

INSPECTION REPORT

SELLING CE PRIMARY SCHOOL

Selling, Faversham

LEA area: Kent

Unique reference number: 118650

Headteacher: Mr I Fidge

Reporting inspector: Mr D Collard
OFSTED Inspector Number: 11122

Dates of inspection: 8th – 11th October 2001

Inspection number: 196800

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

© Crown copyright 2001

This report may be reproduced in whole or in part for non-commercial educational purposes, provided that all extracts quoted are reproduced verbatim without adaptation and on condition that the source and date thereof are stated.

Further copies of this report are obtainable from the school. Under the School Inspections Act 1996, the school must provide a copy of this report and/or its summary free of charge to certain categories of people. A charge not exceeding the full cost of reproduction may be made for any other copies supplied.

INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Type of school: infant and junior
School category: voluntary controlled
Age range of pupils: 4 - 11
Gender of pupils: mixed

School address: The Street
Selling
Nr Faversham
Kent

Postcode: ME13 9RQ
Telephone number: 01227 752202
Fax number: 01227 752906

Appropriate authority: governing body
Name of chair of governors: Mrs Sue Earl

Date of previous inspection: April 1997

INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Team members			Subject responsibilities	Aspect responsibilities
11122	Mr D. Collard	Registered inspector	special educational needs; English as an additional language; equal opportunities mathematics; information and communication technology; physical education; history	What sort of school is it? The school's results and pupils' achievements. How well are pupils taught? What should the school do to improve further?
9306	Mrs B. Moore	Lay inspector	none	How well does the school care for its pupils? How well does the school work in partnership with parents?
10913	Mrs M. Kelsey	Team inspector	the foundation stage; science; art and design; design and technology music	How good are the curricular and other opportunities offered to pupils?
30033	Mr M Wright		English; geography; religious education	Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development. How well is the school led and managed?

The inspection contractor was:

Lincolnshire Education Associates

The Innovation Centre
Europarc
GRIMSBY
North East Lincolnshire
DN37 9TT

Any concerns or complaints about the inspection or the report should be raised with the inspection contractor. Complaints that are not satisfactorily resolved by the contractor should be raised with OFSTED by writing to:

The Complaints Manager
Inspection Quality Division
The Office for Standards in Education
Alexandra House
33 Kingsway
London WC2B 6SE

REPORT CONTENTS

	Page
PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT	6 - 9
Information about the school	
How good the school is	
What the school does well	
What could be improved	
How the school has improved since its last inspection	
Standards	
Pupils' attitudes and values	
Teaching and learning	
Other aspects of the school	
How well the school is led and managed	
Parents' and carers' views of the school	
PART B: COMMENTARY	
HOW HIGH ARE STANDARDS?	10 - 12
The school's results and pupils' achievements	
Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development	
HOW WELL ARE PUPILS TAUGHT?	12 - 13
HOW GOOD ARE THE CURRICULAR AND OTHER OPPORTUNITIES OFFERED TO PUPILS?	14 - 16
HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL CARE FOR ITS PUPILS?	16 - 17
HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL WORK IN PARTNERSHIP WITH PARENTS	17 - 18
HOW WELL IS THE SCHOOL LED AND MANAGED?	18 - 19
WHAT SHOULD THE SCHOOL DO TO IMPROVE FURTHER?	20
PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS	21 - 24
PART D: THE STANDARDS AND QUALITY OF TEACHING IN	

PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Selling Church of England Primary School is situated in the village of Selling near Faversham, Kent. There are 97 pupils on roll. This is smaller than the average primary school. There are four classes with pupils ranging in age from four to eleven years old. The school is attractive and has facilities that include a hall for assemblies and physical education lessons. Outside extensive improvements have been made to the environment, including a newly refurbished car park. Pupils come from a variety of social backgrounds. At the time of the inspection, 16 children attended school on a part-time basis in the reception class. The number of pupils entitled to free school meals (2 per cent) is well below the national average and has decreased since the last inspection. Two pupils come from a minority ethnic background and one is identified as being at an early stage of learning English. This is very low in relation to the national average. Thirty two per cent of pupils are on the special needs register which is above the national average. Two pupils have a statement of special educational need, which is below the national average. Pupils entering the school in the reception class have ability that is at least in line with the national average and some who are above. At the end of the Foundation Stage, in Year 1, the attainment of pupils is average and this enables the majority to start work on the National Curriculum.

HOW GOOD THE SCHOOL IS

This is an effective school that provides sound value for money. The standards that pupils achieve are rising and this is borne out by the data on each pupil that is now more readily available. A positive ethos permeates the work of the school. Pupils have very good attitudes to school and their behaviour is very good in and around the school. Overall, teaching is good in all subjects and in all yeargroups. Leadership is strong and is supported by a knowledgeable governing body. Taking all this into account the school has a good capacity to improve further.

What the school does well

- Standards are improving in the core subjects of English and mathematics and substantially improving in science.
- Teaching is of good quality
- Leadership and management are strong and effective
- The environment for learning is attractive
- The curriculum is wide and varied and includes the elementary teaching of French, Italian and German as well as the use of outside specialists for some aspects of physical education.
- A Christian ethos permeates the work of the school
- The assessment of pupils' attainment is collated and used well to help inform what they will learn next
- Behaviour in the school is very good and pupils have very positive attitudes to their work
- Parents are encouraged to play an active part in the learning of their children

What could be improved

- The standards of writing both in English and in other subject areas
- The provision for information and communication technology and its use in investigation, enquiry and research in other subjects

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

HOW THE SCHOOL HAS IMPROVED SINCE ITS LAST INSPECTION

The school was last inspected in 1997. The school has made good progress since then. At that time there were issues relating to the planning of the curriculum and the quality, use and monitoring of assessment. These have all been dealt with. There is now a consistent whole-school approach to planning, and good assessment procedures that are helping to improve standards in many subjects. In addition, there has been an overall improvement in the quality of teaching. The good standards in the spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of the pupils have been maintained and the quality of leadership has been strengthened with the arrival of the new headteacher in January of this

year. The behaviour of pupils deteriorated for an interim period between inspections but that has now returned to its previously high level.

STANDARDS

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

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

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

The table above shows that in the Year 2000 National Curriculum tests for eleven year olds the pupils gained average levels in English and mathematics when compared to all schools and when compared to schools of a similar type. Standards were well below average for science. Over three years results have fluctuated but percentages have shown an upward trend. Results improved in 2001, particularly in science, although at the time of the inspection no national comparisons were available.

Children enter the school with standards that are broadly in line with the national expectation. By the time children reach the end of the Foundation Stage at the end of the reception class they are ready to start work on the National Curriculum.

Pupils in Year 2 have at least average standards in all subjects. Attainment in tests has been at high levels in writing and mathematics and at average levels in reading. In 2001 National Curriculum tests all pupils gained the expected Level 2 in English, mathematics and science. This is an improvement on the results of 2000. Standards are good in history because the pupils have a good background general knowledge and are beginning to apply it in their studies. Pupils in Years 1 and 2 make suitable progress in their learning because they are given relevant tasks that are planned well to meet their needs.

The standards of pupils in the present Year 6 are average, overall. In English, pupils speak and listen well, they read at levels at least according to those expected for their age and a significant number are better. Standards in writing are average. Pupils' presentation of their work is good. Pupils have above average standards in mathematics, especially in their number work. It is not as strong in the use of data and problem solving. Standards in science are much improved. Pupils in Year 6 are now at average levels. Standards are average in all other subjects except information and communication technology, where they are below. This is because pupils have not been given enough time on computers over their period at the school to allow them to make sufficient progress. Standards in history are above the expected level for their age. They assimilate information quickly and understand many historical facts. Pupils in Years 3 to 6 make good progress in their learning because teachers are able to build upon the achievement that has taken place in the earlier years. Pupils respond well to the challenges they are set and are inquisitive and eager learners.

The targets set for 2001 were too optimistic and unachievable. These have been reviewed in light of the better information from assessment and are now set at realistic and achievable levels for next year.

PUPILS' ATTITUDES AND VALUES

Aspect	Comment
Attitudes to the school	Very good. Pupils are keen to learn and work co-operatively. They enjoy school.

Behaviour, in and out of classrooms	Very good. Pupils show respect for one another. No instances of bullying or oppressive behaviour were witnessed during the inspection.
Personal development and relationships	Very good. Pupils take responsibility for daily routines. Relationships are very good between all members of the school.
Attendance	In line with the national average. The school has pupils from a wide catchment area and many pupils arrive at school in buses and cars.

TEACHING AND LEARNING

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

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

Teaching is good throughout the school and especially in English and mathematics. Teachers are conscientious in their planning of work and ensure that pupils' skills increase each year. They employ a range of methods to interest and motivate the pupils. These are successful, so that learning is also good. The National Literacy and Numeracy Strategies are now well established and teaching in these subjects has improved as a consequence. Teachers have the confidence to plan carefully for individual pupils and use the information they gain to improve the next lesson. They manage pupils well so that the needs of all pupils are met, including those with special educational needs. Support staff are also used well to aid specific groups of pupils. Teachers' subject knowledge is good throughout all areas of the curriculum except information and communication technology. An intensive training programme is about to be started that will improve learning in this subject. Overall, pupils learn well from the opportunities that they are offered at the school, which are increased by the use of specialist teachers particularly in physical education.

OTHER ASPECTS OF THE SCHOOL

Aspect	Comment
The quality and range of the curriculum	Good. The school provides a broad and balanced curriculum that is well considered to meet the needs of individuals and groups. Personal and social development has a high priority and is promoted by specific lessons aimed at developing reflective thinking. Resources are being substantially improved to provide a well-founded curriculum for information and communication technology.
Provision for pupils with special educational needs	Good. Pupils are identified early and given suitably different work that helps them make progress quickly. Regular reviews are conducted and the assessment that is undertaken provides a basis upon which new work is given.
Provision for pupils with English as an additional language	Suitable. When extra support is needed it is provided by specialist teachers.
Provision for pupils' personal, including spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	Good. Assemblies and religious education lessons contribute effectively to the pupils' values and beliefs. Good behaviour is positively promoted by the school and has been very effective in the recent past. Pupils have regular discussion periods when they can strengthen relationships with each other. Younger and older pupils mix very well and are encouraged to do so by helping each other at lunchtimes and after school. Cultural development is good. Opportunities are provided to study our own heritage and that of others; this includes regular times when minority ethnic groups are studied and celebrated.
How well the school cares for its pupils	All staff know the children well and actively promote their care for one another. Monitoring and support in these areas are very good and unobtrusive. There is a strong family ethos that permeates the work of the school. Assessment procedures have greatly improved and are at the core of all planning within the curriculum.

