can further improve their work. Whilst pupils have individual targets for literacy, their formation and use are still in the relatively early stages. They do not always outline clearly the next small steps in pupils' learning and are often too general to be helpful. Systems of using targets across the school are variable and some of their effectiveness is weakened when pupils have to learn different systems in different years.

79. Co-ordination in the subject is satisfactory. The co-ordinator is an experienced teacher who has a good understanding of the subject and, through his interests and enthusiasm, he adds significantly to pupils' aesthetic and expressive development. However, he does not have a sufficiently clear overview of literacy across the school and this limits the effectiveness of his whole school co-ordination. However, the support provided by the headteacher, the monitoring of planning by the co-ordinator and the joint production of a good action plan ensure that useful and relevant priorities for the subject are identified.

80. Assessment in the subject is satisfactory. There are some useful procedures in place, such as the twice yearly pieces of unaided writing which are matched to National Curriculum criteria and provide a good record of pupils' progress. Optional tests take place at the end of Year 3, 4 and 5 and, together with the national tests in Years 2 and 6 and annual reading and spelling tests, provide a good framework for tracking pupils' progress across the school. However, many of these procedures are still new and their use is not yet sufficiently well focused to have an impact on the rate at which pupils progress. Teachers and pupils make good use of the new electronic whiteboards to support their learning in the classroom in

literacy lessons but the use made of computers for pupils to improve and present their work although satisfactory is not well developed.

81. The school also provides a good range of additional supportive programmes such as the additional and early literacy support programmes which are having a beneficial effect on pupils' learning. The school also provides 'challenge' classes for higher attaining pupils to support the development of their thinking skills and extension classes for pupils in Year 6 before their national tests. The school has developed a good range of planning for the development of pupils' speaking and listening skills which covers most subjects in the curriculum. This is an improvement since the previous inspection when there was no planning in place for speaking and listening. The curriculum in English is enhanced by the visits of theatre groups such as the Rainbow Theatre and storytellers such as the visit of a Ghanaian storyteller who combined dance and drumming with the story telling. The school is justly proud of its success in local Rotary poetry competitions with the winning poem entitled 'Sounds of Silence'.

82. Resources in the subject are satisfactory and meet the needs of the curriculum. The organisation of books available for pupils to read in the classroom is variable. Whilst some teachers take care to make reading books and displays attractive and easily accessible, particularly for younger pupils, older pupils in the school have very few books in the classroom and, although some use the library next to the classroom, most read books they bring from home. This situation does not give good encouragement for pupils to develop the range and scope of their reading. The subject makes a good contribution to pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development.

MATHEMATICS

83. In Years 2 and 6, pupils achieve above average standards. This was also the judgement made at the previous OFSTED inspection. The school's results in the national tests for seven-year-olds in 2001 were at the level of the national average but well below the average for similar schools. There has been a good improvement this year, particularly in the percentage of pupils achieving the higher Level 3. This has been the result of the good and very good teaching these pupils receive. In Years 1 and 2, all pupils, including those with special educational needs, make good, and sometimes very good, progress. The results of the national tests for 11-year-olds in 2001 showed that standards achieved were above the national average, although comparatively fewer pupils achieved the higher Level 5. There is some variation in the progress which all pupils, including those with special educational needs, make across this key stage. Across the school, there is no significant variation in the performance of boys and girls.

84. The achievement of pupils in Years 1 and 2 in number is good. Most understand the place value of digits up to a hundred, solve simple multiplication and division problems up to 40 and can carry simple number calculations in their head. They recognise sequences of numbers and understand the idea of odd and even, and the more able round numbers to the nearest ten or hundred. Pupils use and apply their knowledge of number in creating and solving simple problems and talk confidently about what they are doing using mathematical terms such as 'more than' and 'less than'. They identify common two and three-dimensional shapes and the more able are familiar with the terms 'edge' and 'face' when describing them. Information is collected, for example, on the different kinds of transport used for journeys, and displayed in simple lists and block graphs. However, this aspect of their mathematical work is less well developed as they have fewer opportunities to gather, display and interpret data.

85. The achievement of pupils in Years 3 to 6 is sound overall. In number, they add and subtract decimals to two places competently, multiply and divide three digit numbers by two digit numbers and the more able pupils use brackets in equations. Most pupils have a good basic understanding of shape. However, the expectation for some older pupils is too high and inappropriate for their ability level as when, for example, lower ability pupils are drawing chords and segments in a circle when they still have an insecure understanding of how to calculate the area of a rectangle. Problem solving skills are used to good effect in practical situations, planning a garden for example, and in the extension activities provided in the 'challenge' group for higher ability pupils. The oldest pupils, however, have fewer opportunities to assemble and analyse data and to present it in a range of ways.

