

INSPECTION REPORT

Milton-on-Stour CE (VA) Primary School
Gillingham

LEA area: Dorset

Unique Reference Number: 113801

Inspection Number: 197264

Headteacher: Mr D Cregg

Reporting inspector: Dr T Simpson
10428

Dates of inspection: 15th to 17th November 1999

Under OFSTED contract number: 707235

Inspection carried out under Section 10 of the School Inspections Act 1996

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Information about the school

Type of school	Infant and Junior
Type of control	Voluntary Aided
Age range of pupils	4 to 11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
School address	Milton-on-Stour Gillingham Dorset SP8 5QD
Telephone number:	01747 822588
Fax number:	01747 826648
Appropriate authority:	The Governing Body
Name of chair of governors:	Mr M Stroud
Date of the previous inspection:	26 th to 29 th February 1996

Information about the inspection team

Team members	Subject responsibilities	Aspect responsibilities
Dr T Simpson	Science, history, art, physical education.	Attainment and progress, leadership and management, the efficiency of the school, equal opportunities.
Mrs J Bond	English, music.	The curriculum and assessment, special educational needs, provision for the under fives.
Mr J Wray	Mathematics, information technology, design and technology, geography.	Teaching, spiritual, moral, social and cultural development, staffing, accommodation and learning resources.
Mr J Zachary		Attitudes, behaviour and personal development, attendance, support, guidance and pupils' welfare, partnership with parents and the community.

The inspection contractor was:

Zachary Associates
23 White Cliff Mill Street
Blandford
Dorset
DT11 7BQ

01258 450223

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The Registrar
The Office for Standards in Education
Alexandra House
33 Kingsway
London WC2B 6SE

REPORT CONTENTS

Paragraph

Main findings

Key issues for action

Introduction

Characteristics of the school	1 - 5
Key indicators	

PART A: ASPECTS OF THE SCHOOL

Educational standards achieved by pupils at the school

Attainment and progress	6 - 10
Attitudes, behaviour and personal development	11 - 14
Attendance	15

Quality of education provided

Teaching	16 - 20
The curriculum and assessment	21 - 27
Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	28 - 32
Support, guidance and pupils' welfare	33 - 36
Partnership with parents and the community	37 - 40

The management and efficiency of the school

Leadership and management	41 - 43
Staffing, accommodation and learning resources	44 - 48
The efficiency of the school	49 - 51

PART B: CURRICULUM AREAS AND SUBJECTS

Areas of learning for children under five	52 - 61
--	---------

English, mathematics and science	62 - 84
---	---------

Other subjects or courses	85 - 111
----------------------------------	----------

PART C: INSPECTION DATA

Summary of inspection evidence	112
---------------------------------------	-----

Data and indicators

Main findings

What the school does well

- The school achieves above average standards overall and pupils make good overall progress at all stages of education in the school.
- Standards in English and mathematics are well above average.
- Teaching is good.
- The pupils' behaviour is very good and they enjoy coming to school.
- Excellent provision is made for spiritual development.
- Moral development is very well promoted.
- Provision for social development is good.
- Pupils are well supported.
- There are very strong links with the community.

Where the school has weaknesses

- I. Progress in design and technology is unsatisfactory.
- II. Not all subjects have up to date policies or schemes of work.
- III. The results of assessments in some subjects - including science - are not always used to inform the

These weaknesses are far outweighed by what the school does well, but they will form the basis of the governors' action plan, which will be sent to all parents or guardians of pupils at the school.

How the school has improved since the last inspection

The school has built well on the many strengths identified in the last inspection report and has addressed most of the issues in it. However, some subjects still do not have up to date policies and schemes of work. Standards in English have improved at Key Stage 1, while standards in mathematics have improved at both key stages. Progress in design and technology, however, has declined. There has been an improvement in the overall attainment of pupils who are under five. There has been an improvement in the quality of teaching and in developmental planning. Accommodation, storage and car access are now better than at the time of the last inspection. The school has set targets for raising standards even higher and has a good capacity to achieve even further improvement.

Standards in subjects

The tables show the standards achieved by 11 year olds in 1999 based on the National Curriculum tests:

Performance in	Compared with all schools	Compared with similar schools	Key
			<i>well above average</i> <i>A</i> <i>above</i>
			<i>B</i>
			<i>C</i>
			<i>D</i> <i>below</i>
			<i>well</i>

English	A	B	
Mathematics	A	C	
Science	D	E	

This information shows that in 1999, the performance of the pupils was well above the national average in English and mathematics, but below average in science. In comparison with similar schools it was above average in English, average in mathematics and well below average in science. The science result, however, is misleading as small numbers of pupils at the end of a key stage can lead to a wide variation between years. Taking results over the previous three years, for example, performance in English and mathematics was above average, while performance in science was well above this. The judgement of the inspection team was also that standards in English and mathematics are well above average. It was judged that standards in science are currently above average.

Pupils achieve satisfactory standards in information technology at both key stages. There are strengths in music and history. However, pupils do not achieve as well as they should in design and technology.

Quality of teaching

Teaching in:	Under 5	5 - 7 years	7 - 11 years
English	satisfactory	very good	very good
Mathematics	good	good	very good
Science	N/A	good	good
Information technology	N/A	nor enough evidence	not enough evidence
Other subjects	good	good	good

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

Teaching is always at least sound. It is good or very good in over seven out of ten lessons, with nearly two out of ten being very good. There was not enough evidence to judge standards of teaching in information technology, design technology or geography at either key stage, or in history at Key Stage 1.

Other aspects of the school

Aspect	Comment
Behaviour	Very good.
Attendance	Good.
Ethos*	Very good - staff are committed to high standards and there is a high level of satisfaction among pupils and parents.
Leadership and management	Effective overall. The headteacher and other members of staff make a good contribution to the standards and quality of education achieved. The governing body is supportive and effective in many areas - but the governors have an under developed role in focused monitoring of the curriculum.
Curriculum	Good overall and an improvement since the last inspection. Some subjects do not have up to date policies and schemes of work. Assessment procedures - particularly in the core subjects of English, mathematics and science - are good overall. Assessment information is not used enough to support the work provided for pupils in some subjects.
Pupils with special educational needs	Provision and progress are good.

Spiritual, moral, social & cultural development	Very good overall and still a strength of the school. Particular strengths in provision for spiritual and moral development. The cultural diversity of modern Britain is under-emphasised.
Staffing, resources and accommodation	Good overall and an improvement on the last inspection. Strengths in resources available to support mathematics, information technology and physical education. Weaknesses in library provision and resources to support aspects of the learning for under fives. Accommodation now good overall.
Value for money	Good.

* *Ethos is the climate for learning: attitudes to work, relationships and the commitment to high standards.*

• **The parents' views of the school**

What most parents like about the school	What some parents are not happy about
<p>IV. It achieves high standards of good behaviour.</p> <p>V. Their children like school.</p> <p>VI. Positive values and attitudes are promoted.</p> <p>VII. The high academic standards achieved.</p> <p>VIII. The school is approachable and personal problems are solved quickly and professionally.</p> <p>IX. General information and information provided about individual pupils' progress is good.</p>	<p>X. Not enough information is provided about</p> <p>XI. There are some communication difficulties.</p> <p>XII. There is not enough homework for older pupils.</p> <p>XIII. There is a lack of attention to suggestions</p> <p>XIV. Parents are not actively encouraged to help</p>

The team agreed with the strengths. However, it judged that there was not a wide enough range of homework in English at the end of KS2 and that parents were not provided with sufficient advanced written information about curriculum issues. There was not enough evidence to support the other concerns.

Key issues for action

The governors and staff should address the following matters in writing the action plan in order to raise standards and improve the provision the school makes still further:

- a) Improve progress in design and technology by
 - introducing a scheme of work to ensure an appropriate development of pupils' skills
 - further developing teachers' expertise
- a) Continue with the programme of updating policies and schemes of work
- b) More closely link the result of assessment in some subjects - including science - to the work provided for pupils with different abilities in lessons

These weaknesses are mainly discussed in paragraphs 23, 26, 84, 93 and 94.

In addition to the key issues above, there are some less important issues that should be considered for inclusion in the action plan. These are indicated in paragraphs 32 and 42.

(The school's current developmental priorities include the improvement of design and technology provision and the updating of subject policies and schemes of work.)

Introduction

Characteristics of the school

1. Milton-on-Stour is a small school with 83 pupils on roll - including eight who were under five at the time of the inspection. This latter group are described as under fives, rather than pupils at either key stage. The school is about the same size as at the time of the last inspection. There are almost the same number of boys and girls on roll but very few pupils from ethnic minorities. In addition to serving the local village the school admits pupils from some surrounding hamlets and from the nearby town of Gillingham. Most pupils live in owner occupied homes. About 2.7% of pupils are entitled to free school meals, which is well below average. The school serves an area of relatively high employment. The attainment of pupils on entry varies, but is broadly average. Fourteen of the pupils have special educational needs which is average. One pupil has a statement of special educational needs - one less than at the time of the last inspection. Pupils are admitted to the reception class at the beginning of the academic year in which they reach five - part time at first.