The broad curriculum is enhanced by the use of specialist teachers for subjects such as gymnastics and swimming and by a wide range of visiting specialists such as artists, dancers and crafts people. In addition to the normal curriculum the school also offers elementary teaching of French, Italian and German. The school works well with parents and they value the close relationship that now exists. Parents provide valuable financial support as well as helping make substantial improvements to the school's environment.

HOW WELL THE SCHOOL IS LED AND MANAGED

Aspect	Comment
Leadership and management by the headteacher and other key staff	Good. The new headteacher has made a positive impact on raising the esteem of the school and developing a strategy for raising standards. He is supported by an able teaching team.
How well the governors fulfil their responsibilities	Good. The governors have a good grasp of what needs to be done to help the school move forward. They have taken good decisions based on clear information. They effectively fulfil their statutory responsibilities.
The school's evaluation of its performance	Good. The management and leadership of the school have identified and analysed the strengths and weaknesses and taken appropriate action.
The strategic use of resources	Sound. Improvements have made a substantial difference to the fabric of the building and to the immediate environment. Governors evaluate their spending decisions and ensure that they obtain sound value for money.

Before the arrival of the present headteacher there had been a number of immediate issues to resolve regarding the behaviour of pupils and inter-personal relationships. These have been fully remedied and the school has moved forward rapidly. The partnership between the staff and the governing body is good and there is now a renewed confidence throughout the school.

The number of both teaching and non-teaching staff is adequate for teaching all areas of the curriculum. They are supported well by other professionals. This is ensuring that a wide and varied curriculum can be offered. The school has suitable accommodation and an attractive outside grounds. These are being constantly improved from local grants and by offers of help from parents and friends of the school. Resources are satisfactory to provide for all subjects and are being enhanced by a good range of visits and visitors to the school.

PARENTS' AND CARERS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

What pleases parents most	What parents would like to see improved
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Their children like school • The leadership and management of the school is good • The school provides an interesting range of activities during the day. • Behaviour is good • The school has improved recently • Teaching is good and teachers expect their children to work hard 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The range of extra-curricular activities is limited

The inspection team agree with the positive views of the parents. There is a suitable range of extra-curricular activities that is only limited by the need to transport pupils home at the end of the day. The school could provide a wider range of sports in competition with other schools.

PART B: COMMENTARY

HOW HIGH ARE STANDARDS?

The school's results and pupils' achievements

1. Children's attainment on entry to the reception class has been average or above over the last three years, according to the baseline assessments. This year, although no figures are available for comparison at this early stage of the term, indications are that the present cohort of children, have standards which are broadly average when compared with those of their age nationally. By the end of the Reception Year, almost all the children are likely to reach the national goals in the six areas of learning in the Foundation Stage and they will be ready to start the National Curriculum. Some children will exceed these goals.
2. The standards reached in reading and writing by the end of Year 2 are average. In the Year 2000 National Curriculum tests pupils achieved average results in reading and above average results in writing. In this year group 100 per cent gained the average Level 2 in reading, although only a small number gained the higher Level 3. The trend over time is similar to that nationally. In the National Curriculum tests of 2000 for pupils in Year 6 standards were also at average levels. A large number of pupils were able to achieve the expected Level 4 but only a few did better and achieved the higher Level 5. Boys performed better than those nationally whilst girls were broadly in line with the national average.
3. Results improved in 2001 at both Year 2 and Year 6. Eighty-eight per cent of pupils achieved the expected level in Year 2, although figures are difficult to interpret as each pupil represents over 10 per cent. Seventy-one per cent of Year 6 pupils achieved the expected level which is slightly below the national figure. Standards over the last four years have fluctuated but are broadly in line with the national picture. Pupils in the present Year 2 and Year 6 also have average standards in English but generally are achieving better in reading than in writing. This is an area of priority for the school and its success is shown in the better range of writing that is now being undertaken especially in the junior years. Spelling is good and the quality of handwriting shows improvement each year.
4. Standards in mathematics have improved since the last inspection. In the Year 2000 National Curriculum tests for pupils in Year 2 attainment was well above average. All pupils attained at least the higher Level 2A and a higher proportion than the national average attained Level 3. There were no significant differences between boys and girls, who both exceeded the national norms. The trend over the last five years has fluctuated because of the small numbers in each year and the different numbers of pupils with special educational needs. In 2001, all pupils achieved the national average (Level 2) and 30 per cent of pupils achieved the higher Level 3. This indicates that standards have been maintained over time. Pupils in the present Year 2 are

on line to achieve similar standards in the National Curriculum tests at the end of this academic year.

5. Pupils in Year 6 achieved standards in the Year 2000 National Curriculum tests that were average when compared with all schools and with schools of a similar type. The trend over four years is broadly in line with the national picture. Boys' performance was slightly better than girls'. In 2001 National Curriculum tests the performance of pupils was similar and broadly accorded with the national and local figures. Pupils in the present Year 6 have standards that are above average and attainment is particularly good in number work.
6. Teacher assessments in science in Year 2000 showed that standards for Year 2 were very high in comparison with other schools nationally for children reaching the expected Level 2. The percentage of pupils reaching the higher Level 3 was well above average. In national tests the percentage of pupils at the end of Year 6 reaching the expected Level 4 and above was below the national average. The percentage of pupils reaching the higher Level 5 was well below average. Overall, the attainment of girls was below that of boys, which is the opposite of the national trend. In terms of trends over time, attainment in science by the end of Year 6, dropped markedly just after the last inspection in 1997. It then rose consistently, following the steady upward rise in standards nationally, but until 2000, was still always below average. The most recent results in 2001 show a good level of improvement in the percentage of children reaching the higher level, though figures are not yet available for comparison with schools nationally. One hundred per cent of the pupils who took the tests, managed to attain Level 4 or above, and nearly a quarter went on to gain a Level 5. Evidence gathered during inspection showed that attainment was average at both key stages in all aspects of the subject.
7. In other subjects, Year 2 pupils reach the expected levels in information and communication technology, religious education, art and design, geography, music and physical education. Standards are above the expected level in history. The school provides a good range of experiences and pupils are able to develop their skills well in areas of general knowledge and creative arts. They are gaining a good background in assimilating information that helps them in investigation and enquiry elements during Years 3 to 6.
8. Year 6 pupils attain average standards in religious education, art and design, geography, music and physical education. The school provides a good range of activities that help develop all aspects of subjects and a thirst for learning in preparation for higher level work at their next school. Standards are below those expected in information and communication technology. This is similar to the time of the last inspection because not enough priority has been given to the subject over a period of time. This situation is being remedied by the introduction of a new computer suite and by an intensive training programme for teachers.

9. Pupils' progress in learning is sound overall throughout all years in the school. It is good in mathematics, history and physical education. In these subjects in particular, the school provides a consistent scheme of work that ensures that all pupils are stretched to their ability and work is closely linked to improving knowledge, skills and understanding. In physical education it is also helped by the school's use of outside specialists for a wide range of activities. Pupils in all years acquire knowledge quickly. Even the younger pupils are interested learners and show an inquisitive nature. Teachers encourage this through pertinent questioning and the good relationships they engender in their classes. There is an understanding of each individual and the needs that they have. Targets are set in some classes so that pupils begin to understand where they need to improve. Progress in learning is not satisfactory in information and communication technology because pupils have not, until recently, benefited from regular access to computers or enough work linked to other subjects.
10. Pupils with special educational needs make good progress through the school in relation to their own specific abilities. There are good systems for early identification of need and teachers are able to provide good support through the use of learning assistants or specific work.

Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development

11. At the time of the last inspection, pupils were said to have good attitudes to learning and very good behaviour in and around the school. In the interim there were incidents of poor behaviour, but strategies and policies have been put in place and former standards are being recovered and improved.
12. Pupils' attitudes to school are now very good and their behaviour throughout the school is also very good. As a result, pupils are keen to learn. They work co-operatively and show respect for adults in the school and for each other. There are many reminders in classes and around the school that give clear rules for the classroom and the playground. Pupils are encouraged to consider the impact of their actions on others and teachers are consistent in their high expectations of attitudes and behaviour. They have very good relationships with pupils and handle situations in class and on the playground quietly and effectively.
13. The personal development of pupils is very good. Pupils take responsibility for some of the daily routines of the school. They are able to use their initiative and make decisions. Lessons in thinking skills have been introduced for the older pupils. These lessons promote pupils' positive, reflective thinking before they go on to develop critical thinking skills. They promote positive attitudes and behaviour and good working habits. Elsewhere in the school, pupils evaluate the contributions of others to the lessons and on these occasions they show a true generosity of spirit.
14. Pupils with special educational needs are often given a structured programme to improve their behaviour. Teachers and support assistants are fully involved

in monitoring the progress of these. As a result lessons run smoothly and there is very little disruption even from pupils who could easily challenge the authority of the teacher.

15. Pupils are keen to participate in the various activities provided by the school and the attendance rate at the school is satisfactory.

HOW WELL ARE PUPILS OR STUDENTS TAUGHT?