86. The quality of teaching and learning in Years 1 and 2 is good and sometimes very good. This is an improvement on the last inspection when it was judged to be satisfactory. Lessons follow the recommended format with interesting and challenging mental starters, followed by appropriate activities and useful whole-class summing at the end of the lesson. Teachers ensure that instructions are given clearly and lessons proceed briskly. An important strength is the positive way in which pupils are managed. The result of this is that they are well motivated, keen to do their best and eager to learn. Some activities provided are relevant, interesting and challenging. For example, to utilise pupils' interest in the World Cup, in a series of lesson about direction and right angles, a Year 2 teacher had devised an interesting challenge for the pupils. Work developed from preparing a route on squared paper which incorporated right angled turns to programming a computerised 'footballer' to navigate a grid with right angles, avoiding other 'players', in order to score a goal. High attaining pupils meanwhile used the same equipment but were challenged to program it with 45 degree as well as right angled turns, and to reverse, in order to create a maze with dead ends. Other effective teaching was observed in a lesson in Year 1 when a higher attaining pupil used a simple formula which he had learned in the previous day's lesson to solve a problem involving the manipulation of seven counters on an abacus to make as many numbers as possible. Less effective teaching was seen when the task was not so well matched to the pupils' ability, or when it made little contribution to their learning. For example, two pupils were experiencing difficulty using a computer program to answer simple number problems when paper and pencil would have been simpler and would not, therefore, have slowed down their learning.

87. The quality of teaching and learning in Years 3 to 6 is satisfactory with some good elements. In the last inspection, it was also judged to be satisfactory. The strongest teaching was observed in Years 4/5. Here, pupils are fully engaged in their learning and the pace of lessons is brisk. Lessons begin with a mental agility session in which pupils of all abilities are challenged by the teacher's carefully targeted questioning. In a good lesson observed during the inspection, pupils were working on mass and decimals. The main activity of the lesson was focused on estimating and measuring metric and imperial weights with tasks suitably matched to pupils' ability. These included converting imperial to metric weights by higher attaining pupils, while those of lower ability were asked to place tins and packets of food in order according to the weight on the label, or by estimation if the packet was not full. The activities followed on from previous problem solving work linked to a Golden Jubilee party. The final session was used to consolidate what had been covered in the lesson and to set a related homework task. The effect of this well organised lesson was that pupils made good progress in their learning. There are some shortcomings in otherwise satisfactory lessons in Years 5/6. Teacher's planning does not show consistently work planned for higher attaining pupils and too much time is spent on exposition and insufficient time is given to pupils' activities. This limits the quality of their learning.

88. The National Numeracy Strategy is well embedded and the daily mathematics lessons were taught well in the majority of those seen. In the most effective lessons, teachers' daily planning is derived from their medium term plans, modified according to the outcomes of previous lessons, and clearly identifies opportunities for assessing the progress that pupils make. Where the daily mathematics lessons have weaknesses, insufficient attention is given to the timing of its individual elements, thereby adversely affecting the balance of learning activities.

89. The headteacher provides very good leadership and has rightly identified provision for more able pupils as a priority for development. The subject is well resourced, and benefits particularly from the use of interactive whiteboards by teachers. Assessment data from standardised and national tests, and from checking pupils' achievements against key objectives, are assembled and used to track progress of individuals and groups. In Years 1 to 3, very good use is made of this information to set individual learning targets for the pupils. This good practice has not been extended sufficiently across the school in order to provide all pupils and their parents with a better understanding of what they need to do to improve. The organisation of the 'challenge group' for the most able pupils is an excellent initiative which complements the additional support provided for other groups of pupils. It is enabling these pupils to explore a wide variety of aspects of the subject. Numeracy skills are used well in other curriculum areas, for example pie charts and graphs in geography when older pupils were considering the distribution of

employment in St Lucia and as they prepared for their own Jubilee party. Appropriate opportunities are used to incorporate information and communication technology into the subject and pupils use it to control events, manipulate numbers and word process their findings. However, its use is more limited in Years 5/6 and the progress that pupils make in this aspect slows down.

SCIENCE

90. By the end of Year 2, pupils achieve average standards but, by the end of Year 6, standards are above average. These judgements are broadly the same as the school's own assessment of attainment across the school. At the last OFSTED inspection, standards were judged to have been above average across the school. Pupils achieve well in Years 3 to 6, and satisfactorily in Years 1 and 2. The drop in standards in this key stage since the last inspection, is due mainly to the fact that topics are not taught in sufficient depth, particularly in the case of more able pupils. No differences in the achievement of boys and girls were seen during the inspection. Pupils with special educational needs achieve similar standards to those reached by other pupils.

91. In Years 1 and 2, pupils have some opportunities to investigate as, for example, they explore their different senses. However, pupils' ability to experiment and investigate is not sufficiently developed and opportunities to promote the investigative approach through the topics which are taught are not sufficiently taken. Pupils develop a sound understanding of life processes as they make detailed written observations about the seeds they have grown, and of materials, as they consider how bending, squashing and stretching can alter them. They apply their knowledge of electrical circuits well as they make lighthouses with lights that will light up. In Years 3 to 6, pupils have good opportunities to investigate a wide range of interesting topics. For example, they devise tests to separate mixtures of sand and water and consider how some materials such as baking powder and soda crystals, change when added to water. They know why a healthy diet is important. The knowledge of the names and functions of some of the internal organs of the body extends their understanding into levels higher than those expected for their age. They have a good understanding of reversible and non-reversible changes, and set up interesting experiments to show the effect of rust on different materials. They have a good appreciation of the difference between reflection and refraction, and air resistance and upthrust.