2. Summary of aims and priorities:

In the school's Mission Statement it sets out to:

Promote the spiritual, moral, social, cultural and academic development of the individual child nurtured within the Christian foundation of this Church of England VA school. We aim to help each child to grow in confidence, be considerate towards others and enjoy good self esteem within the context of a happy, secure, Christian environment. In developing our own school ethos, we are seeking to prepare the children to meet the challenges of living in a culturally diverse wider society. Implicit in this statement is our desire to celebrate children's successes in partnership with their parents.

3. Aims of the school:

We aim to:

- make provision for each child to have equal and full access to the National Curriculum.
- create a happy school environment, make learning stimulating and develop good self esteem.
- help the children to develop independent social and learning skills from an early age.
- enjoy the status of religious education in our school.
- assist the children in developing their full potential through academic, creative and sporting abilities and interests.
- help the children to use language effectively and imaginatively when communicating in speech or writing.
- develop reading and research skills and foster a love of books used for different purposes.
- assist children in developing effective listening skills.
- help the children to learn that courtesy and consideration for others are very important qualities.
- encourage children to appreciate that the best form of discipline is self discipline.
- develop each child's ability to use and apply mathematical knowledge accurately and effectively.
- encourage exploration and enjoyment of the creative and expressive arts through music and dance.
- enrich skills in ICT in order to help in preparing the children for an ever changing world.
- develop the skills of observation, recording and analysis through science based enquiry.
- seek opportunities to help the children become aware of the wider community and the needs of others.

1. Priorities identified in the most recent school development plan include:

- Continuing to raise standards of achievement
- The implementation of the National Numeracy Strategy
- The development of individual targets for pupils throughout the school in English and mathematics
- The development of individual targets for pupils in science in Years 5 and 6
- Building and environment improvements
- Improving aspects of design and technology

1. Appropriate global targets have been set for further raising standards in literacy and numeracy.

5. Key indicators

Attainment at Key Stage 1¹

Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 1
for the latest reporting year:

Year	Boys	Girls	Total
1999	6	7	13

National Curriculum	Test/Task Results	Reading task	Writing	Mathematics
Number of pupils at NC Level 2 or above	Boys	6	6	6
	Girls	6	6	7
	Total	12	12	13
Percentage at NC Level 2 or above	School	92	92	100
	National	82	83	87

Teacher Assessments	Reading	Mathematics	Science
Number of pupils at NC Level 2 or above	Boys	6	6
	Girls	6	7
	Total	12	13
Percentage at NC Level 2 or above	School	92	100
	National		

Attainment at Key Stage 2²

Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 2
for the latest reporting year:

Year	Boys	Girls	Total
1999	7	4	11

National Curriculum	Test Results	English	Mathematics	Science
Number of pupils at NC Level 4 or above	Boys	6	6	5
	Girls	4	4	3
	Total	10	10	8
Percentage at NC Level 4 or above	School	91	91	73
	National	70	68	78

Teacher Assessments	English	Mathematics	Science
Number of pupils at NC Level 4 or above	Boys	6	5
	Girls	4	3
	Total	10	8
Percentage at NC	School	91	73

¹ Percentages in parentheses refer to the year before the latest reporting year

² Percentages in parentheses refer to the year before the latest reporting year

Level 4 or above	National			
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Attendance

Percentage of half days (sessions) missed through absence for the latest complete reporting year:			%
	Authorised	School	4.9
	Absence	National comparative data	5.7
	Unauthorised absence	School	0.2
		National comparative data	0.5

Exclusions

Number of exclusions of pupils (of statutory school age) during the previous year:			Number
	Fixed period		0
	Permanent		0

Quality of teaching

Percentage of teaching observed which is:			%
	Very good or better		18
	Satisfactory or better		100
	Less than satisfactory		0

PART A: ASPECTS OF THE SCHOOL

Educational standards achieved by pupils at the school

Attainment and progress

2. The results of tests taken by seven year olds in 1999 (SATs) were very high in reading and well above average in writing. In comparison with similar schools they were average. In mathematics the results were close to the national average but below average in comparison with similar schools. In the 1999 teacher assessments of science, results were very high in terms of the percentage achieving Level 2 or above and well above average in terms of the numbers who reached the higher Level 3. In the 1999 tests at the end of Key Stage 2, pupils' performance was well above average in both English and mathematics but below average in science. In comparison with similar schools results were above average in English, average in mathematics and well below average in science. The English and mathematics scores have remained consistently above average over a period of years. The 1999 science results are misleading, and the result of a small cohort of pupils not achieving as well in the tests as might be expected. For example, when the Key Stage 2 science test results for the period 1996 to 1998 are averaged, the results are, in fact, well above the national average. The school could provide no secure explanation for the 1999 results - but the inspection team judged that assessment in science is not always closely enough linked to planning. Appropriate targets have been set for literacy and numeracy. Statutory assessment data is carefully analysed and the results of this used to inform planning and target setting.
3. The judgement of the inspection team is that by the time the pupils leave the school they achieve standards that are above expected levels overall. They are well above average in English and mathematics and above average in science at the end of both key stages. This is consistent with the assessment results except for mathematics at Key Stage 1 and science at Key Stage 2. In both subjects the team judged current standards to be higher than indicated by the 1999 test results. There are particular strengths in music and history - but weaknesses in design and technology. Standards in information technology are satisfactory at the end of both key stages. Pupils enter the school with broadly average attainment and leave it with above average attainment. Thus they make good progress. Progress is particularly strong in literacy and numeracy. The team judged that pupils who are under five make good progress in all their areas of learning - including language and literacy and mathematics - and have above average attainment when they reach five. This is as a result of good teaching. Pupils with special educational needs make good progress in lessons and their individual education plans show that they also make good progress over time. There is no significant difference in the progress made by boys and girls or between the progress made by pupils of different levels of prior attainment. Since the last inspection there have been improvements in pupils' performance in English at Key Stage 1 and in mathematics at both key stages. There has also been an improvement in the progress made by pupils who are under five. However, there has been a decline in design and technology. Satisfactory standards in information technology have been maintained.
4. Within English, attainment in each of the three elements of speaking and listening, reading and writing is well above average. Progress is good and sometimes very good. The school has established a well co-ordinated approach to the Literacy Hour but the pupils also successfully develop their literacy skills across the curriculum. By the end of Key Stage 1 most pupils enjoy reading aloud and higher attaining pupils vary the tone and pitch of their voices to convey meaning. They use an increasing range of strategies for tackling unfamiliar words and show an increasing knowledge about the language and structure of books. At Key Stage 2 pupils read books independently - both for pleasure and to gain information - and show a good understanding of content, character and events. By the end of Key Stage 1 most pupils produce legible writing and take care with the presentation of their work. They communicate meaning successfully through

well structured sentences. At Key Stage 2 pupils produce a more complex sentence structure. Writing is well structured into paragraphs and pupils have a good understanding of different styles and forms. Handwriting and spelling are good. By the end of Key Stage 1 pupils speak with growing confidence and listen with increasing alertness. At Key Stage 2 pupils share, develop and challenge each other's ideas to effectively form opinions.

5. Numeracy is a strength of much of the work in mathematics and standards are very good. Some higher attaining pupils at the end of Key Stage 2 are reaching particularly high levels in some aspects including multiplication tables. Numeracy is successfully employed in some other areas of the curriculum such as science and information technology. Standards in other areas of mathematics are also well above average with, for example, Key Stage 1 pupils being able to estimate length in standard units and describe a range of shapes and their attributes. Standards in science are above average throughout the school and pupils make progress that is generally sound and sometimes good. Key Stage 1 pupils, for example, are aware of the properties of magnets and can construct simple circuits while Key Stage 2 pupils are able to use formal symbols to construct circuits of their own. Standards in information technology are average at the end of both key stages. Overall progress is satisfactory, but progress in word processing skills is good.
6. There are strengths in other subjects. In music, for example, Key Stage 1 pupils successfully use melodic and untuned percussion instruments to create simple music structures. At Key Stage 2 pupils follow pitch patterns in group performances and compositions. They make good progress in singing and show good levels of diction and enunciation. Older Key Stage 2 pupils have a good understanding of various aspects of life during the Second World War and make effective use of a range of resources to explore associated themes. Progress in design and technology is unsatisfactory - largely because skills in the subject are not being developed enough.