16. Teaching in the Foundation Stage is good overall, and never less than sound. There is a good ratio of adults to pupils, and the children benefit from the patience shown by all the staff within a well-structured and well-organised learning environment. The staff work well together, and this contributes to the good progress that the children make. There is a wide range of activities, covering all aspects of learning, and an appropriate balance between teacher-directed and child-initiated tasks. However, the possibilities for role-play are not exploited to the full, and opportunities are missed to create centres of interest for role-play which could be maximised for related experiences, particularly in communication, language and literacy and mathematical development. Whole-class sessions, whether for particular lessons such as physical education or "Circle Time", or when the class comes together for a structured input, as in the introductory work in literacy and numeracy, are well taught. The teacher ensures that children are not kept sitting on the carpet too long, and she makes the sessions fun, so that children enjoy participating. When children are engaged in activities of their own, the staff take every opportunity to talk with them about their experiences. These conversations are sometimes too fleeting to develop a sustained dialogue, or pursue a learning objective. For example, in a music session, the planning did not allow sufficient time for each group to consolidate what they had learned. A few children were unsure of the difference between high or low notes and those that were loud or soft. These children needed more time to try playing the xylophone for themselves.
17. Teaching in Years 1 to 6 is also good and this is why pupils progress well in their learning. Lessons are planned effectively to ensure that all aspects of subjects are covered and that pupils are given tasks that will challenge and excite them. In this way pupils are assured of learning new information and increasing their knowledge base. A good example of this was seen in a Year 5/6 history lesson. The teacher carefully referred to work on the Victorians that had taken place in a previous lesson and asked the pupils to write down what they knew. This gave a good starting point and the learning could move on from into developing better understanding.
18. In all subjects except information and communication technology the teachers have good subject understanding. They are able to answer difficult questions and talk knowledgeably about the topic being studied. In a Year 3/4 science lesson the teacher used a question and answer session to develop a branching diagram and was then able to demonstrate examples from those

given by the pupils. The learning here allowed pupils to draw conclusions and work independently to improve their scientific skill. During lessons the teachers have good expectations about the pupils are capable of. This is based on increasingly effective data provided by national and optional tests during the year. The school is gathering these and is now beginning to use them to group different abilities of pupils. A consequence of this has been the introduction of a small number of more able pupils into a higher mathematics group. They are closely monitored to ensure that not only are they able to complete what is asked of them but that their lower maturity level is not ignored.

19. When pupils are asked to undertake independent work the pace of the learning is good. In the best cases the teacher ensures that each child is aware of how much is expected to be completed and the reason why. This was successfully achieved in a Year 5/6 literacy lesson. After the pupils had set to work they discussed the task quietly with each other, made use of the dictionaries and completed a good quantity of work in the time allowed. Learning was good because there was ample time to practice and gain better understanding.
20. Pupils throughout the school are managed well by the teachers. During the inspection there were no instances of disruptive behaviour despite there being a small number of pupils who could quickly challenge the authority of the teacher. Before this happens a learning support assistant is usually deployed to divert any potential trouble. This may include a range of sanctions such as taking the pupil out of the room to settle. This ensures that the rest of the class are not distracted from their learning. Because of this good management pupils concentrate well and show high levels of interest. They are inquisitive in nature and are quick to enquire when they do not understand what they are being told. In a Year 1/2 history lesson there were particularly good levels of concentration during a practical 'archaeological dig.' The teacher in this lesson was enthusiastic and generated a sense of fun about the activity.
21. Marking and day-to-day assessment of work are good. Pupils are given praise and often comments for improvement. Some of the marking is interactive and a response is expected from the pupil. This is all helping pupils gain a knowledge of their own learning capability. Individual targets are also set and these give even better ways to help pupils understand if they have moved on. Homework is set in the junior years and younger pupils are expected to take reading and spellings home to learn. This is good preparation for the move to the next school.
22. Pupils with special educational needs are taught and supported well. Those with statements are given an adequate level of support and the school adds to this provision from the main budget allowance. Planning in the individual education plans is linked to making 'small steps' in learning and these are regularly reviewed to ensure that they have been achieved. A number of pupils who were on the register of special educational needs have managed to achieve levels appropriate to their age in national tests and this demonstrates good improvement in learning.

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

23. The school provides a good curriculum which is broad, and has been well considered to meet the interest and needs of its pupils, including those with special educational needs and those who have English as an additional language. It is generally well balanced. The school confidently meets the requirements of the National Curriculum and the locally agreed syllabus for religious education, except in information and communication technology (ICT) for the juniors, where the school does not have equipment to teach the subject to a sufficiently high standard. An appropriate emphasis is given to English and mathematics, but there is a slight imbalance in the time allocated to some other subjects. Art and design, design and technology, music, and science in years 3 to 6 are given a little less time than the national average.
24. In accordance with the governing body's policies, the school makes suitable arrangements for sex and drugs education through the good programme of personal, social and health education, as well as in science and physical education lessons. Pupils learn how to keep safe in a variety of situations and develop an understanding of citizenship through discussions about rules and responsibilities in the community. There are opportunities for pupils to talk about themselves, their thoughts and their feelings, and to listen to what their friends have to say. Good use is made of outside agencies to learn about health, safety and environmental concerns, including the Road Safety Officer and the Park Ranger.
25. The curriculum for children in the Foundation Stage takes account of the Early Learning Goals, which are now a requirement for children of this age. The planning is fully based on the nationally agreed areas of learning, rectifying a weakness identified in the last inspection, when there was no separate curriculum for the children in the reception class. Additionally, at the time of the last report there was no outside play area for the reception class. An attractive area has now been provided and this enables the staff to plan a full outdoor curriculum.
26. The strengths identified in the curriculum have been maintained, and new initiatives have been introduced. The work which had been started with the core subjects has now been extended to develop policies for all subjects. These are now in place and are regularly reviewed. The school has adopted the national schemes of work for most subjects, but is adapting and modifying them to suit the school's particular needs. This is proving successful, as seen for example in music, where a more interesting activity had been found to meet the scheme's learning objectives for a Year 5 and 6 lesson. The teaching of a modern foreign language in Year 5 and 6 has been extended to continue with French and add a term each of Italian and German.
27. The National Strategy for Literacy is in place and is working effectively. Pupils have a wide range of skills to enhance their reading, writing and speaking. Writing has been identified as a weakness by the school and specific attention is

being given to extended writing, including using this more in religious education and science.

28. The provision for pupils with special educational needs is good. There are well-derived individual education plans that ensure that pupils are given specific work tailored to their particular needs. Learning support assistants are consulted about what should be done next and this information is shared with teachers. When work is planned for groups, good account is taken of ensuring that these pupils are challenged but not overawed by what is asked of them.
29. The school makes good provision to enrich the curriculum through a range of well-supported extra-curricular activities. There are after school and lunchtime clubs for mathematics, music, environmental activities, French and various sports according to the season. These clubs are well attended and teachers and other helpers diligently organise well-balanced, challenging and enjoyable activities, enabling pupils of different ages to mix together.
30. The school works hard to provide a socially inclusive curriculum. Equal access and opportunities to be involved in lessons are ensured through a variety of strategies as set out in the policies for equal opportunities and for educational inclusion. These include differentiating the curriculum for different groups of pupils and providing good in-class support.
31. To enhance the curriculum for all its pupils, the school has established good links within the local community. The local clergy visit the school and regularly lead the daily act of worship. One of the best examples of the many events which take place is the school's annual May Day Celebration. The children dance round the maypole and each class puts on a performance for the community. The children also serve teas to their guests. Many members of the community also make a good contribution to the pupils' learning. For example, the local cricket club arranges coaching sessions and the local gardeners' group has helped the children to plant and grow vegetables. There are good links with the local playgroup and with other schools as well as with Christchurch College, which works with the school on a partnership basis in the training of teachers.
32. The provision for pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good. Spiritual awareness is developed satisfactorily. Religious education and collective worship contribute effectively to the development of pupils' knowledge and their insights into religious values and beliefs, and allow pupils to make a personal response through such themes as "Friendship". There are some spontaneous moments when children express awe and wonder. For example, in a science lesson they were amazed and delighted when they were shown a dragon fruit. In assemblies, a candle is used as a focus when the children are invited to reflect, but, as at the time of the last inspection, they are not given enough time to do this, and not enough guidance is given to help them to meditate on the content of the worship.
33. The moral development of pupils is good. The school positively encourages good behaviour. There have been some marked improvements recently after an

unsettled period when the good behaviour, noted at the time of the last inspection, had deteriorated. Pupils know what is expected of them and all members of staff apply the behaviour code consistently. Pupils take pleasure from the praise they are given or the rewards they achieve, for example in the special Golden Time Celebration Assembly. All adults within the school promote the principles which distinguish right from wrong through their positive relationships with the pupils. The school's work in "Circle Time" strengthens these principles well. The children are encouraged to think of others. Their harvest festival enables them to do something positive for others within their own community. Through Christian Aid, and by sponsoring Oscar, a child in a poor community in Ecuador, they spread their contributions on a worldwide scale.

34. As at the time of the last report, the school's provision for social development is good. Pupils are expected to be courteous and to co-operate sensibly in group work. Adults act as good role models in the way they value and support the contributions each makes to the life of the school. Pupils are encouraged to take responsibilities for themselves and for others. Older pupils help younger ones at lunchtime and in the sports clubs. The 'friendship stop' (a former bus stop, which has been erected in the playground) never seems to be needed, because children never seem to be without a friend. The school council is developing its role within the school, raising and discussing issues of importance to the other pupils.
35. Cultural development has improved since the last report and is now good. Good opportunities are provided for children to study their own British cultural heritage, through their work in the curriculum, with local artists and craftspeople, taking part in national days of celebration and through the close links the school has with the community. For example, they have had a bagpipe demonstration and taken part in Scottish dancing for their Scottish day, and Jenny Bailey, a local ceramics artist has worked with children. The European dimension is strong, and children have the opportunity to study European languages, and famous artists such as Van Gogh, Holbein and Cezanne. The school is also introducing awareness and appreciation of the wider world. Through its work in religious education, pupils learn about major world faiths, such as Hinduism. During Ghana week three artists came into school to discuss the cultural significance of masks, and to show them the techniques involved in making them. There is also a selection of musical instruments from around the world, but not enough multicultural books in the library.

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL CARE FOR ITS PUPILS?

36. This aspect of the life of the school has improved since the last inspection and is now a strength of the school. Teachers know their pupils well. They know the procedures to be followed to ensure that pupils are well protected and that the level of welfare for the pupils is of a very high quality. Parents appreciate the way the staff care for their children. The school have very good procedures in place to ensure that the educational and personal support of

pupils is of a very high quality. All the related matters of health, safety, security and first aid are dealt with to a very high standard.