92. The quality of teaching and learning in Years 3 to 6 is good and, in Years 1 and 2, it is satisfactory. At the last inspection, teaching was good at both key stages. Across the school, teachers' planning is sound. Lesson plans provide details of the activities to be followed and identify the particular learning expected in that lesson. However, planning does not consistently show how work can extend the understanding of the higher attaining pupils in the class. This was also a shortcoming that was identified at the last inspection. In Years 3 to 6, teachers manage pupils well; they set the context of pupils' learning well as they remind them about the work done in previous lessons and they are careful to use specific subject vocabulary accurately. These strengths motivate pupils, help them to understand what is expected of them and so improve their learning. A lesson to pupils in Year 3/4 illustrated several features of good teaching. A very large floor diagram of the heart had been provided and the pupils' appreciation of the importance of the heart was developed well as they moved in groups around the hall to demonstrate how blood circulated around the body. This practical activity was thoroughly enjoyed by the pupils and the teacher's effective summing up at the end of the lesson ensured that their learning was maximised. The quality of teaching and learning in Years 1 and 2 is satisfactory. Teachers manage pupils well and give good opportunities for them to ask questions and to talk about what they know. The main shortcoming is that, in the topics which are taught, the distinctive science element is not always emphasised and planning does not consistently show how more able pupils can be extended. The result of this is that elements of the subject, such as investigations and the work on forces, are not developed to a sufficient depth for pupils to be consistently extended to higher levels.

93. The subject is managed satisfactorily. However, the subject policy and guidelines statement has not been revised in the light of the Curriculum 2000. Planning is based on the nationally recommended scheme of work and an overall curriculum plan shows how topics are to be taught on a two-year rolling programme to take account of the mixed age classes in the school. The co-ordinator has usefully

monitored teachers' planning, and has carried out some monitoring of teaching and learning across the school. However, this has not identified shortcomings, particularly in Years 1 and 2. Assessment is satisfactory. Teachers make overall judgements of the success of pupils' learning in the termly topics but there is no collection of work which has been matched to National Curriculum requirements to give teachers a better understanding of the different levels required. There has been insufficient analysis of the assessment data provided by national testing or teachers' assessments. The process of setting targets for pupils in this subject is at an early stage of development. Information and communication technology skills are not used sufficiently in this subject. Interest and opportunities in the subject are extended well through the Science Week, which was held in the spring term. This provided a scientific focus for the school's work for a week and included interesting and challenging events such as a visit to the Science Museum, observation of moon rock, and a scientific magic show. Opportunities for higher attaining pupils are provided well through science extension classes provided by the local secondary school which provides chances for extension work in several aspects of the subject.

ART AND DESIGN

94. At the end of Years 2 and 6, pupils attain above average standards. This represents an improvement in standards since the last inspection in Year 6 when standards were judged to have been average. This has been achieved as a result of improved teaching at this key stage. Pupils with special educational needs attain similar standards to other pupils in the school, often as a result of good encouragement and support from their teachers. All pupils achieve well as they move through the school developing their range of experiences well and their skills and understanding well.

95. The main achievement of pupils across the school is in the development of their observational skills. For example, pupils in Year 2 made careful observational drawings during their visit to Ditchling Museum which show a good awareness of shape and form. Pupils in Years 5 and 6 make fine, detailed observations of contrasting patterns in their work based on aboriginal art and make effective use of shading and perspective in their work. A further strength is the way in which pupils discuss and explore the work of well known artists and are encouraged to show a sensitive and imaginative response in both their own paintings and in their linked work. For example, pupils in Years 3 and 4 make interesting and effective links with their work in literacy when they explore their own versions of Picasso's 'Weeping Woman' and write a poem about the painting.

96. The quality of teaching and learning is good at both key stages. At the previous inspection, teaching was satisfactory in Year 6. Pupils are now given a good foundation for their work in Years 1 and 2. Teachers provide well planned opportunities for pupils to draw, paint, and make collages and sculptures from clay, straws and silver foil. Pupils confidently explore the different effects of a range of 'cool' colours using paints and pastels. They are given good encouragement and opportunities to develop their understanding of the effects of blending and layering colour through discussing and sharing their activities and looking at each other's work. Pupils are also given a wide range of stimulating experiences which are well reflected in their work. For example, as a result of a visit to Borde Hill Sculpture Park, Year 2 pupils made sketches of what they had seen and, on their return to school, created in collage a 'special' place in which to put their own piece of sculpture using foil, straw frames and plasticine. Features of good teaching were seen in a lesson to pupils in Year 6 where they were using their knowledge of a local history event to create a textile tableau in the style of the Bayeux tapestry. The teacher had planned a series of carefully organised lessons where pupils through discussion, sketching and evaluation had decided on the scenes and made preparatory drawings. In the lesson, pupils' good previous knowledge of the story and the good level of discussions and planning enabled them to work confidently on their ideas. They were interested in their work and, as a result, the teacher's good motivation and organisation were well involved in the development of their ideas. Pupils collaborated and shared ideas and suggestions very well, particularly in the final plenary where they were asked to present their work in process to the rest of the class.