10. **Attitudes, behaviour and personal development**

7. Pupils throughout the school respond very well in lessons, frequently showing enjoyment, enthusiasm and excitement. In a Year 1 and 2 science lesson, for example, pupils were making a circuit and showed great excitement when the bulb lit up. Most pupils show very good attitudes towards their learning. They arrive in lessons prepared to work, settle quickly and apply themselves well to their tasks. They are keen to answer questions and show confidence and a pride in their work. For example, in a Year 3 and 4 geography lesson on Indian festivals pupils were genuinely interested and eager to contribute. Pupils who are under five enjoy school and are happy in their good relationships with their teacher and the other children. They behave very well, even when excited, and have a very positive attitude towards all their activities.
8. The pupils' behaviour in lessons, in the playground and around the site is very good indeed, and is often exemplary in lessons. This means that the school is a very orderly and secure environment that greatly supports learning and personal development. The previous inspection reported that behaviour was very good, so the high standards have been maintained. All parents who responded to the questionnaire agreed or strongly agreed that the school achieves high standards of good behaviour. The pupils are very polite to each other and to adults, holding doors open for visitors. They show respect for property and are careful when handling school equipment, for instance in music and science. No graffiti or litter, bullying or harassment were seen during the inspection. The school has had no exclusions in the past three years.
9. Relationships between the pupils are also very good and there is a caring family atmosphere in the school to which the pupils make a significant contribution. They work well together, both in lessons and in the context of the wider school community. In assemblies, for example, pupils co-operate well in operating the audio equipment, and in handing out and gathering up hymn books. In one assembly the 'family' atmosphere was demonstrated by the way the pupils holding up the

letters making a biblical anagram were known by name to the rest of the school. The good collaboration in lessons greatly supports learning in a number of areas, including music, science, art and PE, and has a significant positive effect in the group work sessions during Literacy and Numeracy hours.

10. The pupils' personal development is good. The last inspection report noted an occasional lack of concentration in lessons, but concentration is now very good. In a Year 5 and 6 history lesson on World War 2 evacuees the high level of sustained concentration led to good progress, for example. Pupils listen to each other in lessons, even in the reception class, where pupils made good progress in their personal development through an activity about sending a card to a friend in hospital. Pupils contribute to the school community, not just by helping at times like assemblies but in lessons themselves, bringing in supporting material from home. They can work whilst unsupervised, for example in their use of information technology at lunchtimes.

14. **Attendance**

11. Attendance is good, with significantly less authorised absence and less unauthorised absence than the national average. Full attendance throughout the school is not unusual. Punctuality is good at the start of the day and lessons start and end on time.

15. **Quality of education provided**

Teaching

12. The good quality of the teaching is a major strength of the school and contributes significantly to the good progress made by the pupils. The teaching is always at least sound. It is good or very good in over seven out of ten lessons with nearly two out of ten being very good. There is no significant difference between the teaching at any of the stages of education in the school. These findings show overall improvement since the last inspection, when there was some unsatisfactory teaching.
13. The major weakness in the teaching during the last inspection was planning at Key Stage 1 with the result that pupils were not given work appropriate to their needs. This weakness has been improved as the planning is now clearly matched to the pupils' ability in most lessons, with the result that pupils are taught in groups with suitably challenging work. This is evident in a mathematics lesson dealing with money, as there is considerable difference in the work that was given to both the least able and the most able pupils. One minor weakness relates to the planning in science at Key Stage 2, as the tasks are not always sufficiently well planned to take full account of the ability range. Teachers plan well for pupils with special educational needs. These pupils follow the same work as other pupils, with different individual or group work provided which is more appropriate to their needs. Statemented pupils additionally receive good planned support from support assistants and from visiting local authority specialist teachers. Pupils who have special educational needs and those who are under five are taught well.
14. Literacy and numeracy are particularly well taught, especially at Key Stage 2 with lessons having a clear structure. The questioning is often useful and constructive, improving both the pupils' vocabulary and their thinking. This is exemplified in a Year 5 and 6 literacy lesson as the pupils are able to make good judgements about the differing texts and the reasons for the variety of styles of writing. Literacy and numeracy skills are taught across other areas of the curriculum including information technology, with word processing and graphing being seen in history, geography and science for example. The teachers' subject knowledge, understanding and general enthusiasm also contribute significantly to the very good teaching in English and mathematics. However, in design and technology at both key stages planning indicates that some teachers have limited subject knowledge. This is a specific subject weakness.

15. There are other strong features of the teaching. Teachers have high expectations with the result that pupils produce work of good quality. The work is often well marked and in mathematics for example pupils are set targets for improvement. All classes are very well managed and as a consequence there are secure and very positive classroom relationships. Discipline is extremely well maintained, whilst being low key, ensuring that pupils are not distracted from their work. The pace of lessons is generally good, although in some physical education lessons there are times when the pupils could be more active rather than being passive spectators. Resources are very well used as, for example, in a Years 3 and 4 mathematics lesson when estimating and measuring the size of heads, and in science when working on circuitry.
16. The good teaching is supported by some good on-going assessment at Key Stage 1 and some very good assessment at Key Stage 2. The pupils' progress, particularly in numeracy and literacy, is well recorded and the teachers are particularly good at praising the pupils and supporting and analysing their work through positive marking. Homework is used throughout the school and supports some of the class work. Parents did express concerns about the appropriateness of some of the homework for the oldest age group as some is not always sufficiently wide ranging.
20. **The curriculum and assessment**
17. The aim of the school to provide pupils with full and equal access to the National Curriculum is being successfully met except in design and technology. The curriculum effectively includes religious education and appropriately reflects the school aims and development priorities. Provision is effectively enhanced by an appropriate personal and social development programme, which includes sex and drugs education. The school has effectively implemented the National Literacy and Numeracy Strategies.
18. The curriculum for children under five incorporates the desirable learning outcomes well and provides children with a positive learning experience. They are effectively prepared for a smooth transition to the first levels of subjects of the National Curriculum. Assessment of children on entry to the school gives a good picture of each individual's stage of development and is being used appropriately to inform the planning of teaching programmes.
19. The curriculum for pupils in Key Stage 1 and Key Stage 2 is broadly based, well balanced and relevant for all pupils except in design and technology where there is insufficient planning for the development of knowledge and skills. Policies and schemes of work are now in place for all subjects except design and technology and personal, social and health education. While an appropriate planned programme of activities is in place for personal, social and health education this is not written as a scheme of work and this limits planning for pupils to build on their earlier learning. Although schemes of work are in place for the majority of subjects, a number require updating. The most significant effect of this is to be found in design and technology, as the lack of a scheme of work detracts from teachers' ability to plan successfully for progression and continuity in the subject. Further updating of schemes of work is identified as a target in the current school development plan.
20. Good medium and long term planning in subjects effectively ensures that appropriate coverage is given to all subjects except design and technology. The good planning also effectively supports a smooth transition for pupils between Key Stages 1 and 2, which enables them to build upon previous learning. The good percentage of time pupils spend daily on literacy and numeracy significantly contributes to the good progress made by pupils in these subjects and their improving attainments. All pupils, including those with special educational needs, have equal access to the rich and broad range of learning experiences the school curriculum provides. The good provision for pupils with special educational needs provides effective support and allows pupils to benefit

from their access to a full curriculum.

21. The good links established by the school with the community, the very good links with the local church, and the range of additional educational visits undertaken within the community further support and enhance pupils' learning. The good range of extra-curricular activities offered contributes effectively to enriching the curriculum opportunities available to the pupils.
22. Effective systems are in place for the assessment and recording of pupils' progress. Every pupil has a half-termly target for English and mathematics and in science for pupils in Years 5 and 6. Reading tests take place termly to enable pupils' progress to be tracked and reading record sheets are maintained daily. Within foundation subjects there is no agreed school system for assessing and recording progress. However, assessment is on-going with weekly tests or regular topic assessment sheets appropriately used. Samples of pupils' work are maintained to check progress over time. National Curriculum record books are maintained, and diagnostic screening is used to further develop pupils profiles. Procedures for the identification and assessment of pupils with special educational needs are clear and carried out well. Each pupil with special educational needs has an individual education plan that is reviewed termly. Annual reviews are in place and meet statutory requirements. Parents are actively and appropriately involved in target setting and reviews. Subject co-ordinators collect a sample of pupils' work in their subject from each year group. This provides useful information for teachers and for subject co-ordinators and effectively supports their lesson planning. The school uses its assessment information well to inform planning and teaching in English and mathematics. In some other subjects - including science - this is less effective, with the result that not all pupils are provided with work that meets their needs.. Results of national assessments are analysed and the information used to influence the targets in the school development plan.
23. Since the last inspection there has been a significant improvement in the curriculum for the under five's. Planning across key stages is now systematic and ensures that pupils build upon earlier learning in most subjects.