37. Good assessment procedures are in place for the Foundation Stage, and staff use the results of their assessments to plan the next steps in learning. The steps the children are making towards the early learning goals are recorded, as well as the first part of the school's numeracy record. A baseline assessment is carried out early in the autumn term that enables the school to compare the cohort with the local education authority's average.
38. Procedures for the monitoring and supporting of pupils' personal development are very good and those for monitoring and supporting their academic progress are good. The strong family ethos, which is built into the daily life of the school, ensures that the personal development of pupils is of a high quality. Older pupils care for younger children in an unobtrusive manner, and the younger ones are able to settle quickly into the school routine. The school council further enhances personal development of pupils. Each year group has members on the council who discuss a broad range of the daily life of pupils, including playground apparatus and the designs to be used for stickers and certificates. Sensibly, an early decision of the council was to have refreshments served at their meetings.
39. The office staff ensures that procedures for the monitoring of attendance are very good. The effective procedures are resulting in a steady rise in attendance. Staff work together well to ensure the implementation of the school's firm and friendly approach to discipline. The procedures for monitoring and promoting good behaviour and the eliminating of aggressive behaviour are very good. This is particularly significant as it is reported that before the appointment of the new head teacher there was deterioration in the standard of behaviour. Throughout the inspection, behaviour was seen to be very good. The very effective support provided by staff makes a positive contribution to children's well being, and enables pupils to take full advantage of the educational opportunities offered.
40. Regular meetings take place to ensure that pupils with special educational needs are given the best opportunities. Specialist help is sought quickly and tests are carried out to enable teachers to plan work effectively. The school works as closely as it can with educational psychologists and educational welfare officers to pursue any concerns that arise at school.
41. Procedures for assessment are much improved since the last inspection and are now good. The school has gathered together all the available information and has produced it in useable formats that enable teachers to work out different groupings and types of work. This information is valued more highly by the staff. The range of testing is suitably wide but not onerous. As well as the national tests and associated teacher assessments, other year groups undertake optional testing at the same time. Results have been collated and used to develop thorough systems of target setting. These targets were set too highly last year because there was not enough information to argue the

case well. This year's targets are consistent with the performance of pupils over a period of time and therefore achievable.

42. There are good links between the use of assessment information and the development of the curricular planning. During the inspection a number of lessons had been formulated in light of previous assessment tasks that the pupils had done. In addition, teachers have also honed their skills in evaluating lessons and this further enhances work at the correct level for individual pupils.

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL WORK IN PARTNERSHIP WITH PARENTS?

43. At the time of the last inspection the school was judged to have an effective partnership with parents. This aspect is now a strength of the school. There was a clear indication from parents that their children like school, that children are expected to work hard and do their best, that teaching is good and that the school is well led and managed. These views came from questionnaires; views expressed at the meeting prior to the inspection and from those parents who talked to inspectors during the inspection.
44. The school has very good links with parents to consolidate and extend pupils' learning. The impact of parental involvement on the life of the school is good. Since the appointment of the new head teacher the school has worked hard to improve the confidence of parents. Parents are appreciative of the welcome they receive in the school. Parents also gave a positive view about behaviour in the school; they appreciate the way problems are dealt with before they become an issue.
45. The quality of information for parents is very good. Reports about pupil's progress are clear and informative. Termly meetings are held in order that parents are kept informed about pupils' progress. Letters to parents are friendly and keep parents informed about all aspects of school life. Home school agreements are in place and the governors' annual report to parents is a very well presented document.
46. The school works closely with parents in the Foundation Stage. There is a good familiarisation programme that includes visits, meetings for parents, and telephone calls to each family to re-assure them about the process of starting school. The reception teacher and learning support assistant make themselves available before school to chat to parents and carers, and there are three consultation evenings spread over the year. The written report to parents cover all the areas of learning, and also comment on general progress, as well as setting targets for each child.
47. Parental contribution to pupils' learning at home and at school is very good. Parents willingly help with homework, frequently initiating trips to places of interest to support learning in school. The school has a very supportive

Friends Association that raises valuable funds to support pupils' education. Many of the activities promoted by the Friends Association involve the whole village, when school and community come together in support of the pupils.

48. Parents of pupils who have statements of special educational needs are kept fully informed about their children's progress. Annual reviews are held that involve all interested parties and at other times of the year parents are encouraged to come into school. When extra help is required parents are consulted, to allay any concerns or misconceptions at an early stage. The school is also trying to find better ways of providing more challenge for those with talent in any area. Several pupils are now receiving mathematics lessons with a higher age group to help them develop further.

HOW WELL IS THE SCHOOL LED AND MANAGED?

49. The headteacher provides the school with good leadership. He has been in post for two terms and is providing strong, effective and diplomatic leadership. He is supported well by the staff in providing a firm steer to the work of the school. Before and shortly after his arrival there were incidents of poor behaviour. Since his arrival, strategies and policies have been established and former standards are being recovered. He is supported by a strong and effective team of teachers who take responsibility for each area of the curriculum. Co-ordination is good and is helping to drive standards up. The headteacher is also the special needs co-ordinator. An administrative assistant who deals with day-to-day matters supports him in this role. Together, they ensure that the provision for special educational needs is good. There is now a clear direction and drive to improve standards. This has been linked to ensuring that the best is done for each level of ability. The useful assessment material being collected is identifying groups of pupils that need extra support and is also being used to determine whether boys and girls are given the best opportunities.
50. The governors make a strong team with clear roles and responsibilities. They have recently re-evaluated the terms of reference for each of their committees. They are well led by a recently elected chair, are well informed and know the strengths and weaknesses of the school. Governors are involved in monitoring the work of the school and they make regular visits. They are united in having the best interests of the school at heart. Governors are involved in formulating the school improvement plan and they help with the setting of the budget. This is a very thorough, and perhaps too lengthy document. It has been recognised that it needs some refinement to make it more workable. Governors understand the role of being a critical friend to the headteacher and this is leading to improved standards in all areas.
51. Performance management is now established and currently in its first cycle. It will enable the school to improve the performance of staff even further. Priorities are identified through discussions with governors and staff. This is well illustrated by the united decision to tackle behaviour management in the

school. In doing so, the school has regained a calm sense of purpose through which opportunities to learn are improved.

52. The school's finances are carefully managed and regularly audited. The headteacher and governors have not yet fully acquainted themselves with the principles of best value but those in place are consistently applied. The administrative staff provide knowledgeable support for both financial and secretarial matters.
53. There are sufficient teachers with the qualifications and experience to teach the Foundation Stage Curriculum, the National Curriculum and religious education. The induction of new staff is satisfactory. Accommodation is satisfactory except for the hall, which provides insufficient safe space for activities like indoor physical education. Resources are mostly adequate and the initiatives to improve the outdoor play areas and the car park have resulted in very attractive play areas and improved safety in delivering children to school and fetching them. At the time of the last report there was no outdoor play area for the children in the reception class. This has now been rectified and the area adjacent to the classroom has been developed to provide a secure and attractive play area. There are plans to improve the area further by converting some of the grass to a hard play area. This will allow easier use of the wheeled toys, especially when the grass is wet. There are also plans to make the access more direct, by opening up a door directly into the classroom to avoid going through the cloakroom that is shared with the Year 1 and 2 class. During the inspection, the school started to build a new computer suite and to refurbish it with extra hardware.
54. There is a good sense of purpose and direction about the management of the school. The headteacher is clear about where the school is going and the staff is united in knowing what the school needs to do in order to get there. The school has the capacity and commitment to take its development further.

WHAT SHOULD THE SCHOOL DO TO IMPROVE FURTHER?

55. In order to improve standards further the headteacher, staff and governors should:-

Continue to develop and raise the standards of writing in all subjects by:

- Providing regular opportunities for pupils to learn to write extended and creative pieces
- Placing more emphasis on learning about the structure of a piece of writing
- Finding ways of using the writing skills that are being acquired in other subjects
- Assessing and reviewing the effectiveness of any new systems that are introduced

(See particularly paragraphs 2, 3 and 70)

Raise the standards and learning opportunities in information technology by:

- Improving the skills and competence of all teachers
- Improving the use of hardware and software
- Devising ways of assessing the present capability of pupils
- Developing the draft scheme of work to continuously build upon specific information technology skills and ensuring that all aspects of the subject are addressed
- Ensuring that all pupils have full access to the curriculum, including using computers within other subjects

(See particularly paragraphs 108 - 112)

In addition to the key issues above the governors may wish to include the following minor issues in their action plan:

- Opportunities for role-play by children in the Foundation Stage *(Paragraph 16)*
- Checking the balance of subject time *(Paragraph 23)*
- Improving the provision of books for multi-cultural education *(Paragraph 35)*
- Further developing the school improvement plan *(Paragraph 50)*
- Raising the profile of design and technology *(Paragraph 99)*

PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS

Summary of the sources of evidence for the inspection

Number of lessons observed	25
Number of discussions with staff, governors, other adults and pupils	21

Summary of teaching observed during the inspection

	Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
Number	0	3	15	7	0	0	0
Percentage	0	12	60	28	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. [When the total number is substantially less than 100, add] Care should be taken when interpreting these percentages as each lesson represents more than one [two, three, etc] percentage point[s]. [Where the total is close to or greater than 100, use only the first sentence.]