97. The co-ordinator has a good understanding of her role and an interest and enthusiasm for the subject. Planning is based on a two-year rolling programme of units from national guidelines, which ensures that

pupils in joint age classes receive experiences and guidance which develop in progressive stages. Opportunities for assessment and evaluation by both teachers and pupils are included with each unit for work although these are not consistently formally recorded. The co-ordinator has monitored teachers' planning and is compiling a useful record of pupils' work. The school is making appropriate use of information and communication technology to enhance the curriculum and is developing a useful range of computer assisted graphic art to support the curriculum. Opportunities in the subject are enhanced by a wide range of additional opportunities such as those organised during Arts Week. The school has good links with local artists and parents to broaden pupils' experiences to include pottery, modelling in a range of materials and activities such as tile making and creative textiles. Younger pupils in the school benefit from visits to places such as Brighton to observe 'light' sculptures which they then produced in their own work. The environment of the school is enhanced by interesting and vibrant displays of pupils' work, particularly in the school hall where brightly coloured silk banners, made by the whole school and each individual class, portray representations of the stories of creation of different faiths and cultures. The school's recent award of the Artsmark Gold Award is recognition of the high profile of art in the school and the effective breadth and range of the opportunities offered to pupils. Resources in the subject provide appropriately for the curriculum. The subject makes a good contribution to pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development.

DESIGN AND TECHNOLOGY

98. By the end of Years 2 and 6, pupils achieve average standards. At the last inspection, standards were judged to have been well above average across the school. Standards have fallen since then because of the emphasis placed on developments in literacy and numeracy in the school and because the quality of teaching has dropped since the last inspection. Pupils with special educational needs make similar progress to their peers. There are no significant differences between the attainment of boys and girls.

99. Across the school, pupils achieve satisfactorily. Pupils' main achievement across the school is in the way in which they design and make an interesting range of articles and artefacts. For example, in Years 1 and 2, pupils make models of a variety of different homes such as cabins, tents, lighthouses and castles, and they make their own glove puppets from a range of fabrics. Pupils in Years 3 to 6 make money purses and storybooks with moving elements and investigate the strength of different structures.

100. Pupils use a good range of materials in their work. For example, younger pupils use recycled materials as they design and make apparatus for an imaginary playground, while older pupils make an interesting variety of breads in their food technology work. A further strength in pupils' achievement is the way in which they take care to produce carefully finished end products. Evidence from models on display during the inspection, and also from photographic evidence confirms this.

101. The quality of teaching and learning across the school is satisfactory. At the last inspection, teaching was judged to have been very good. In the single lessons observed at each key stage, pupils were managed well and teachers built up and maintained an effective learning relationship in each class. Interesting activities were set up, such as making a chair which would be strong enough to support a given weight. Evidence from the analysis of pupils' work shows that, across the school, they are introduced soundly to the design process and they record, for example, their design intention, materials to be used and what they did. However, some evaluation comments were insufficiently detailed. A further shortcoming is that opportunities to emphasise the design aspect of a topic and to develop pupils' accurate measuring and cutting skills are not always taken.

102. Teachers are supported by a clear policy statement. This provides useful advice for teachers on developing links with other subjects. Planning follows the nationally recommended scheme of work and appropriate curricular time is given to the subject. There is a clear overall curriculum map which shows when topics are to be taught to each class on a two-year rolling programme. The format for recording teachers' termly planning is currently being revised. The newest form of planning is detailed and full and shows clearly how work in each topic is matched to the different levels of ability in each class. This form of planning is good. Overall, the co-ordinator provides sound leadership. A strength has been the way in

which she has been involved in specialist teaching of the subject in other years of the school, particularly in Years 5 and 6. This has had a positive impact on the standards that these pupils achieve. Assessment in the subject is underdeveloped. There are no agreed procedures for recording the attainment of pupils or for monitoring the progress they make through the National Curriculum as they move through the school. Interest in the subject is promoted well across the school by some interesting and challenging displays of pupils' completed work. Resources are satisfactory, but opportunities to use information and communication technology in the subject are not sufficiently developed.

GEOGRAPHY

103. At the end of Years 2 and 6, pupils achieve above average standards. Because of the way in which the timetable was organised, it was not possible to see any teaching in Years 1 and 2. Judgements have, therefore, been made from lessons seen in Years 3 to 6, a scrutiny of documentation and pupils' work across the school and discussions with pupils and staff. Pupils with special educational needs attain similar standards to their peers. These judgements were similar to those made at the last inspection.