27. **Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development**

24. The overall provision for the spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of its pupils is very good and clearly reflects in practice the aims of the school. This is a strength of the school and shows that the previous good inspection findings are being maintained. The aims and provision are achieved through a positive ethos with the adults in the school providing very good role models for the pupils. There is an air of concern and appreciation of young children's needs and they are treated as individuals in their own right. All adults in the school set a very good example for pupils to emulate.
25. Provision for the pupils' spiritual development is excellent. Religious education and the acts of collective worship are central to this provision as they encourage pupils to reflect on the world and understand something of the spiritual nature of life. Assemblies are Christian in character. They often involve the pupils in a very positive way through readings, acting, responding to questions and in the saying of prayers. They are ably led by a variety of staff and the local vicar, who takes an active part in the spiritual life of the school. There are good opportunities for reflection and pupils are encouraged to express themselves and share their thoughts with others. Quiet moments and appropriate use of music and singing contribute to the excellent provision. Assemblies are also used to celebrate success with pupils being encouraged to share their good work and deeds. Occasional visits to the local church to take part in festivals and leavers' concerts are further evidence of the school's provision. Circle times and religious education lessons are also making a positive contribution as pupils are made aware of others. They also reinforce the 'spiritual nature' of the school through discussion and thought.

26. The provision for moral development is very good and is closely linked to the school's ethos. There is an excellent caring family atmosphere. A clear code of conduct is successfully put into practice. The pupils are taught to have a clear understanding of right and wrong. Consequently, they are very good in their personal and social behaviour, with the older pupils showing great care and concern for the younger members of the school. Some lessons also reflect moral issues such as the differences in levels of starvation and food resources in India, compared with our own country. Pupils also follow up themes such as kindness and the morality of war, specifically relating it to the World War 2 topic in Key Stage 2.
27. Another strength is the good provision for the social development of the pupils. Social development is encouraged and the older and younger pupils mix well together. Older pupils are given opportunities to help and do so within a quiet yet purposeful way as seen in assemblies. Lunch-times are a good social occasion when the whole school meets, including the staff, so reinforcing the social dimension. In the playground older pupils are always very willing to help those who fall or have an accident and show care and genuine concern. In the wider context the pupils are often involved in supporting both local and world wide charities including Marie Curie Research, Harvest Home in Zambia and the distribution of harvest gifts to some of the less fortunate residents of Gillingham. Concerts - both at school and in the local church - also heighten social awareness.
28. Provision for the cultural development of pupils is sound overall but is the weakest of all the elements. This is because the provision arises incidentally and is not clearly planned within and around the curriculum. Pupils do learn to appreciate their own culture through their work on local studies and also through the work on Victorians. They also appreciate their own culture through listening to differing styles of music and in celebrating festivals. Multiculturalism is covered in a limited way when studying other countries such as India, as the pupils became aware of differing designs and clothing as well as life styles. However, the cultural diversity of modern British society is under-emphasised and the overall provision including books and artefacts is very limited.
32. **Support, guidance and pupils' welfare**
29. The school provides good support and guidance for its pupils, and has a particular strength in the way it encourages good behaviour. The good standards of care identified at the time of the last inspection have been maintained, and there is still a strong family ethos in school. Staff know pupils very well as individuals in both personal and academic terms. Support for pupils with special educational needs is good, and the special needs register is kept up to date. Pupils who are under five are well supported. Records in general are well kept, and overall the procedures for monitoring progress and personal development are good.
30. Measures to promote discipline and good behaviour are very effective overall. This is reflected in the very high, often exemplary standards of behaviour in lessons. The behaviour policy is written in a positive way. It includes expectations (including rules), incentives (which include stickers etc) and privileges. More important is the overriding school ethos and its emphasis on self discipline and care for others that underpins the good discipline that teachers establish in classes, and encourages good work habits.
31. The procedures for recording and promoting attendance are satisfactory. Registration is carried out effectively by class teachers, though not always using the correct codings as some blanks are left too long. The education welfare officer is involved as needed, and provides good follow up for unexplained absence.
32. Arrangements for child protection are sound. A senior member of staff is the responsible member of staff, and other staff are aware of her role and how to take any concerns forward. The school also

has sound arrangements for promoting the health and safety of pupils through safe working practices. Concerns at the time of the last inspection relating to physical education equipment in the hall were addressed through the building of a new hall. There is adequate supervision in playground areas – injuries are well and promptly attended to and accident forms appropriately completed. Safety is stressed in lessons – for example hygiene was stressed in a reception class science lesson on waste recycling. The school is aware of potential health and safety issues and investigates them thoroughly. However there is not yet a formal health and safety policy and this is a weakness.

36. Partnership with parents and the community

33. The partnership with parents and the community is good overall. The school has maintained the strengths of the last inspection. The quality of the annual reports on pupils, which were described in the previous report as weak in the foundation subjects, however, remains a minor weakness in some classes. They do not all give sufficient information on individual progress. The school provides information for parents which is satisfactory overall. Parents' involvement in their children's learning is also sound. However the school's links with the community are very strong and make a powerful contribution to pupils' attainment and personal development. They are used to enrich the curriculum and make it more relevant and meaningful.
34. At the parents' meeting there was general agreement that much of the information parents get is useful. Regular newsletters contain good information on current events. The annual governors' report to parents is small, neat and informative, whilst the prospectus is informative if less attractive. Despite the minor weakness in written reports, they do have a useful extra section suggesting key points for development. The opportunities for face to face discussions with parents about their child's progress are sound. The school also provides information about the current curriculum, including numeracy and literacy evenings, though some parents feel that there is not enough advance information about curriculum issues or teaching methods. The inspection team agreed with this concern.
35. The inspection questionnaires for parents and the parents' meeting revealed a variety of opinions about the way parents are involved in the school and the information they receive. A small number of parents are unhappy with the encouragement the school gives them to be involved, and with the school's approachability; they feel complaints are not well handled. Few parents were seen helping in school during the inspection week. There was general agreement at the parents' meeting that more parents would be involved if they were better encouraged. However, a more significant number feel very positive about their relationship with the school and the staff. The parent teacher association is very active and parents take an important role in providing extra adults for trips out. Parents are appropriately involved through the homework system, which includes reading books. Appropriate links are in place to involve the parents of pupils with special educational needs.
36. Links with the local village community are particularly strong. The theme of 'people who help us' involves numerous visiting professionals such as the local dentist, doctor, vet, health education specialist and a post office worker, a former pupil. The school also takes advantage of specific village events, for instance having a focus on the tradesmen involved in the recent building works. Members of the community are also involved in the well-supported 50-50 club run by the governors, which raises valuable funds beyond those provided by the parent teacher association. There are close links with some local businesses such as garden centres, and each class is usually involved in a termly curriculum-related visit – for instance to wildlife parks, or Montacute House. The very good relationships and liaison with the secondary school ensure pupils are well prepared for the next stage of their education.

40. **The management and efficiency of the school**

Leadership and management

37. The headteacher provides very caring leadership. He is a good team builder with a strong vision for the school's further development who is well aware of the strengths of individual members of staff at all levels. He is well supported by staff with management responsibilities. Subject co-ordinators are fully aware of the developmental needs of their areas and carry out their duties effectively. The English and mathematics co-ordinators, for example, have had some release time to view the teaching of their subjects and have fed back relevant comments to the teachers concerned. The school appropriately plans to extend this activity to other subjects in the near future. They do not, however, regularly monitor planning. This is carried out by the headteacher. However, the more significant role that the co-ordinators now have is an improvement since the last inspection when weakness in subject co-ordination was a key issue. There was no secretary in post at the time of the inspection. As a result - despite office support from a number of governors - this has led to weaknesses in routine administration.
38. The chair of governors is very supportive and keeps himself well informed about the school's day to day affairs. The governing body is also supportive and several individual governors are very involved in school activities, including finance and special educational needs. The governing body as a whole - although kept well informed by detailed reports from the headteacher - has an under developed role in the strategic oversight of the school's curriculum. Provision for pupils with special educational needs is well managed and relevant statutory requirements are fully met. Due regard is given to the Code of Practice for the Identification and Assessment of Special Needs. Individual education plans are in place and monitored termly. An annual audit - also monitored termly - is carried out by the school to ensure accurate identification of pupils experiencing difficulties. Appropriate arrangements are in place for the management of literacy, numeracy and the provision made for pupils who are under five.
39. The school development plan is a detailed and practical working document that is constructed in consultation with staff and governors. Main priorities are highlighted and due regard continues to be given to the key issues identified in the last inspection. It is regularly reviewed and updated as targets are achieved. Statutory requirements are fully met and virtually all issues identified in the last report have been met well. Suitable systems are in place for monitoring all aspects of school life. All staff are individually and corporately committed to the school's further development. The school has a good capacity to achieve further improvement. There are good working relationships in the school and staff are fully committed to raising standards yet further. There is a high level of satisfaction on the part of most pupils and parents. The school's stated aims are met well and ethos is very good.