Information about the school's pupils

Pupils on the school's roll

	Nursery	YR – Y6
Number of pupils on the school's roll (FTE for part-time pupils)	N/A	94
Number of full-time pupils known to be eligible for free school meals	N/A	2

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Special educational needs

	Nursery	YR – Y6
Number of pupils with statements of special educational needs	N/A	0
Number of pupils on the school's special educational needs register	N/A	30

English as an additional language

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

Pupil mobility in the last school year

	No of pupils
Pupils who joined the school other than at the usual time of first admission	8
Pupils who left the school other than at the usual time of leaving	3

Attendance

Authorised absence

	%
School data	4.5
National comparative data	5.2

Unauthorised absence

	%
School data	0.1
National comparative data	0.2

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
		2000	9	7

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		Reading	Writing	Mathematics
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	9	7	9
	Girls	7	7	7
	Total	16	14	16
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	100 (86)	88 (86)	100 (100)
	National	83 (82)	84 (83)	90 (87)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	9	9	9
	Girls	7	7	7
	Total	16	16	16
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	100 (93)	100 (100)	100 (93)
	National	84 (82)	88 (86)	88 (87)

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

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

Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 2 for the latest reporting year	Year	Boys	Girls	Total
		2000	5	8

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys	5	4	5
	Girls	7	5	5
	Total	12	9	10
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	92 (77)	69 (54)	83 (85)
	National	75 (70)	72 (69)	85 (78)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys	4	4	5
	Girls	6	5	6
	Total	10	9	11
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	77 (n/a)	69 (n/a)	85 (n/a)
	National	70 (68)	72 (69)	79 (75)

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

Ethnic background of pupils

	No of pupils
Black – Caribbean heritage	0
Black – African heritage	0
Black – other	0
Indian	0
Pakistani	0
Bangladeshi	0
Chinese	0
White	84
Any other minority ethnic group	0

This table refers to pupils of compulsory school age only.

Teachers and classes

Qualified teachers and classes: YR – Y6

Total number of qualified teachers (FTE)	4.8
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	19.5
Average class size	23.5

Education support staff: YR – Y6

Total number of education support staff	6
Total aggregate hours worked per week	111

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Exclusions in the last school year

	Fixed period	Permanent
Black – Caribbean heritage	0	0
Black – African heritage	0	0
Black – other	0	0
Indian	0	0
Pakistani	0	0
Bangladeshi	0	0
Chinese	0	0
White	3	0
Other minority ethnic groups	0	0

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

Financial information

Financial year	2000/01
	£
Total income	241900
Total expenditure	231816
Expenditure per pupil	2493
Balance brought forward from previous year	17044
Balance carried forward to next year	27128

Recruitment of teachers

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

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Results of the survey of parents and carers

Questionnaire return rate

Number of questionnaires sent out	94
Number of questionnaires returned	37

Percentage of responses in each category

	Strongly agree	Tend to agree	Tend to disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know
My child likes school.	78	19	0	3	0
My child is making good progress in school.	51	41	3	0	5
Behaviour in the school is good.	62	38	0	0	0
My child gets the right amount of work to do at home.	43	41	3	0	14
The teaching is good.	59	35	0	0	5
I am kept well informed about how my child is getting on.	54	35	0	0	5
I would feel comfortable about approaching the school with questions or a problem.	92	3	5	0	0
The school expects my child to work hard and achieve his or her best.	73	27	0	0	0
The school works closely with parents.	68	24	5	0	3
The school is well led and managed.	76	24	0	0	0
The school is helping my child become mature and responsible.	70	22	3	0	5
The school provides an interesting range of activities outside lessons.	38	43	11	0	8

Note: Because of the timing of the inspection which was early in the academic year there were a number of responses from parents of children who had only been at the school for a short time. These are reflected by the percentages in the 'Do not know' column above.

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. Children enter the reception class in the September following their fourth birthday, beginning on a part-time basis until after the autumn half term. At the time of the inspection there were 16 part-time children in the reception class.
57. Children's attainment on entry to the reception class has been average or above over the last three years, according to the baseline assessments. This year, although no figures are available for comparison at this early stage of the term, indications are that the present cohort of children is entering school with standards which are broadly average when compared with those of their age nationally. By the end of the reception, almost all the children are likely to reach the national goals in the six areas of learning in the Foundation Stage and they will be ready to start the National Curriculum. Some children will exceed these goals. There is evidence from the current Year 1 that, by the end of the reception year, children are confident, happy individuals, with positive attitudes to learning.

Personal, social and emotional development

58. Children's personal, social and emotional development is given a good emphasis in the reception class, and the children make good progress, owing to good teaching. Almost all the children have had some pre-school experience and this helps them to come into school well prepared for many aspects of school life. They have settled into school well, benefiting from the good induction programme and gradual introduction to school. During their activities, they are encouraged by staff to share resources, to take turns and to help each other. For example, at the end of each session, they are all encouraged to tidy away their toys and equipment, helping each other as necessary. The atmosphere in the classroom is calm and well ordered, though occasionally, some of the boys get rather boisterous when playing in the sand. "Circle Time" is used to introduce a good programme of personal, social and health education, and this is helping to teach the children to be considerate and helpful to each other. They were very gentle as they stroked the class hamster in a science activity and showed kindness in the way they offered her bits of food which they thought she would like. Lessons in religious education also help to promote feelings of caring for others. For example, they listened to the story of Peter and The Fisherman, and placed the fishes they had made in the net. They understood that Jesus had helped the fishermen, and this theme of helping one another was followed up on many occasions in class. The children are particularly good at doing this.
59. The children are provided with many opportunities to extend their development as members of a group, and to expand their own qualities of self-esteem, self-confidence and independence. Boys and girls play happily together in the home corner, sharing the roles feeding the baby or making the tea. They enjoy

whole-school events such as assemblies, and they all enjoy eating lunch at school, where older children help to look after them. By the end of the Foundation Stage all the children are likely to achieve the early learning goals and many will exceed them.

Communication, language and literacy

60. Knowledge and understanding of language are given good emphasis in the reception class through daily speaking, listening, reading and writing activities. Teaching for this area is sound overall with some good features, and the children are achieving standards that are in line with those expected nationally. They are quickly learning to listen to each other and the staff who teach them. Many are already becoming confident in speaking, expressing their opinions, asking and answering questions, or requesting help. In reading they are also making good progress. When handling books, they can all turn the pages correctly and most understand that words and pictures carry meaning. Many children can recognise their own name and a few can recognise some familiar words. They all enjoy books, and like to choose a book for the teacher to read to them. They join in well in the “guided reading” sessions led by their teacher, and almost all the children are beginning to recognise some letter sounds. These sessions are suitably short, and carefully structured to engage the children’s interest. The children are beginning to try to write their names and a few can already do so. They enjoy tracing over the teacher’s writing and patterns, and practise their emergent writing as they play in the writing area. Teaching is good in the whole-class sessions. Stories are read expressively so that the children are interested and concentrate well. The teacher models appropriate language as she reads to them, as “I am just going to open the cover now and look at the first page.” This is effective in helping children to learn these terms. However the staff do not always interact sufficiently in the children’s imaginative play and table-top activities, by engaging them in extended conversations. There are not enough opportunities for children to write in more imaginative contexts such as shops, hospitals and cafes.

Mathematical development

61. Children in the reception class are making at least satisfactory and sometimes good progress in mathematics because of the generally good teaching. They are achieving standards which are average compared with national expectations for children of their age. They recite numbers up to 20 confidently, and many can count and add numbers to 5 accurately. The structured and well organised numeracy sessions are carefully tailored to the needs of these young children. They practise counting, matching and sorting in class groups and on their own, and join in number rhymes and songs. Good use is made of resources to make learning fun. Most children can and can identify positional language such as ‘under’, ‘on top’ and ‘next to’. They are familiar with vocabulary such as ‘one more’ and can say what the number will be then. The teacher uses questions effectively to extend and consolidate learning, for example, when ordering the teddies from smallest to biggest. There is not enough involvement of adults in role-play situations, such as a

shop or café, which would make a greater contribution to children's growing awareness of mathematics in everyday life. For example, the children choosing to play in the home corner act out typical family scenes, such as feeding the baby, and putting everything away in its place: With input from an adult, they could be encouraged to use mathematical situations, such as counting the items to be ironed, or the number of spoons needed at teatime.

Knowledge and understanding of the world

62. Children are beginning to develop knowledge and understanding of the world around them through well led sessions focusing on scientific activities. For example, they worked in groups with the learning support assistant to learn more about Lollipop, the class hamster. The teaching in this aspect of the work is good. The children were encouraged to stroke the little animal, and to use their senses to observe her special features. Good questioning helped them for example, to focus on her feet and notice how these were different from their own hands and feet. The children made good observations. They noticed how soft her fur was, and how her whiskers and nose twitched constantly. They were intrigued with the way her cheeks bulged as she stuffed them with food. They asked lots of questions in their enthusiasm to find out more and thought very hard about why she was an "old lady" at two years old. They learn to control a computer mouse well, to activate the screen and control the program. Some are beginning to be able to tackle more advanced skills, such as opening the program. They have opportunities to cut, stick and join materials and to use constructional toys, and malleable materials such as dough. In their current topic of "Ourselves", their early historical and geographical experiences are developed by finding out about past and present events in their own lives, for example, by looking at the hands of young and old people. They think about the places where they live, and know that animals have special homes too.

Physical development

63. The children make good progress in this area of learning and by the end of the Foundation Stage, many are likely to exceed the nationally agreed targets which have been set for them. Through their work using paint and modelling materials, pencils, scissors and brushes, they show a growing control and ability to manage tools and smaller items. They are taught techniques which help them to cut out shapes more easily, as seen when they cut out the hands they had drawn.
64. Outdoor activities are planned every day, but owing to heavy rain and strong winds during the three days of the inspection, these sessions were not observed. There are also physical education lessons in the hall. The teacher and the learning support assistant work well together and these sessions are well taught, using good demonstrations, clear instructions and effective management. Almost all the children can catch a beanbag accurately and have good co-ordination and balance for their age. The staff make effective use of praise to reward them for their good efforts and performance. The

children are also learning about the importance of cool-down exercises after getting warm following physical activity. They are achieving high standards compared with children of the same age.

Creative development

65. Children are developing the appropriate techniques in their creative development using a range of media such as paint, glue and dough. They used paint confidently to colour the hand shapes they had made by drawing round their own hands. They enjoy creating their own colourful pictures on the computer. Most can tap a simple rhythm on their knees – which they do as they count to 20 with their teacher. They use the musical instruments to create their own imaginative music during the time when they can choose their own activity, and in their music sessions they are beginning to learn about pitch. About half of the children were able to distinguish high notes from low notes when played on a xylophone, and a few of the higher attainers could pick out the high notes played by a violin when listening to an extract of music on the tape recorder. Some children are confusing volume with pitch and describe a low note as loud. These children needed more time to practise playing the xylophone for themselves to help them understand the difference. Teaching in this area is sound, and children attain standards which are broadly average in comparison with children of this age. Most of the children in the reception class are likely to achieve the early learning goals by the end of the Foundation Stage. There has been an improvement in the provision of education for pupils in the Foundation Stage since the last inspection because the quality of teaching is good overall.