104. Across the school, pupils achieve well. In Years 1 and 2, they study topics related to their local environment, for example, going to the seaside, and a contrasting location such as an island with the aid of books, maps, photographs and charts. Pupils' interest is stimulated by opportunities to take the class Bear to different places and to report back his experiences. This was seen when a Year 1 pupil described a weekend visit to another area to the rest of the class. A strength in pupils' achievement is the way in which they use computers and the Internet to find out about different areas, to reproduce their work and to enter data on a simple database. Simple graphs are then produced to represent, for example, different ways that people travel to a particular location. In Years 3 to 6, pupils' main achievement is in the way in which they are able to contrast and compare different areas and to reflect on the decisions that people have to make that affect their environment. This was seen well, as pupils in both Years 3 and 6 were able to argue reasons for and against the development of a hotel, and to compare the variety of employment opportunities in St Lucia with those in this country. A further important strength is the way that outside speakers are used to bring interest to the subject. For example, during the inspection, a visitor who had worked in Bhutan came to the school and talked to pupils in Year 3/4. In the follow up lesson, pupils demonstrated a good knowledge of the everyday life and climate of the country and were able to compare this with their own, noting the similarities and differences.

105. The quality of teaching and learning across the school is good. The scrutiny of work for pupils in Years 1 and 2 shows that pupils are given good opportunities for developing their knowledge and skills across well planned topics. In the lessons observed in Years 3 to 6, teachers introduced lessons clearly and activities stimulated pupils' imagination and often provided them with opportunities to see and handle artefacts. They also linked pupils' learning well to other curriculum subjects. As a result of this teaching, pupils made good progress. A lesson to Year 4/5 illustrated several features of good teaching. The lesson was focused on the multicultural nature of British society and identified particular characteristics of the countries from which many minority ethnic groups originate. Excellent use was made of the interactive whiteboard to identify the line of a North-South divide in the world and pupils demonstrated substantial thought in drawing conclusions from the information they very competently extracted from atlases. Appropriate tasks were allocated to different groups of pupils and good use was made of the teaching assistant to help those with more limited literacy skills to have access to the material.

106. The subject has clear long and medium term structure and teachers' short term plans identify opportunities for assessing pupils' understanding and progress. Issues arising from the assessments are discussed at staff meetings to establish improvements. The co-ordinator provides a strong lead for the subject, monitors planning and ensures that a good range of resources is available. She has a subject action plan which rightly identifies the need to develop monitoring of the subject through observation of teaching. The subject is developing its use of information and communication technology throughout the school and contributes to pupils' development in both literacy and numeracy. It stimulates their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development by encouraging them to understand other cultures and to consider how their own actions affect the lives of other people. Opportunities in the subject are enhanced by

working in different locations, ranging from the school's own grounds and pond, and an orienteering trail through Ditchling itself, to those further afield such as a local farm, Borde Hill, the Isle of Wight and Seaford.

HISTORY

107. By the end of Year 2, pupils achieve above average standards. By the end of Year 6, standards are average. This is an improvement on the last inspection in Years 1 and 2 because standards were judged to have been satisfactory across the school. Standards have been improved because the quality of teaching has improved at this key stage. Pupils with special educational needs attain similar standards to their peers.

108. Across the school, the main strength in pupils' achievement is the way in which the local environment is used not only to give them an understanding of different historical times, but also an appreciation of the history and traditions of their own village community. A further strength is the way in which important links are established with work in other subjects. For example, useful links are made with geography over the study of the local area, and in art, where a particularly imaginative use of a local legend is being used as a stimulus for work. Pupils achieve well in Years 1 and 2 and satisfactorily in Years 3 to 6.

109. The quality of teaching and learning in Years 1 and 2 is good. This enables pupils of all abilities to make good progress. Features of good, effective teaching were observed in a lesson to Year 2 pupils. Here, a visitor was talking about her experiences as a child at the seaside, with contemporary photographs for pupils to look at. Skilled questioning by the teacher enabled the pupils to compare various aspects of the visitor's experience with their own. They could clearly identify differences and similarities and made perceptive comments. They noted, for example, that the formal dress worn by adults in the photographs was markedly different from that worn today, whilst deck chairs remain unchanged. The teacher made good use of time, frequently moving the lesson on, and created many opportunities for pupils to demonstrate their understanding and to make links with past learning.

110. The quality of teaching and learning in Years 3 to 6 is satisfactory with several good features. In a lesson to pupils in Years 4/5, pupils were visiting the village to make first hand observations of the layout and to gather evidence about the buildings. These would be used in a variety of ways in their later work. The lesson was interesting and challenging and the teacher demonstrated very good subject knowledge. The outdoor activity and the classroom follow up were managed very well and pupils' interest and commitment to the lesson were secured very well. The follow up activities, such as devising a quiz and compiling a village guidebook were appropriate and well handled. Where teaching is less successful, teachers over estimate the level of interest and ability of pupils in the class and do not provide work that is appropriate for all the pupils in the class.