43. **Staffing, accommodation and learning resources**

40. For a school of its size, there are a large number of appropriately qualified and experienced teachers who deliver the full range of the National Curriculum. They work well together, supporting each other effectively through discussion, planning and teamwork. The whole staff work together as a cohesive group. Co-ordinators have clearly defined roles and responsibilities, which helps to ensure the full delivery of the National Curriculum.
41. The pupil to teacher ratio is 18.8:1, which is well below the national average for a school of this size, and is an improvement on the previous inspection findings. The small size of the classes has a very positive impact on the quality of teaching and the behaviour of the pupils. Pupils are taught in two-year age groups and there are no cross key stage classes. The level of educational support staff is also very high. They have very good expertise and they make a very positive contribution to the

pupils' learning. The staff make a good contribution to the extra curricular life of the school as there is a suitable range of after school activities that supports the school's good ethos.

42. There are good arrangements for the professional development of staff, which are closely matched to the school development plan. Appropriate funds are used well to improve the expertise of teachers, with information technology being a good example. All teachers have undertaken training in the Literacy and Numeracy Strategies, which is having a positive effect on raising standards. Suitable arrangements for appraisal are in place. Overall the school's appraisal system is very good and fully meets statutory requirements, which is an improvement since the last inspection.
43. The quality and adequacy of resources are satisfactory. They are good for mathematics, physical education and information technology. The overall library provision is unsatisfactory, as the books are limited in both range and quality. Many are outdated, but a recent audit shows that the school is planning to address this issue by providing a new library area. The resources for the under fives also lack range and variety. There is a good grassed area that is used well for physical education and a playground of sufficient size for games. Parents make a very significant contribution to the quality of overall resource provision, which the school appreciates. Field trips and visits to local museums and those further afield also improve the quality of the provision.
44. The accommodation is good overall, extremely clean and well cared for. It provides a range of facilities that enhance the pupils' learning opportunities. There are sufficient classrooms and adjacent work areas that allow for the full range of curriculum activities to take place. The hall is spacious and light and is also used for music. There is a lack of storage space that means some of the areas around the school become cluttered. This detracts from the overall appearance of the accommodation. There has been a vast improvement in the quality of the accommodation since the last inspection, so that pupils and staff now work in a very pleasant learning environment.

48. **The efficiency of the school**

45. Financial planning at the school is good and appropriately involves the governors at relevant stages. The budget is constructed in relation to school and national targets. Likely spending on developmental priorities is projected over a three year period, with more detailed costings prepared for the current financial year. This is an effective way of ensuring the school's financial stability and is an improvement on the findings of the last report. A high carry forward of funds from the previous year was a planned device to pay for outstanding building bills. Financial control is also good. The chair of the finance committee in particular is closely involved with the headteacher in monitoring expenditure. For example, she completes a monthly financial analysis from which she produces a very detailed balance for the full governing body to discuss. Terms of reference for the finance committee are recent and detailed. There are some weaknesses, however, in routine financial administration as there is no secretary currently in post.
46. Teaching staff are very well deployed and management structures are appropriate to the needs of a school of this size. Good use is made of resources available to support learning. Accommodation and facilities are used well. Displays are satisfactory overall and there are some good examples of displays that serve well to stimulate pupils and to celebrate their achievements. Good use is made of money available to support pupils with special educational needs. Satisfactory use is made of resources for the under fives and additional grants for the professional development of staff are spent efficiently.
47. The socio-economic circumstances and attainment of pupils on entry is broadly average. The school's costs are high. However, pupils make good progress. Standards at the end of Key Stage 2 are above average overall and are well above average in the key areas of literacy and numeracy. Non-academic aspects such as teaching, support and guidance and the provision for pupils'

spiritual, moral and social development range from good to excellent. The school continues to provide good value for money.

PART B: CURRICULUM AREAS AND SUBJECTS

51. Areas of learning for children under five

48. Children enter school on a part time basis in the September of the school year in which they are five. In the half term in which they are five they begin full time attendance. Almost all of the children have had nursery or play group experience and on entry to school the range of attainment is in line with what is expected nationally. The children who are under five are accommodated in a reception class where they are taught with a small group of Key Stage 1 pupils. Children make good progress in all areas of their learning and are well prepared for the next stage of their education and for beginning National Curriculum work. This is an improvement since the time of the last inspection when some areas were under developed.
49. Overall teaching is good. The teacher has a good knowledge and understanding of the learning needs of children of this age and provides a secure learning environment for them. Routines are established, known and understood, and good relationships support children in their confidence in learning and in behaving appropriately. Lessons are well planned and informed by medium and long term planning that appropriately reflects the desirable outcomes for learning for children of this age. On entry all children are assessed and the information from this is used well to inform the teacher in planning appropriate work. During lessons, observation of children at work and play and talking to and questioning children further informs planning and teaching. The classroom assistant works well with small groups of children and makes a valuable contribution to their learning. However, the organisation of the classroom does not fully support children in getting resources out and putting them away. This has a potentially adverse effect on their social development.
50. Children enjoy school and are happy in their good relationships with the teacher and the other children. They behave very well even when very excited, for example when studying waste recycling, and have a very positive attitude to all of their activities. They are keen to try new activities and offer their own ideas and suggestions to new situations. Children listen well to each other's ideas and suggestions and are confident to contribute to class and group discussions.

Personal and social education

51. Children make good progress in personal and social education. They exceed the expectations in the desirable learning outcomes in personal and social development on entry to statutory education. Routines are known and followed well. For example, when coming into the classroom, children are confident to begin their activities while their mother is exchanging information with the teacher. They greet the other children by name and most, with limited or no support, can take off their outer clothes and put them in the correct place. Behaviour is good and the children are very responsive to the teacher. They work and play well together, for example in the book corner a group of children decided to 'read' a library book to the range of soft toys, just like school. When making a scarecrow the children co-operated well together in thinking about the design, in making suggestions and in putting together their ideas. They had great fun stuffing the trouser legs full of crumpled newspaper rolls they had prepared. The children are kind, thoughtful and helpful to each other. For example, during the inspection one pupil asked another if she wanted help with putting away the things on her table. In games children take turns and share the apparatus evenly between them. In many aspects of class life - apart from organising resources - the children are developing their independence skills well, for example in taking responsibilities for their own and others property and in working or playing while the teacher is working with another group of children. Teaching of this area is good.

Language and literacy

52. Children make good progress in language and literacy as their attitudes are positive. They listen very well to the teacher and to each other and are confident to join in discussions. Through structured activities children extend their vocabulary, for example when enjoying a feely bag they used a good range of words to describe what they were feeling. They exceed the expectations in the desirable learning outcomes for five year olds on entry to statutory education. All of the children enjoy books and many 'read' the story by looking at the pictures. Children handle books well, turn the pages in the correct sequence and gain information from the pictures. They enjoy the class big books, listen attentively to the story and begin to show perceptive scrutiny of the pictures. For example, one child commented that one of the characters had a speech bubble. Higher attaining children are recognising letter sounds and many can do the actions associated with the letters. Many can find things in the classroom that begin with a given letter. Children try very hard when practising their writing, with some copying sentences while others trace over words or writing patterns. Teaching is satisfactory.

Mathematics

53. Children make good progress in mathematics and are beginning to develop an appropriate mathematical vocabulary. For example, they discuss whether objects are bigger or smaller, the same or different, and they use their increasing vocabulary across many areas of classroom life. They count how many children are present and when lining up to go into the hall they make pairs. The desirable learning outcomes are achieved by the time they reach five. A wide variety of purposeful activities extend children's mathematical experiences. Children recognise numerals, count in sequence to ten and match objects to numbers. They show good pencil control in writing over numerals and higher attaining children copy underneath their numbers. They create mathematical patterns using a variety of equipment and through practical activities children begin to sort and classify materials such as articles made of plastic. Teaching of this area of learning is good.

Knowledge and understanding of the world

54. Children make good progress in exploring the world around them through a variety of experiences. Good opportunities are available for the children to talk about the past when talking about their weekend news, and in sequencing the days of the week, what is past and what is to come. Expectations in the desirable learning outcomes are met. Through model making children talk about different environments, for example a farm and its features. Children think about their own environment, for example when discussing the benefits of recycling waste materials. They explore and select materials and equipment for specific purposes. For example, when making a large scarecrow children discussed how they could make it stand up and what materials would be best to use for different parts. They ask questions and offer their own ideas for solutions. Teaching here is again good.

Physical development

55. Children make good progress in physical development and show good control in both outdoor and indoor physical activities. The desirable learning outcomes for physical education are met. In gymnastics children show their ability to balance, for example balancing on one leg and moving around the hall balancing on different body parts. In the classroom children show increasing physical control in manipulative skills. They enjoy, for example, ripping, cutting with scissors, and using glue to stick things carefully. Teaching is good.

Creative development

56. In the range of their experiences in art, craft and music children make good progress and by the

time they reach five, the desirable learning outcomes are met. They experiment with a range of media and enjoy choosing and deciding what is best to use for the purpose. They become more confident in using paint to design their own pictures and patterns. In music the children are very excited to use the percussion instruments but listen carefully to the teacher and watch when they are shown for example how to correctly hold their instrument. They enjoy experimenting with sounds but can also stop and start playing appropriately. Most children can hold a beat. Once again, teaching is good.