ENGLISH

66. The quality of provision for English is good. It has been strengthened by more systematic planning. There are some significant strengths in the standards of speaking and listening but writing standards are not yet high enough. On the evidence of lessons seen and from the scrutiny of work, standards in English are broadly in line for pupils at the end of both Years 2 and Year 6. Speaking and listening skills and reading are good by age seven but writing skills are satisfactory. Skills in speaking, listening and reading are good by age eleven. National Curriculum tests indicate that standards in writing at age eleven are not high enough. The school has put in place a programme to raise standards in writing, particularly extended writing. Standards in writing are now beginning to improve. Insufficient use has been made of computers in the past but plans are in place to improve the opportunities with the development of the new computer suite.
67. National Curriculum tests results show that standards in English have generally been maintained since the last inspection. A careful analysis of results by the school has led to good planning and the school is now well placed to raise overall standards in English.
68. At the end of Year 2 pupils' speaking and listening skills are good. Their lessons include opportunities for discussion and drama. They responded well to the story 'Not Now Bernard' by sharing the reading of sections of the story

and by working in groups to dramatise it. Pupils experiment with using imaginative speech. During vocabulary teaching pupils work on pronouncing words correctly. They are inspired in this activity through the use of an Italian doll that must be helped to pronounce words properly. This integrates the planned lesson with the school's current Italian theme. Pupils willingly answer questions and listen carefully to instructions. By the age of eleven pupils are confident in expressing their opinions. Pupils in Years 3 and 4 carefully and sensitively articulate their views of the performance of a poem about teachers. All pupils are encouraged to participate in question and answer sessions in lessons and they communicate well with each other to discuss tasks they are busy with.

69. All lessons seen included group reading activities. The overall standard of reading was always satisfactory or better. Shared reading is a popular activity and pupils at all levels in the school get very involved whatever their ability level. Most pupils read widely from a variety of available books. They show confidence in using texts to read for information.
70. The standard of writing has been identified by the school as a weakness, particularly in Years 3 to 6. Inspection evidence supports this view. There have in the past been too few opportunities for pupils to write extended pieces or produce creative writing. A scrutiny of English work and that written in other subjects shows few examples of extended writing. The school is now giving particular attention to improving writing. Lessons are set aside specifically for the teaching of creative and extended writing and standards are beginning to improve. Clear guidelines are given to pupils for developing the structure of a story. The literacy hour lessons have become established and clearly give pupils useful skills for writing, including punctuation, vocabulary and descriptive writing ability. All pupils are now being given the time to use these skills and standards in writing are beginning to improve. Most pupils spell words accurately and write legibly in a joined-up style as they write stories, poems and reports. Computers are not yet used as well as they could be for drafting and writing. There is some evidence of the limited use during literacy sessions.
71. Overall, the teaching of English is consistently good. Teachers have a good knowledge of literacy and they plan well. Lessons are well organised and the management of pupils is good. Assessment sheets are used to track progress. Children are grouped according to their needs and all the work planned enables pupils with special educational needs to make good progress. There is a good level of challenge in all English lessons. Teachers have good relationships with pupils and this contributes to improved concentration and learning.
72. Assessment and monitoring procedures are good and the school is now considering the best ways to use the data that is being accumulated. Targets for pupils are set by teachers and written in exercise books. This should be developed into an interactive process, with pupils being helped to identify their own needs and expressing them in targets for themselves. Marking is good

and includes encouraging comments that help pupils to improve their performance.

73. The management of English is good. Time is used each term to monitor teaching and learning. For example, a focus on the plenary session is chosen and staff consider the feedback during discussion and staff meetings. The School Improvement Plan includes the improvement of writing as a priority and the co-ordinator feels confident in giving help and advice to colleagues.

MATHEMATICS

74. Standards in mathematics are above average for pupils in the present Year 2 and Year 6 and have improved since the last inspection, especially in the attainment of pupils in Year 6. National Curriculum test results have fluctuated each year in mathematics more than in English and science because of the ability and the number of pupils with special educational needs associated with numeracy. Teacher assessments of pupils were broadly in line with the test results, although the targets set were much higher. This was recognised as being an unrealistic figure before the tests were taken. The problem had occurred owing to the lack of good assessment information available at the time and has subsequently been remedied. The targets set for this year are more realistic and likely to be achieved.
75. Younger pupils in Year 2 are able to use mental calculation well. From the opportunities they are given in the oral sessions at the start of lessons they are beginning to develop many different strategies for working out answers. They can calculate correctly and can make good estimates of whether their answer will be correct. They have a thorough understanding of place value up to 1000 and can talk about what individual numbers mean and how these can be added, subtracted, multiplied and divided. In a Year 1 and 2 lesson the younger pupils in the class could count confidently to 100 and a good number were able to carry on past this. Pupils were learning about how to measure length. The teacher had planned this well and gave the pupils practical tasks and allowed them to estimate and check their answers. When one pupil talked about big and small the teacher correctly pointed out that he should be saying shorter and longer. This was helping to build good understanding of mathematical vocabulary. The below average pupils in these years are able to sort and order shapes by colour and size. They are developing their skills in learning well against their own ability from the practical activities that are suggested by the teacher. Pupils are beginning to be given opportunities to develop their skills in problem solving. Teachers plan a range of different techniques to use real-life situations to help with these skills.
76. All pupils in Years 1 and 2 are well behaved and are interested and motivated by what they are asked to do. They are aware of when they have succeeded in a task because the teacher uses the individual targets that have been set and links these to the good quality marking. The information that is collected is used to group pupils for future work.

77. Pupils in Years 3 to 6 continue to make good progress. In a Year 3/4 lesson the teacher asked the pupils to draw and name different shapes. The pupils were using the knowledge they had gained from a previous lesson and this was helping to reinforce the concept. Pupils found the lesson mentally stimulating, especially when the good questioning by the teacher promoted thoughtful involvement. By the end, pupils had gained new knowledge about the shapes they were studying and had a better understanding because the teacher challenged learning. Pupils here were working above the level expected for their age. In the Year 5 and 6 lesson the pupils learned about decimals. Again the work set by the teacher was at a level above that expected for their age. Pupils were able to place the value of numbers to hundredths and thousandths and knew the reason for these. There was good relevant planning, high levels of organisation and expectation which presented high levels of challenge to the class.
78. Teachers take good account of the need to divide up different work for the differing ages and abilities in each class. Work is solidly related to the National Numeracy Strategy. This has been developed well and as teachers have become more confident in its application and lessons evolve well through the various elements. The use of the mental and oral session at the start is very well paced and is a contributory factor in pupils having a good understanding of the use of number. Not enough use is made of computer work linked to mathematics. Teachers keep very good control even with a small number of pupils who find difficulty in conforming. Pupils with special educational needs are well supported by specific individual education plans. Learning support assistants are very well briefed and offer consistent help. They report back to the teacher on any problems or where work needs to be developed further. Not enough use is made of information and communication technology to enhance the learning that is taking place. The school has prioritised this as an area of improvement. It is linked to improving the attainment in problem-solving that was highlighted as a weakness from an analysis of the data from tests.
79. Pupils in Years 2 to 6 undertake tests of various kinds. Information is starting to be analysed to discover what improvements need to be made. Some pupils benefit from having individual targets in their books and where these are used the teacher refers to them in the lesson and when marking work. This helps pupils understand what they need to do to improve. This practice is not consistent throughout the school. There is a development plan for the subject and a clear view about the strengths and weaknesses of the provision. Resources for the subject are good and have been updated recently. The co-ordinator is central to the improvement in mathematics.

SCIENCE

80. In 2000, teachers assessed standards for 7 year olds as very high in comparison with other schools nationally for children reaching the expected Level 2. The percentage of pupils reaching the higher Level 3 was well above

average. In National Curriculum tests the percentage of pupils in Year 6 reaching the expected Level 4 and above was below the national average. The percentage of pupils reaching the higher Level 5 was well below average. Overall, the attainment of girls was below that of boys, which is the opposite of the national trend.

81. In terms of trends over time, attainment in science for Year 6, dropped markedly just after the last inspection in 1997. It then rose consistently, following the steady upward rise in standards nationally, but until 2000, was still always below average. The most recent results in 2001 show a good level of improvement in the percentage of children reaching the higher level, though figures are not yet available for comparison with schools nationally. One hundred per cent of the pupils who entered managed to attain Level 4 or above, and nearly a quarter went on to gain a Level 5.
82. Evidence gathered during inspection showed that attainment was average at both key stages. During the infant stage, pupils make good progress, developing a wide knowledge and an appropriate range of skills. The younger pupils are gaining a good understanding of healthy eating. They know that some foods are unhealthy, especially if we eat too much of them, and they consider how much oil should be used in making the pizza for their role-play area which, following the Italian theme, is "Luigi's Restaurant". The older pupils in the class can sort an extensive range of food according to whether it is healthy, or whether it should not be eaten too often, and they use their new information to design posters to encourage other people to eat healthily. They observe closely and record their observations using simple drawings and sentences. For example, they have compared similarities and differences between themselves. Their drawings and captions show clear outcomes, such as "David is the tallest". Their teacher has helped them to make further comparisons between their findings, such as whether the tallest person is also the quickest.
83. In the junior years, pupils make good progress overall. They continue to develop their knowledge well, but some aspects of their science enquiry skills are less secure. In Year 3, pupils made good observations when noting the differences between two identification keys. The Year 4 pupils learn to use a branching key successfully to identify a variety of animals from drawings. The notebooks retained from the previous Year 6 show that in the work related to the knowledge and understanding of scientific concepts, few pupils attain standards below the expected level. The most able pupils achieve high standards by the end of the year. When closely directed by their teachers, most pupils can carry out experiments and make observations that are adequate for the task. However, their investigative skills are not sufficiently developed for them to be confident in planning and carrying out this work on their own. They have a sound understanding of a fair test, and can explain how they would control variables by changing one factor and keeping all the others constant. However, they are not rigorous enough about identifying what needs to be measured; for example, they suggest "I will need some water" rather than identifying how much water they will need. They also need

prompting to think about taking repeat readings. However, pupils can suggest appropriate ways of presenting their findings.