111. The subject co-ordinator has extensive knowledge of the subject and provides satisfactory leadership. There is an up-to-date policy but the school has not produced a detailed scheme of work that sets out the topics to be covered and skills to be taught and which will ensure progression throughout the school. Monitoring of the subject is carried out by scrutinising teachers' plans. The subject development plan rightly identifies the need for all staff to become involved in procedures for assessing the standards of pupils' work against expectations set out in the National Curriculum. The subject is well resourced with books, posters and CD ROM's. There are limited opportunities for pupils to use information and communication technology to research information and word process their work. Very good use is made of the village as a local resource and interesting visits are made to places such as Chichester Cathedral and Seaford. Good links are made with other subjects; for example, in geography, in studying the local environment and in art where a particularly imaginative use of a local legend is being used as a stimulus for work. Through this close link with their own village, the subject provides good opportunities for pupils' cultural and spiritual development.

INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY

112. By the end of Year 2, pupils achieve average standards but, by the end of Year 6, standards achieved are below average. At the last inspection, standards were average across the school. Standards have fallen since then in Years 3 to 6 because, until recently, the school had not been able to keep up with the increasing need for investment in hardware and software, and the curriculum had not been taught, particularly in Years 5 and 6, to a sufficient depth for average standards to be achieved. Pupils with special educational needs attain similar standards to their peers. Pupils achieve satisfactorily in Years 1 and 2, but do not make sufficient progress by the time they leave the school.

113. A significant feature which positively supports the standards pupils reach across the school, is the recent provision of class interactive whiteboards. These are important resources and give the subject a high profile through the school. They enable teachers to demonstrate new techniques clearly and show the school's positive commitment to new technology. Because their introduction is relatively new, staff are not yet fully confident with their use. In Years 1 and 2, pupils are introduced to appropriate word processing functions and they use these satisfactorily to present their work as, for example, they write and print class prayers for assembly and write facts about foxes. They use and handle data soundly as they illustrate and analyse data showing the favourite foods of pupils in the class, and the weekly weather record. By the end of Year 6, pupils make insufficient progress mainly because the older pupils have not been taught a sufficiently detailed curriculum which has been able to build on their previous learning. This weakness has been compounded by the fact that the relatively new hardware and software recently introduced has not yet had time to influence the standards at the end of Year 6. Pupils have limited opportunities to use word processing functions in their work. Older pupils write and print details of themselves, but opportunities to use word processing across all subjects to enhance the quality of the presentation, are not sufficiently developed. Pupils are aware of some of the ways in which data are held on the computer. For example, they know the difference between simple and complex searches in the databases on the human body. However, across this key stage, pupils are not taught topics to a sufficient depth for average standards to be met.

114. In Years 1 and 2, the quality of teaching and learning is satisfactory, but unsatisfactory in Years 3 to 6. At the last inspection, the quality of teaching across the school was satisfactory. Strengths in teaching across the school are in teachers' use of the interactive whiteboards and in the level of support provided by the teaching assistants. Several teachers rely on teaching assistants to provide the support for groups working in the computer suite. Evidence from this inspection shows that teaching assistants are well prepared, have good subject knowledge and support and challenge pupils well as they work. They make a positive contribution to the standards that pupils achieve. The teaching observed in the inspection in Years 4 and 5 was good. The teacher used her interactive whiteboard very confidently and showed good subject knowledge as pupils accessed a database to discover information about the internal organs of their bodies. The main weakness in teaching, especially in Years 5 and 6, is that pupils have not been taught a sufficiently detailed curriculum to reach average standards.

115. Teachers are supported by useful subject documentation which the co-ordinator has produced. There is a clear policy statement and helpful advice on the need to be aware that pupils might have varying access to computers at home. Planning is based on the nationally recommended guidance and follows an overall curriculum plan which is based on a two-year rolling programme. The co-ordinator is relatively new to the school and to the profession. She undertakes her role satisfactorily. She monitors teachers' termly planning but not the standards being achieved in the classroom. There were examples during the inspection of the appropriate use of information and communication technology to support work being done in other curriculum areas. For example, pupils in Year 1 confidently devised a program which moved a robotic toy over a predetermined course, to develop their understanding of patterns and predictions in a mathematics lesson. Assessment in the subject is unsatisfactory. There are currently no agreed procedures for recording the attainment or the progress of pupils as they move through the school. Older pupils access data on the Internet but the use of e-mail is not sufficiently developed. During the inspection, pupils in the 'Challenge Group' were using the Internet well as a resource to discover facts about different countries. Resources are satisfactory. They are enhanced by the class interactive

whiteboards but the computer suite is small and can only be used for small groups. Staff training, has been effective and is due for completion at the end of the current year.

MUSIC

116. Standards in music are above average across the school. Similar standards were observed in the school's previous inspection. Pupils with special educational needs take a full part in all activities and with good encouragement and support achieve well from their individual starting points.