57. Since the last inspection there has been a significant improvement in the curriculum, which is now appropriate for children of this age. While there has been an improvement in resources for imaginative play there are insufficient resources to support children's learning across the curriculum. Many of the puzzles and educational toys are old and there is an insufficient range. This means that this aspect of the provision is not stimulating. The organisation of the classroom is satisfactory but there are insufficient interest tables and focused areas to provide opportunities for children to experience a sufficiently rich and varied range of materials and activities.

61. English, mathematics and science

English

58. At both key stages, overall standards in English are well above average. The most recent National Curriculum tests also show that the number of pupils who reach the national expectation at the end of both key stages is well above average. Over the last three years there has been a steady improvement in the number achieving at higher levels, especially at Key Stage 2.
59. Standards seen during the course of the inspection reflect these results. Attainment in reading, writing and speaking and listening is well above average at both key stages, and as they move through the school pupils make good and sometimes very good progress in all aspects of English. Pupils with special educational needs are supported well in literacy and make good progress in relation to their prior attainment through well targeted in-class support. The school has appropriately set targets for all pupils in literacy. These are reviewed each half term.
60. The recommendations of the National Literacy Strategy, and the introduction of a daily Literacy Hour are well established. The monitoring and review of targets and regular assessments of reading and spelling ensure pupils' progress is carefully tracked. However, English is not confined to the set hour and pupils' vocabulary and writing is usefully extended across all subjects.
61. When they enter Key Stage 1 pupils are familiar with books, recognise common words in simple texts and are beginning to use phonic skills in their reading. By the end of Key Stage 1 most pupils enjoy reading aloud and higher attaining pupils vary the tone and pitch of their voices appropriately to convey meaning. Pupils use an increasing range of strategies for tackling unfamiliar words and higher attaining pupils read accurately and fluently. Lower attaining pupils read hesitatingly and use picture clues and the context to help them establish meaning. A few need help when they meet unfamiliar words, although they use pictures well to help their reading and understanding. All pupils enjoy books and show an increasing knowledge about the language and structure of books, for example when using the terms author, title and index. The data collected over time from the annual diagnostic testing of pupils' reading shows improvements year on year. At Key Stage 2 pupils build on their earlier learning very well. Pupils read books independently both for pleasure and to gain information, and show a good understanding of content, character and events. Good use is made within lessons of dictionaries and thesaurii to help in understanding words or in finding alternative words. Pupils enjoy comparing texts from different genres and understanding the need for such variety. For example, linking to their work on the home front,

pupils studied telegrams, official reports, newspaper articles, diaries and poetry concerned with the death of a young airman. Pupils begin to appreciate the requirements of the audience, for example the need for sensitivity or brevity within texts, and to appreciate the metaphorical function of language in poetry and prose. Given the limitations of the library, the pupils work independently in locating books and researching subjects. The high attainments achieved in reading support pupils well in their work in other subjects.

62. At both key stages pupils make good progress in writing. By the end of Key Stage 1 pupils produce legible writing and take care with the presentation of their work. They communicate meaning successfully through well-structured sentences with higher attaining pupils extending their use and understanding of punctuation such as full stops and commas. Pupils explore different forms of writing, for example when writing poetry they understand the need for a different structure and most can identify and describe what the differences are. By the time pupils are at Key Stage 2, their written work shows sentence structure becoming more complex. Writing is well structured into paragraphs, with a good understanding of different styles and forms, Pupils begin to understand how to write for different audiences, with middle and higher attaining pupils producing a range of written work, for example, narratives, diaries and instructions. Punctuation is used appropriately and spelling becomes more accurate. Pupils use different tenses appropriately, and enjoy using an increasing range, for example, of dramatic words and puns, incorporating these well into their writing. Higher attaining pupils can produce a précis of a story and identify within their writing, for example, synonyms, verbs, nouns and adjectives. Spelling is practised frequently and complex words are spelt correctly. Good use is made of drafting techniques by all pupils and a number effectively use word processing to provide a different form of presentation. Pupils take a pride in their written work and try hard to present their work well. Handwriting is good. Pupils use a cursive form of writing that is legible, well formed and well presented.
63. By the end of Key Stage 1 pupils speak with growing confidence and listen with increasing alertness. They respond relevantly to questions and are confident to ask questions and offer their own opinions and ideas and are very keen to contribute to class and group discussions. At both key stages pupils use well developed spoken language skills to communicate effectively with adults and with each other. At Key Stage 2 pupils work well co-operatively. They share, develop and challenge each others ideas to effectively form opinions and develop ideas from each other. By the end of Key Stage 2 pupils are confident to speak in class and to a wider audience, for example in assemblies.
64. All pupils have very positive attitudes to their work and are enthusiastic and eager to learn. Pupils enjoy work in English, reflecting stimulating teaching and work well matched to individual learning needs. They are confident to ask and answer questions and to offer their own ideas. All pupils behave well in class - although occasionally some pupils find a whole class session too long to sustain their full concentration. Pupils take responsibility for resources and handle them appropriately and with care.
65. Teaching overall is very good and is never less than good at both key stages. This very good quality teaching significantly contributes to the above average attainments and good progress the pupils make in English. The National Literacy Strategy is being implemented effectively and lessons are well planned with group work appropriate to the full ability range. The management and organisation of the classroom, of resources and of time are good and enable pupils to work and progress well. Teachers have a good knowledge and understanding of the subject and of their pupils. Expectations are high. Support time is well planned for and structured to meet individual and group learning needs and the high quality of support contributes significantly to pupils' progress and positive attitude to work. Detailed assessments and records of individual pupils' work are used well to support appropriate planning of lessons and activities. Pupils are given clear guidance on the purpose of the lesson and what they are to do. Books are carefully marked with clear comments on how work can be improved. However, homework tasks set for older pupils are

not wide ranging enough.

66. English is well planned for, organised and managed. The current scheme of work needs updating since the introduction of the Literacy Strategy and this is planned for in the school development plan. The co-ordinator works closely with other teachers in guiding planning and supporting the school's work in literacy. Structured monitoring of long, medium and short term planning by the headteacher, is in place and is well used to improve pupils' learning opportunities. All pupils have full access to the curriculum and good provision is made for pupils with special educational needs. Rigorous assessment and data analysis systems are in place and are very effective in guiding teaching and monitoring pupils' progress. All staff are involved in moderation of pupils' work to ensure consistency between teachers in their marking and expectations of pupils' work.
67. A good range of resources has been purchased which effectively support the Literacy Hour. While books are well promoted in classrooms, the range and quality of books is not satisfactory and many are old and very well worn. There are plans to improve current limitations in the accommodation of the library, which will overcome the restrictions on its use from its present siting. There is an insufficient range of learning resources to support English for younger pupils.
68. Since the last inspection there have been effective improvements in English. Pupils have improved upon their good attainments since the last inspection. This, in part, reflects the improved assessment systems now in place, which enables teachers to plan work matched to pupils' abilities and so provide more pace, challenge and rigour to lessons. Time allocated to English is now sufficient.

72. **Mathematics**

69. In the 1999 assessments of seven year olds, the percentage of pupils reaching the expected level was very high. However, the percentage reaching the higher Level 3 was average and the results were average overall. The school was aware of the relative weakness of mathematics at Key Stage 1 and has successfully addressed this through the National Numeracy Strategy. The inspection findings are that the attainment of pupils is currently well above average. A similar picture emerges from the results of the 1999 Key Stage 2 National Curriculum tests. Standards achieved were well above average overall. The judgement of the inspection team is also that standards in mathematics at the end of Key Stage 2 are currently well above average.
70. The overall progress made by the pupils is good in both key stages. Pupils enter the start of compulsory education with broadly average mathematical understanding. Because of the good teaching and small class sizes, coupled with the pupils' very good attitudes, progress is always good. At Key Stage 2 progress is always good with some instances of very good progress, particularly in Years 5 and 6 where the teaching is often very good. Pupils with special educational needs are also making good progress in relation to their prior attainment, as they are taught in a small group or even at the personal level with additional support. There is no significant difference between the progress of boys and girls.
71. Numeracy is a major focus of all the lessons and the school has adopted the Numeracy Strategy with success. All lessons begin with mental work so that the pupils are confident in handling numbers. In Years 1 and 2 the pupils learn their number bonds and can for example recognise coins, with the most able changing money up to a pound. Many of the pupils in Year 2 can count in twos, fives and tens as well as being able to estimate simple length in standard units. Their mathematical vocabulary is good as they can describe a range of shapes and their attributes. Standards achieved at Key Stage 1 are built upon successfully at Key Stage 2, with some Year 6 pupils being extremely confident and knowledgeable about their tables as well as being able to handle decimals and simple percentages. Numeracy is used in other areas of the curriculum such as

science for example and extends into programs for creating logo patterns in information technology.