84. Pupils enjoy their science. Their behaviour is good, and when working in groups they do so sensibly. The presentation of pupils' work is good, and this has improved since the last inspection.
85. The quality of teaching and learning is good overall. Teachers have secure subject knowledge, high expectations that are explained clearly to pupils and work is suitably matched to the different age groups in each class. The introduction of an investigation planning proforma is proving successful in helping pupils in the juniors to plan their investigations more independently. There is good ongoing assessment in science. For example, in a Year 1 and 2 lesson, the learning support assistant asked each child a question which established how well the concept of healthy eating had been understood. In Year 5 and 6, the teacher had assessed each child's knowledge and understanding about the topic of Earth in space before the unit of work was started. This helped her to plan suitable activities to address the misconceptions she had found. During one of the lessons, a good demonstration using a globe helped pupils to make sense of the practical work they had done. By the end of the lesson, almost all the pupils had grasped the learning objectives and could explain why shadows are longer at the beginning and end of the day. They could also account for why the sun rises in the east and sets in the west. This was particularly good progress for the Year 5 pupils.
86. There is some evidence that teachers are developing their marking so that their written comments give more feedback to pupils about what they need to do to improve their work. The science co-ordinator is anxious to develop this further. There is an appropriate balance between the teaching of science knowledge and skills, but some of the science investigations seen in last year's notebooks did not allow children to work independently enough. Particularly in Years 3 to 6, the pupils have too few opportunities to plan their own investigations or select their own equipment. The present allocation of time to the subject is a little above average in the infants, and a little below average in the juniors. Not enough use is made of information ICT.
87. Since the last inspection, attainment in science has dipped and is now recovering. The science co-ordinator is very committed to the raising of standards, and has used a number of strategies to bring about improvement. She has identified the need to improve the pupils' use of scientific vocabulary, and to sharpen up the investigative work. Some of the tasks at present are more illustrative than truly investigative. She has observed teaching throughout the school and has given written and oral feedback to the staff. She has analysed pupils' test results to ascertain which questions the pupils found most difficult. This has resulted in a decision to tackle the way the units on light and sound and the Earth and beyond, are taught. Science targets have been introduced in Years 3 to 6, and homework tasks linked to the targets have been devised. Resources have been checked against the requirements of the new scheme.

88. The school adopted the national scheme of work last year, and is changing some of the activities: more stimulating and motivating tasks are contributing to a more interesting curriculum for the pupils. At the time of the last inspection, there were few cross-curricular links. These links are now good. For example, work on composing music for the planets built very well on the Year 5 and 6 science work. The bowl of fruit, which had been used for pupils in Year 1 and 2 to examine when considering a healthy diet, became the subject of further observation for still life in the art lesson. Here it was the starting point for making a Caribbean fruit salad in a future design and technology lesson. Making good use of the habitat areas within the school grounds, which include a pond, further enhances the science curriculum.

ART AND DESIGN

89. There were no art and design lessons on the timetable during the three days of the inspection. Evidence was gathered from looking at the curriculum plans, work on display and photographic evidence, and discussions with teachers and with pupils from Years 2 and 6. This indicates that pupils in both key stages attain standards that are average, with some work that is above average. Pupils make satisfactory progress overall, with good progress evident in some aspects of the work. Pupils with special educational needs are helped to make progress at the same pace as other pupils in their class. The last inspection found that attainment at the end of both key stages was in line with national expectations. The evidence available indicates that the school has maintained this level of achievement, and improved standards in some aspects of the work.
90. It is not possible to make judgements about the quality of teaching and learning. However, the pupils who discussed their work enjoy the subject very much. They were very impressed by the work of Andy Goldsworthy and explained how he worked with purely natural materials. They discussed some of their own recent work, introducing terms such as 'still life', to describe their pastel pictures of a bowl of fruit. They are acquiring skills in colour mixing, and had learned to blend the colours by smudging and had achieved a close match, for instance with the aubergine, creating interesting shades and tones. The Year 2 pupils were knowledgeable about the work of famous and local artists, and have studied other still life pictures of food, for example, by Auguste Renoir, Paul Cezanne and Clara Peters.
91. The Year 6 pupils are also knowledgeable about the work of famous artists. They are able to explain what they admire about Van Gogh's work and have painted their own pictures in the style of Claude Monet. Their ceramics work is of a high standard, and came about as a result of working with a local ceramics artist, Jenny Bailey. In particular, their tiles, inspired by Monet's famous water Lilies, show that the pupils are developing good skills. They had created three-dimensional flowers by curling the clay to give a very delicate effect and experimented with unusual glazes. Their finished work had been fired in the artist's kiln.

92. Pupils in Year 3 and 4 have experimented in creating a desired atmosphere using watercolour and cut-out shapes. Some pupils have produced a bold, colourful effect; others have worked to create different effects such as a feeling of calm or softness.
93. The pupils have opportunities to use a wide range of media, including paint, pencil, charcoal, textiles, weaving and collage. There is very limited use of ICT and this is a weakness.
94. There are good links with other subjects. For example, in history the pupils in Years 1 and 2 have studied portraits of famous people, such as Holbein's painting of Henry V1111. As part of their work in religious education, pupils have considered the work of various artists in depicting celebrations, for example Lowry's V.E.Day Celebrations.
95. The subject is well co-ordinated. Work is well displayed and the initiative to introduce sketchbooks across the school is proving successful. Clip frames have been used to display some of the children's portraits, photocopied from their sketchbooks. The subject has a high profile around the school. There is an interesting and stimulating display in the library, focusing on environmental art, and including some wooden sculptures, such as the mobile which the pupil described as spellbinding because it twists and spins in the wind. The summer holiday visit to Groombridge Park gave the pupils an experience to visit an "enchanted forest" and has provided inspiration for the school's own environmental art project.

DESIGN AND TECHNOLOGY

96. There was no teaching of design and technology during the inspection and hardly any evidence of pupils' past and present work. Consequently, it was not possible to make firm judgements about standards of attainment, teaching and pupils' progress in learning.
97. Scrutiny of the planning indicates that an interesting curriculum is in place and that pupils tackle work in a range of materials, including wood, card, paper, food and textiles. Pupils in Years 1 and 2 made a wind-up toy, and were able to describe how they had made the mechanism, indicating the relevant details on the photographs. They had clearly enjoyed making these toys. The playground project last year had enabled them to make booklets, showing their designs for a children's playground. They had thought about the types of materials involved in playground equipment, which linked well with ongoing science work about materials and their properties. This work had also been enhanced by a visit from the Park Ranger, who discussed his job with them.
98. Pupils in Year 6 were able to explain how a cam mechanism worked. They were also able to discuss the project to design a shelter for parents and children to use. They had clearly enjoyed this task and found it motivating and

relevant. They had produced some creative ideas, and although none of these was usable in its entirety, for practical reasons, the shelter is now completed, and is an additional asset within the school environment.

99. The time allocated to design and technology is below average. The subject has a low profile at the present time, partly owing to timetabling arrangements. The school is considering ways of using time more creatively, so that sustained work can be carried out. Computers are not used well to collate information or to help in designing.
100. The co-ordination of this subject has recently been passed to a different member of staff who has just taken on this responsibility and has not had time to evaluate the relative strengths and weaknesses. However, she is keen and knowledgeable, and has received recent in-service training for the new role. She has begun to collect photographic evidence for some of the work made in the infants, though not yet for the juniors. If the pupils' design work were kept alongside the photographs, it would form a useful record, and could be useful for assessment purposes. There is a good policy in place, and since the last inspection the school has adopted the national scheme of work. This is being adapted to include tasks which are more pertinent to the school, such as the design of the shelter in the school grounds.

GEOGRAPHY

101. By the end of Year 2 and Year 6 pupils' standards of attainment in geography are broadly typical of those found in most schools. Standards are similar to those found in the last inspection. Younger children compare life on the island of Struay with their own lives and they include Barnaby Bear in their own travels by displaying pictures of him with them on holiday in Cyprus, Turkey, France, Dorset and Wales. These links with other places make pupils aware of far away locations. In Years 3 and 4 pupils study village settlements. They work with maps to create and follow directions from one place to another, interpreting symbols and using a variety of roads, footpaths and bridlepaths. In Years 5 and 6 pupils study rivers and their formation. By the age of eleven pupils have a good knowledge of local issues, including the millennium project that provided a car park for the school. Pupils explored the issues like people's views on the project, safety and the landscaping of the new car park.
102. The teaching seen in Years 3 to 6 was sound. Interviews, scrutiny of work and sound planning by the teacher show that teaching overall is satisfactory. Curricular coverage is ensured by the use of the new national guidelines and a matching commercial scheme. Resources are generally adequate but a modern set of atlases is needed. In discussion, pupils showed good general geographical knowledge. This is not reflected in written work, which is well presented but limited in scope. Assessment and marking are regularly done but assessment should be systematically planned to ensure that pupils make good progress and develop the full range of geographical skills in order to raise their attainment.

103. The management of geography is satisfactory. Monitoring takes place as part of a whole-school programme and priorities for development in geography are assessed annually. More use needs to be identified to link the subject with information and communication technology. Pupils research work at home but this is much more limited at the school.