117. Pupils' main achievement is in the level of performance which is encouraged across the school. Pupils enjoy their music making and participate in school productions with confidence and poise. The school's approach to the creative and performing arts is very positive. It is to enrich pupils' experiences through practical involvement and to develop their skills and confidence in the creative process. As a result, pupils achieve well throughout the school. Appropriate emphasis is also placed on pupils' singing. Pupils sing in assemblies tunefully with an appropriate awareness of melody. In whole school productions, older pupils in the school are able to sustain counter melodies and rhythms. In these productions, pupils have a good awareness of the concentration and discipline needed to follow the guidance of a conductor. Pupils have appropriate opportunities to listen to a range of music, which includes Tchaikovsky's 'Peter and the Wolf' and 'The Nutcracker Suite', Holst's 'Planet Suite' and music from other cultures such as music from China and Africa.

118. The quality of teaching and learning across the school is good. This is a similar judgement to that made in the school's previous inspection. Teachers plan their lessons carefully with a good regard for a broad range of musical activities that provide a good level of challenge and interest. As a result pupils are well motivated and enthusiastic about their music making. Several strengths in teaching in Years 1 and 2 were evident in good lesson in Year 2, where pupils were exploring a range of sounds and songs to accompany the teacher's reading of a story of pirates on a treasure island. As a result of the teacher's good management, combined with good support from the teaching assistant, pupils considered well the range of sounds percussion instruments were able to make. They were given good opportunities to select the instruments most suitable for their parts in the story. As a result, by the end of the lesson, pupils had developed well the range of sounds they were able to create using their voices, body percussion and pitched and unpitched percussion instruments.

119. Strengths in teaching in Years 3 to 6 were seen in a lesson to Year 6. Pupils were composing a musical exploration of the story of the Ditchling Snowball which they had been studying in their work in local history and which they were using as a basis of their work in art. They were able to select from a good range of pitched and unpitched instruments and pupils who learned to play instruments such as the violin and tenor horn with peripatetic teachers enhanced the work of their groups effectively. In their preparatory discussions, pupils experimented with elements such as tempo and dynamics and, in the most successful compositions, consideration had been given to opening and closing effects. As a result of good guidance from their teacher and a good use of time, by the end of the lesson, they were able to contribute usefully to a whole class evaluation of the progress each group had made with the task. They were able to record their compositions using a range of simple symbols with which they were familiar.

120. The co-ordinator for music is currently absent due to illness and the subject is being temporarily managed by the headteacher. The co-ordinator is a music specialist who is responsible for most of the teaching in the subject. The value the school places on pupils' experience and understanding of music is reflected in the recent Artsmark Gold award which recognises the school's commitment to this area of pupils' learning. In the school's previous inspection, the subject did not have a scheme of work. This has now been addressed and there is a recent policy and a new scheme of work which combines elements of national guidelines and a commercial scheme. Provision has been enhanced by a school choir, recorder clubs and a school band which has recently included brass instruments. Visitors to the school such as the visit of a musician from Ghana and good links with events, such as the local area infant and junior music festivals, enhance pupils' experiences. The subject is monitored by senior staff and through a good level of informal discussion among all staff involved. Assessment in the subject is informal and includes a good level of evaluative discussion in class. There is no recognition of National Curriculum levels in the work

of the subject. Resources in the subject are good. There is a good number and range of pitched and unpitched musical instruments, tuned instruments and an appropriate range of musical instruments from different cultures. The school's range of recorded music supports the curriculum appropriately and is used to enhance school assemblies on a regular basis. Appropriate use is made of information and communication technology to listen to recorded music and to compose and play using the keyboards. The subject makes a good contribution to pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development.

PHYSICAL EDUCATION

121. By the end of Years 2 and 6, pupils achieve above average standards. This represents an improvement since the last inspection in Years 1 and 2 when standards were judged to have been average. The above average standards in Years 3 to 6 have been maintained. The improvement in Years 1 and 2 has been achieved through an improvement in the quality of teaching in this key stage. The majority of pupils achieve, and many exceed, the expectations in swimming by the time they leave the school. Across the school, pupils with special educational needs make good progress, as do those with higher ability.

122. Across the school, pupils achieve well. Pupils achieve well in swimming. Younger pupils develop confidence in the school's own learner pool and this is developed as they progress through the school with a range of swimming and personal survival activities at a nearby public pool. Other strengths in pupils' achievement are the way in which a strong emphasis is given to developing their knowledge and understanding of fitness and health. Pupils are consistently taught the importance of warming up at the beginning of an activity and cooling down at the end. Younger pupils understand the connection between heart rate and exercise while older pupils prepare their own sequences of warm up activities to be used for running, jumping or throwing which they might then use in subsequent lessons.

123. The quality of teaching and learning is good across the school. There has been an improvement in the overall quality of teaching since the last inspection. The teaching of swimming is good. It is done by qualified staff and pupils follow a staged course enabling them to obtain recognition for a range of water skills. Athletic and gymnastic skills are systematically taught well, as in a Year 5/6 class when pupils were practising for the standing long jump. The teacher made effective use of examples from the pupils themselves, drawing their attention to both good and poor practice, and providing a level of challenge which required them to evaluate and improve on each other's performance. In a Year 2 lesson on developing control of a ball with the feet, pupils carried out a sequence of warm up activities directly linked to the task they were then asked to do and the teacher was careful to draw attention to the muscles they were stretching and their use when dribbling a ball. Where teaching was less effective it was because insufficient opportunities were being provided for the pupils to evaluate and reflect on their performance. The limited space in the hall also has a negative impact on the quality of learning.