72. The attitudes of the pupils are good at Key Stage 1 and always very good and often excellent at Key Stage 2. The pupils are very attentive and the small numbers in the class allow them to fully participate enthusiastically in the question and answer sessions. They are very hard working and produce sufficient quality work during the sessions. Behaviour is often exemplary - especially at Key Stage 2.
73. At Key Stage 1 the quality of teaching is good whilst at Key Stage 2 teaching is always good with half being very good. The teachers knowledge, understanding and expectations are good in Years 1 and 2 and very good at Key Stage 2. Teachers' use appropriate vocabulary which challenges the children's thinking. Overall planning is good as the work is carefully matched to the pupils' needs and abilities, including the few lower attainers. In one Key Stage 2 mental arithmetic lesson the work for some pupils was too hard and this was a minor weakness. The other very good features of the Key Stage 2 teaching relate to the management of pupils and the quality of the daily marking and assessment. The small class sizes means that the teachers are able to have personal knowledge of the pupils' difficulties and successes and respond accordingly. Homework is now being used successfully from Years 1 to 6.
74. The interested and enthusiastic co-ordinator has monitored some of the work and teaching in the school as well as giving demonstration lessons. This is an improvement since the last inspection. The scheme of work and policy are good and have a positive impact on the planning and progress. The assessment of pupils' attainment is very good. They are tested on a regular basis and trends from national tests are monitored.
75. Resources are generally good and range of published material and practical apparatus are used efficiently. Calculators are not always used to full advantage to support and enliven the pupils' work. Information technology is used well in data handling and through reinforcement and simulation software. The pupils in Years 3 and 4 used them well during the inspection.
76. The school has made good progress since the last inspection report as the standards of attainment, the quality of teaching and the progress made by the pupils has improved.

80. **Science**

77. In the most recent teacher assessments of seven year olds, the percentage of pupils achieving expected levels were well above average, while the percentage achieving higher levels was above average. In the tests of eleven year olds (SATs) the results were well below the national average and well below average compared with similar schools. However, this is a small school and results can vary from year to year. For example, in 1998 SAT results at the end of Key Stage 2 were well above average. When results for the three years 1996 to 1998 are averaged achievement is also well above expected levels. Work provided in lessons, however, does not always match the results of assessment. The findings of the inspection are that current standards in science are above average at the end of both key stages and that pupils make progress which is generally sound and sometimes good. Therefore, the good standards found at the time of the last inspection have been maintained.
78. Key Stage 1 pupils are aware of the properties of a magnet and can construct a simple electrical circuit. They also understand that shadows are formed because light is being blocked by an object. By the early part of Key Stage 2 many pupils have developed a good understanding of the nature of magnetic fields. Pupils at the end of this key stage can all construct a circuit with a switch. They are able to explain how a switch works by interrupting the flow of electricity in a circuit and use

formal symbols to design different circuits of their own. This is an example of good progress. Most understand the concept of 'fair' testing and the need to change only one variable at a time in a valid scientific experiment. They carry out successful investigations into different aspects of forces - such as how much force is needed to make an object move - and record their findings in a variety of ways - including line graphs.

79. Pupils' response in science lessons is always at least good and frequently very good. From the earliest years pupils are very enthusiastic about science activities. They are keen to contribute to class discussions, but are also willing to listen to their teachers and to one another. They settle quickly to their investigations and work on these with a high level of sustained concentration. They co-operate with one another and share apparatus very well. Even the youngest work well in groups without direct adult supervision. Overall behaviour is consistently very good. Teaching is also consistently good. Planning is always at least sound and is sometimes very detailed. Resources are of good quality and are used effectively to stimulate pupils and to enhance their learning. Discipline is very effective with positive relationships being regularly created. Teachers' knowledge and understanding of the area of the subject they are teaching is secure, with lessons invariably being made interesting for the pupils. There is a good balance between whole class teaching and individual or group investigations. Expectations are broadly appropriate and extension activities for higher attaining pupils are frequently provided. However, although some on-going assessment informs the direction of some lessons, work provided for pupils is not always matched closely enough to the needs of pupils of different levels of attainment.
80. Planning overall is satisfactory. There is an up to date policy for science and a the subject is delivered according to a two year topic cycle which ensures coverage of all the required programmes of study. Overall assessment procedures are good at Key Stage 2 but weak at Key Stage 1, and assessment information is not used enough to inform planning. This means that teachers are not always well enough informed to provide specific tasks for pupils of different levels of attainment in lessons. Co-ordination of the subject is satisfactory. Resources available to support science teaching are sufficient overall and good for some aspects. Since the last inspection there have been improvements in the teaching, planning, co-ordination and coverage of science.

84. **Other subjects or courses**

Information technology

81. The standards achieved by the pupils at both key stages are in line with national expectations. The school has managed to keep pace successfully with the continuing changes and improvements since the last inspection and this is good. Overall progress is sound but there are some inconsistencies between the different elements of the subject. Pupils' progress in word processing skills is good and they use them in other areas of the curriculum such as history when writing about the Victorians. Progress at Key Stage 1 in control is, however, limited - as the pupils' are not introduced to this element of information technology until late in Year 2.
82. Pupils who are under five are taught simple mouse skills. They can move small pictures about their daily life around the screen and place them in sequence. This is good. These mouse skills are further developed in Years 1 and 2, with pupils' using the 'Dazzle' painting program to produce good pictures. They can also change simple text and print and save their work with some help. By the end of Key Stage 2 the majority of pupils have developed their computing skills so that text and pictures can be merged and work saved and printed. Other work including data handling shows that pupils can successfully input data and produce both block and pie graphs. The work on control - particularly associated with logo - is good, as the pupils make relatively complicated programs involving repeating patterns and rotations. The progress in this aspect of the work is good.

83. The pupils are keen to demonstrate their skills and concentrate well when using the computers. They help each other to learn new skills and their general confidence and good behaviour are contributory factors to the progress that they make. Overall they have very good attitudes. No secure judgement as to the quality of teaching can be made as none was seen during the inspection. However, evidence from teachers' planning and pupils' work indicates that the teaching of skills is not carried out on a regular basis. This is a minor weakness. The teachers have a basic knowledge of the subject and this is supplemented by input from a support teacher who occasionally helps by demonstrating programmes and directly teaching skills. This is seen in the Year 6 work on control and modelling.
84. The co-ordinator has developed a scheme of work that includes clear details about progression and continuity. This is put into practice with the result that all the required elements of the subject are being covered. The resources for information technology are good. Parental support has greatly enhanced these resources. Information technology is used across the curriculum with pupils in Years 3 and 4, for example, using it to help them in mathematics and in geography.
88. **Art**
85. Observation of a number of lessons and a scrutiny of pupils' previous work indicate that there are a number of strengths in art throughout the school and that pupils make satisfactory progress. This is broadly similar to the findings of the previous report. Pupils are provided with opportunities to experience a wide range of techniques in two and three dimensional form and to study the work of major world artists. Key Stage 1 pupils, for example, create images of fire using paint and effectively smudged chalk. They also produce simple collages using wax crayon and a black coloured wash. They take great care when constructing and decorating thumb pots and when attempting to replicate the techniques of Vincent Van Gogh. Pupils at Key Stage 2 use a variety of media to produce paintings representative of modern and traditional Indian life. Others create well executed pencil drawings of places of worship and paintings of scenes from the Second World War.
86. Pupils are generally enthusiastic about their art lessons. They share ideas well with one another as, for example, when discussing 'The Sower' by Van Gogh. They have a good level of concentration on tasks and co-operate well with one another. Teaching is always at least sound and is mostly good. Resources are used effectively to challenge and stimulate the pupils, while the good quality of discipline successfully enhances relationships in classes. Pupils are given clear instructions and good work is rewarded with praise.
87. Planning strategies for art are due to be revised in response to national initiatives and assessment is currently mainly informal. The school development plan indicates that the newly appointed co-ordinator will lead revisions in these areas during the current academic year. Out of school visits to places such as a local stately home contribute positively to the overall art curriculum provided by the school.
91. **Design and technology**
88. No lessons at either key stage were seen during the inspection, but evidence from pupils' work, teachers' planning and discussions with the staff and co-ordinator show that overall progress is unsatisfactory. Design and technology has not been a focus in recent times due to other curriculum pressures, with the result that these inspection findings are not as good as the previous ones.
89. In the reception class pupils use constructional equipment well and learn how to strengthen paper structures with straws and plasticine. They have some good ideas as to how improvements can be made. In Years 1 and 2 the work is of limited quality, involving the cutting out of simple puppet

shapes and displaying them on a screen. This indicates that pupils' skills are very limited and not being developed. In Years 3 and 4 the planning shows that there is some confusion between the skills of art and design technology which mean that overall progress is unsatisfactory. The planning in Years 5 and 6 indicates that more sophisticated tasks including the production of mobile cranes and wheeled vehicles are to be produced. However this still means that overall progress is very inconsistent.