HISTORY

104. Standards are above the national expectation at the end both of Year 2 and of Year 6. Pupils throughout the school have a good general knowledge and are inquisitive about the world. Younger pupils in Year 1 and 2 have a good understanding of time. In the lesson seen the pupils were shown pictures of different eras and knew that in the time of Henry V111 people had to draw pictures because there were no cameras. During the discussion the teacher developed the use of key historical language well and pupils were able to understand how important secondary sources of information are for researching how people lived. The practical work associated with this moved on the learning well. Pupils were given a box of sand to excavate and to draw conclusions about what they found. Again, this helped develop understanding from previous knowledge. The pupils were highly motivated by the experience and got excited about what they were doing. The teacher channelled this into a detailed discussion about why archaeologists need to use careful unearthing of artefacts. Progress in learning through these years is good because the teaching is of a high standard.
105. Pupils in Years 3 to 6 develop their historical understanding through the comprehensive and detailed lessons that take place and the progress in learning through these years is good. Teaching is good and is well planned.
106. Year 3 and 4 are studying the Romans during this term and the lessons were planned well. The preamble discussion showed that pupils had retained a great deal of knowledge about the Celts and the Romans and also had a good understanding of effects through history of different social structures. Pupils were better at talking about the period studied than they were at reading the short texts. The teacher had good background knowledge of the subject and this allowed the pupils to have their detailed questions answered. By the end of the lesson the pupils were able to put the historical events in a sequence, showing that they had progressed well in their learning. Pupils in Year 5 and 6 are studying the Victorians and the teacher here produced an equally effective lesson that helped build understanding. Pupils were able to talk about their own school, its size, the different number of pupils and, because of the focused questioning by the teacher, were learning about Victorian social conditions compared with their own. The pupils were very enthusiastic and asked detailed and complicated questions. These were thought out well. The written exercise was suitable but the pupils would have benefited from a wider range of secondary sources and work using computers. The links with information and communication technology are not used as well as they could be.

107. The subject has continued to improve since the last inspection and has continued to have a high profile. Teachers are conscientious about the topics they cover and the progress that pupils make. They understand the need to develop specific historical language and the key elements of time, local study and research. There is a good plan for developing the subject still further and to ensure that better ways are found of incorporating the new national guidelines for the subject. There are good resources available to the school and the local area is rich in possibilities for field study.

INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY

108. Pupils' standards are in line with national expectations by the end of Year 2, but below national expectations by the end of Year 6. There has been an improvement in the provision of ICT since the last inspection but the development of the subject has been slow. Consequently, the standards in the juniors have dropped. The school has a comprehensive plan to provide a new computer suite and for teachers to be fully trained in using technology throughout different areas of the curriculum.

109. Pupils in Year 2 are able to switch on computers and know how to open and close programs. They can use the software associated with word-processing and drawing programs. Children in the reception class are able to operate a mouse to direct movement around the screen and in one lesson two girls used the keyboard to show that they knew about letters. At this stage of their development, however, there were no recognisable words. Older pupils in Year 1 and 2 used a database program in a science lesson on health. They were able to produce a graph about the favourite fruits of the class.

110. Pupils in Years 3 to 6 do have opportunities to use the computers and when this happens show adequate levels of skill. Pupils are able to word-process their work but are not given the opportunity to use the computers to draft and plan their stories, thereby missing good opportunities for integrating the use of the technology. Other opportunities are missed, as seen in one Year 5/6 history lesson. Pupils here could have researched CD Roms or the Internet for information about the Victorians and this would have given them a better background. Pupils in the juniors do not have consistent opportunities to develop their understanding of spreadsheets or to use computers to control machines. That is an area that was highlighted at the time of the last inspection.

111. When children enter the school they develop their skills quickly because they are given appropriate challenges by the teachers. This includes using interactive book games that helps develop control of the mouse and starts to show the children co-ordination of hand and eye that is needed. All teachers plan the development of ICT skills within lessons but there is not yet a coherent plan for making sure that the skills that pupils are learning, progress through each year. Teachers have only a basic subject knowledge to teach the areas they focus on. As pupils get older their experience is limited by the

lack of use of software and computers. During the inspection, computers were used in some lessons but too often the planning for use in subjects such as English and mathematics are not exploited to the full. In discussion, the pupils can talk about various programs that they have used but accept that the work they do could be better and that they could use the machines more. In Year 5 and, especially in Year 6, there are a number of pupils who have good levels of ability that are not fully stretched in computing skill. A number of them regularly use the web at home to research information for other subjects but this is not exploited sufficiently at school.

112. Over time, information and communication technology has not had a high profile within the school. However, there are now ambitious plans to renovate a separate room and develop a suite of computers. The co-ordinator has a clear view about what needs to be done to improve the situation and understands that not enough has been done so far. Lack of action has resulted in standards falling in Years 3 to 6. A safe Internet policy is being formulated. Some classes have already displayed notices about what is expected of the pupils when they use outside media on the web. The ratio of computers to pupils is to be increased and the range of software is to be extended. Teachers will soon embark on a national training programme in the use of ICT within all areas of the curriculum. As a consequence, there is now the capacity to improve at a much faster rate.

MUSIC

113. Only two music lessons were seen during the inspection, but from these and other evidence available, including planning documents and discussions with teachers, the inspection found that pupils in both key stages attain standards that are in line with national expectations for Year 2 and 6. Pupils of all abilities make sound progress, and those with special educational needs are helped to make progress at the same pace as other pupils in their class. Very little connection is made with information and communication technology.
114. The last inspection found that attainment at the end of both key stages was in line with national expectations. The evidence available indicates that the school has maintained this level of achievement.
115. Pupils in a Year 1 and 2 music and movement lesson worked with good concentration to mark the beat of the dance music in their own way. They counted four beats to the bar and kept the rhythm going well. They were creative in using their bodies to emphasise the final beat and developed a sequence towards building up a dance as they moved around the room in time to the music.
116. In a Year 5 and 6 lesson, pupils worked in groups to compose music to illustrate a planet. They used the musical elements and created a two-minute sequence, selecting the instruments they felt would interpret their own particular planet. For example, one group chose to feature panpipes to give

the atmosphere of “hot and sultry”. They showed a good understanding of the musical elements, and were able to explain, for instance, how they would create the desired effect for “wild and stormy” by using a fast tempo and loud dynamics. They suggested that the pitch might be low – high – low to stress the feeling of the storm. They included ostinato where they thought that this would be effective.

117. In both lessons, the quality of teaching was good. Very good teamwork in the Year 1 and 2 class enabled the learning support assistant to complete assessments of all the children, using a simple but effective checklist and noting very pertinent observations about particular achievements or difficulties. This enabled the teacher to plan the next lesson to address specific needs. In the Year 5 and 6 lesson, the teacher explained the task carefully so that all the pupils knew what they had to do. The pace was good, because they worked to deadlines that give them time to think things through whilst maintaining a purposeful working atmosphere. A great deal was achieved in the lesson, including time for two groups to give their performance. The pupils concentrated and stay on task throughout the session. They shared the instruments well and collaborated with members of their group to produce a sequence of music which they were proud of. They listened to the first performances appreciatively, making positive comments about the techniques used by other groups.
118. The pupils sing tunefully in assemblies. In the weekly hymn practice assembly they sang well unaccompanied. They listen carefully and as a result of good teaching they learn new hymns, or practise and improve their singing of more well known ones. The music curriculum is enriched in many ways. As at the time of the last report, they listen to steel band performances by the local high school. Years 1 and 2 have had a bagpipe demonstration, and St Edmund’s School orchestra has also performed to the whole school. The pupils have taken part in their own musical productions – ‘Joseph and his Amazing Technicolour Dreamcoat’ by the older pupils and ‘Noah’ by the younger ones. There is a school choir, which is run as an extra curricular activity, although there was no opportunity to observe these sessions during the inspection.

PHYSICAL EDUCATION

119. No full lessons were seen during the inspection so it was not possible to judge the quality of teaching in the school. However, from a discussion with pupils, teachers and from an observation of the support provided by outside specialist teachers it is clear that standards are at least in line with those expected nationally for pupils through the school. This is similar to the time of the last inspection.
120. Pupils are offered a wide range of different activities throughout the school year that fulfil the requirements of the curriculum. Despite the restrictions of the hall and the low numbers within each year group, the school has developed innovative ways in which to use local expertise. Pupils in Year 3 to

6 are given the opportunity to swim using a pool in a nearby town and sessions are led by specialist teachers. Other pupils are taken to a specialist gymnasium that enables them to have expert tuition and use a wide range of apparatus. Other specialists are engaged for football and other sports throughout times in the year. This is all ensuring that pupils are given a good start to their physical education. As a consequence, the progress in learning is good.

121. The school has a hall that is used for indoor lessons. The space is restricted because the area is also used for storage. However, pupils do work in this very carefully and the teachers are well aware of the need for safe practice. Pupils are not allowed to run wildly and have to learn to take notice of instructions. Pupils also have the opportunity to develop more adventurous sports through residential visits. The range of competitive sports events, especially with other schools, is more limited. There are some school teams but the school has some difficulty in organising such competitions because of the location of the school. Pupils take part in sports events where they can compete against each other.

RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

122. Standards of pupils' attainment for pupils at the end of Year 2 and 6 are in line with those typical for the age of the children. The standards are similar to those seen in the last inspection. It was possible to see only one religious education lesson. However, there was sufficient evidence to judge that standards are typical for the age of the children and that there are appropriate programmes in place to meet the requirements of the Kent agreed syllabus.
123. Pupils understand that their religious traditions are mainly Christian. They have a growing awareness of other principal religions such as Judaism, Islam and Sikhism. Displays in classes show perception and a good knowledge of the topic being studied. The work done in religious education is used well to support pupils' personal development. However, there is insufficient emphasis on writing opportunities. Pupils express their feelings well in discussions, when many of them talk fluently and expressively, but they should now be given opportunities to write more frequently and they should be encouraged to reflect deeply in the work they write. Pupils have a good understanding of celebration in Christianity as well as in other faiths. Festivals such as Divali are well covered in the teaching and there are good resources which include videos, posters, books and artefacts, to support teaching, stimulate pupils' thinking and improve understanding.
124. The quality of teaching seen in the lesson observed was very good. The teacher's knowledge is good and the planning is very good. Challenging questions were well used to show children's understanding. Pupils worked well in groups and listened carefully to each other's views. Careful questions at the end of the lesson ensured pupils' learning and reinforced their knowledge. Pupils' attitudes are very good. These, together with their good

relationships with teachers, ensure good learning opportunities. More links could be made with information and communication technology.

125. The school has good links with the local church and the vicar knows the school well and is very supportive. The school gives good emphasis to religious education within the ethos that is supported by it. The subject co-ordinator gives good leadership to the development of the subject and currently monitors lessons and the work covered every half term.