124. The subject is led well by an enthusiastic co-ordinator who monitors teachers' planning to ensure progression and that the full National Curriculum requirements are met. She has arranged appropriate training from visiting specialists for her colleagues and maintains an appropriate subject development plan to address priorities such as monitoring teaching. The school organises a wide range of extracurricular activities for both boys and girls. These include hockey, netball, football, rounders and maypole dancing. They are taught by school staff and visiting specialist teachers. Outdoor education is addressed through a residential visit for older pupils which provides opportunities for activities such as climbing and ropewalks. Good links are made with other curriculum subjects. For example, Year 5/6 pupils design simple team games, word-process the rules, design instruction cards and then use them to teach Year 4/5 pupils. Parents who are doctors have demonstrated the effect of exercise on the heart and lungs by using computerised monitors in science teaching. The subject is well resourced, with a good range of outdoor as well as indoor equipment.

RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

125. By the end of Years 2 and 6, pupils' knowledge and understanding meet the expectations of the locally Agreed Syllabus. Similar standards were seen in the school's previous inspection. The school has

a caring and supportive ethos, which encourages pupils to respect the ideas and opinions of others. The subject makes a good contribution to pupils' personal development. Across the school, pupils achieve satisfactorily. Pupils with special educational needs are well involved in lessons and achieve well, especially when they receive well targeted support in class.

126. The main achievement of pupils across the school is in their understanding and appreciation of the Christian message and the Christian foundation of the school. The school has good links with local clergy and the church and ensures that pupils build a secure knowledge of traditions and beliefs of the Christian religion as they move through the school. Pupils visit the local church for the major celebrations in the Christian calendar and for occasions such as the Leavers' Service in the summer. A further strength of provision is the sensitivity and respect that teachers and pupils show towards the feelings, beliefs and opinions of others. Weaknesses in pupils' achievement are in the depth and detail of their written work which is sometimes limited and superficial and this inhibits some aspects of their personal responses. Also studies of other major faiths in the world, whilst represented appropriately in the curriculum and teachers' planning, do not build sufficiently progressively through the years.

127. The quality of teaching and learning throughout the school is satisfactory overall, although there was evidence of good teaching during the inspection. Pupils have trust and faith in their teachers and other adults in the classroom. This helps them to be well involved in lesson activities and to develop confidence in offering their ideas and responses. Strengths in teaching in Years 1 and 2 were seen in a good Year 2 lesson. The teacher quickly established a calm and thoughtful atmosphere by asking pupils to listen with their eyes closed to a short piece of Jewish folk music. Pupils listened very attentively and with interest and quickly adopted the teacher's respectful approach to the beliefs and traditions of others. The teacher used questions sensitively to encourage pupils who had links with the Jewish faith to discuss their knowledge and experiences and this maintained a high level of interest throughout the lesson. As a result the lesson created a good basis for pupils to further extend their knowledge of the beliefs and traditions of Judaism.

128. In a good Year 6 lesson, the teacher opened the lesson effectively with a series of quotations from the Old and the New Testaments which gave contradictory guidance on the legitimate use of violence. This provided an interesting and thoughtful basis for pupils to begin to think about the meaning of the term and its application to global issues such as war and its relevance to their own experiences. The teacher's use of well focused questions and his good management of the class enabled pupils to discuss issues as a whole class and in smaller groups together. The lesson concluded with a series of role-plays in which pupils considered appropriate responses to violence or intimidating behaviour. Lesson activities and discussion provided a good level of challenge and provoked some interesting exchanges of ideas. By the end of the lesson, pupils had developed their understanding of a complex issue well.

129. The subject is well led by a senior member of staff who is interested in, and committed to, its further development. There is a recently reviewed policy and curriculum map which reflects the requirements of the locally Agreed Syllabus. This is an improvement since the last inspection when there was no scheme of work for the subject. The co-ordinator has monitored teachers' planning and the school has undertaken a useful 'pupils' voice' review of the subject which is being used to adapt the curriculum and to inform teaching. From this review, the school was able to adjust curricular planning to ensure that pupils' knowledge and understanding developed progressively. Assessment in the subject is generally satisfactory and is linked to teachers' evaluation of their planning, informal question and answer in lessons and a statement in pupils' yearly written reports. There are good links with the local church and clergy and pupils have visited a church in Brighton to support their understanding of Christianity. The school is aware that links with other faiths are not part of pupils' experiences. Resources are sufficient to ensure the effective teaching of the curriculum. There are useful links with other areas of the curriculum, such as pupils' speaking and listening in literacy and in art where pupils in each class made silk banners depicting the creation stories in some of the major faiths and cultures around the world. There are some useful links with information and communication technology such as use of the Internet for the retrieval

of information on Judaism. However, this is still in its early stages of development. Collective worship supports pupils' learning well.