90. The well qualified co-ordinator is well aware of the weaknesses in the subject. A scheme of work is a major priority as the teachers who lack subject expertise and confidence need clear guidelines about progression and continuity. Most teachers are aware of their lack of knowledge about the skills to be taught and have difficulty in planning progressively. There are sufficient resources to meet all the demands of the subject, but evidence indicates that it is not being taught frequently enough.

94. **Geography**

91. A geographical topic has been completed in Years 3 and 4 and this provided the only source of work completed during the current academic year. Other evidence from pupils' work, teachers' planning, the scheme of work and discussions with the co-ordinator shows that overall progress is sound. Only one lesson was seen - at Key Stage 2.
92. The pupils' work on India indicates that a range of geographical skills are being learnt. The maps completed by the pupils used keys and good labelling, and they are aware of the comparative size of the country. Their writing covered a range of topics that include an appreciation of life in a rural community compared with that in a large city such as Bombay, and the various forms of transport used on the sub-continent. The pupils are making sound progress as they are building and improving on previously acquired geographical skills. This is also seen in the work completed by Years 5 and 6. It is of a more sophisticated nature as seen by the contour mapping, the study of the greenhouse effect and life in differing climatic regions.
93. No judgement can be made about the quality of the teaching at Key Stage 1, as none was seen during the inspection. In the one lesson seen at Key Stage 2, pupils were very interested in the work and concentrated very well on it. Teaching was good, with good working relationships created. Planning shows that geography is covered by topics carried out once or twice a year, and that pupils cover the full range of the skills. The marking of the work is clear and the quality of the work on India is generally good. The pupils' work is mostly of a similar kind, showing that differing tasks for the differing ability ranges are not always planned.
94. The scheme of work is due for revision, and new guidelines are being adopted. The present policy has been produced by a cluster of schools within a general humanities policy, but lacks clear guidance about progression and continuity. Resources are satisfactory, although there are difficulties with storage - especially for large maps. Visits to places of local geographical interest are undertaken by the pupils, and these are useful in providing a stimulus to their work.

98. **History**

95. It was only possible to observe one history lesson during the course of the inspection. Judgements, therefore, are additionally based on a scrutiny of previous work, the examination of planning documentation, and on discussions with staff and pupils. These indicate that there are several strengths in the subject and that pupils make good progress - a finding broadly similar to that of the last inspection. Key Stage 1 pupils have a good understanding of the circumstances surrounding the Great Fire of London and of the significance of the records of the diarist Samuel Pepys as a source of evidence. Pupils at the end of Key Stage 2 have a high level of empathy with the people

living in Britain at the time of the Second World War - including evacuees and the families who received these. Most are aware of the main events surrounding the blitz. For example, they appreciate the dilemma surrounding the failure to evacuate Coventry before it was bombed. They make effective use of a range of resources - modern and contemporary - to explore associated issues.

96. In the one lesson seen, pupils were very responsive. They were keen to contribute to discussion but were also prepared to listen to their teacher and to one another. They carried out written tasks with a high level of sustained concentration and co-operated well with one another when appropriate. Behaviour was consistently good. The quality of teaching was good. The lesson was well prepared and a good range of relevant resources provided stimulation and background information. The teacher was enthusiastic and knowledgeable about the subject and used higher order questioning effectively to challenge the pupils to think deeply about issues. Good quality discipline created a pleasant and positive working atmosphere.

97. History is successfully taught as part of a two year rolling programme of topics. Planning documentation and assessment strategies are due to be revised during the next academic year in line with national initiatives.

101. **Music**

98. Pupils' progress in music is good overall at both key stages and the good standards achieved at the time of the last inspection have been maintained.

99. Pupils at Key Stage 1 experience an appropriate balance of instrumental work, including the use of notation, and listening to and appraising compositions. All pupils can use body percussion, for example clapping, to follow a rhythm and maintain a beat. Most can accurately copy a phrase clapped by the teacher and hold the phrase to use at a later time. They successfully use melodic and untuned percussion instruments to create simple musical structures and patterns, and are developing a good understanding of pitch, dynamics and rhythm. Pupils gain information from notation, and higher attaining pupils recognise crotchets and quavers and can explain their purpose. All confidently sing a range of songs and play simple percussion accompaniments with a good awareness of pulse. Pupils listen and respond thoughtfully to a range of music and are beginning to identify the work of some composers.

100. At Key Stage 2 pupils build well upon the skills, knowledge and understanding they have acquired in music lower down the school. They rise to the challenge of following pitch patterns in group performances and compositions while using, for example, chime bars. Higher attaining pupils play the graphic score both independently and ensemble and can extend and develop basic ideas well. While lower attaining pupils find this work difficult they are supported well by the teacher and by others in their group, and can correct their own rhythm to match that of others. Pupils progress well in singing and show good levels of diction and enunciation.

101. Pupils enjoy music lessons and are very keen to participate, showing great enthusiasm particularly in playing a range of percussion instruments. Their behaviour and concentration are very good and all are actively involved in lessons. Group work is very good, with pupils helping each other and discussing their work, for example how a certain score should be played, in an effective manner. All pupils, including those with additional needs, have full access to music. The very good attitude of pupils to music significantly contributes to their good progress.

102. Teaching is good and the teacher has a good subject knowledge, which she shares well with the pupils. Lessons are well planned and structured to allow pupils to build on earlier learning. Sufficient challenge is built into lessons for higher attaining pupils and good opportunities to

perform for others are provided. The use of conducting techniques and demonstrations efficiently supports pupils who find the work hard. Technical terms are introduced appropriately to ensure understanding and time is used well, with a sense of urgency given to the tasks.

103. A good policy and scheme of work effectively supports teacher planning and pupils' good progress. Assessment through observations and performance allows for individual needs to be met and planned for. An appropriate range of good quality musical resources supports pupils learning but there are a limited number of instruments and examples of music from other countries. Storage of instruments is good and the use of the school hall effectively supports group work and performances. Pupils benefit additionally from participating in one of the three recorder clubs available weekly in school. Music is effectively used daily in acts of collective worship and contributes well to setting an appropriate atmosphere. Both the school and the local church are used annually for concerts in which all pupils participate, and which are open to parents and friends to enjoy.

107. **Physical education**

104. It was not possible to observe any gymnastics or swimming at Key Stage 2 during the course of the inspection and evidence for the report is partly based on examination of planning documentation. A full physical education curriculum is provided and pupils make progress which is at least satisfactory and is sometimes good. The youngest pupils balance effectively on the floor and on apparatus. By the end of Key Stage 1, pupils are aware that exercise causes changes to their bodies and can use existing folk dance traditions to successfully perform their own movements to music. They are able to discuss their own performance and that of others, and make judgements which enable them to make improvements to their dance through further practice. Pupils at Key Stage 2 have a sound level of ball skills overall and some have a level of proficiency which is above average.
105. Pupils' response to physical education lessons is always at least good and was very good in half of the lessons seen during the inspection. They enjoy the activities provided for them and work hard to improve their skills. Behaviour is consistently good. There is a good level of co-operation as, for example, when pupils are required to plan movements together in pairs or groups. All have due care and regard for one another's safety. Teaching is always at least sound, but is sometimes very good. In the best lessons, planning is detailed and the content is imaginative. Expectations are high. In others, however, pace is too slow and there is not enough challenge to activities. Good discipline was a feature of all the lessons inspected.
106. There is no up to date policy for physical education, but a new long term framework for delivering the subject has recently been drafted. The co-ordinator is enthusiastic and has a firm view of where the subject now needs to be developed further.

107. **Swimming**

The inspection of this school included a focused view of swimming which is reported below:

The school provides swimming lessons at a local leisure centre for all pupils at both key stages during the summer term. The number and length of lessons that are provided appropriately increases as pupils move through the school. Tuition is carried out by class teachers - supported by non-teaching staff and a parent. One of the teachers has an appropriate swimming qualification and there is always a qualified lifeguard at the pool side. The costs of pool hire and the employment of a lifeguard are met from the school's own fund raising activities, while transport to lessons is by staff and parents' cars. There is, therefore, no cost implication for the school's delegated budget and no withdrawal of resources available to support the other subjects of the

curriculum. The timing of the inspection meant that it was not possible to see any swimming lessons taking place. However, examination of the school's detailed records indicated that all pupils achieved at least the minimum National Curriculum requirements for the end of Key Stage 2 in 1998 and 1999 and a high proportion achieved beyond these. The requirements have also already been met by the current Year 6.

PART C: INSPECTION DATA

111. Summary of inspection evidence

108. The inspection was carried out by a team of four inspectors who spent a total of 10 inspection days in school. Activities were observed (including lessons, registration, assemblies and extra-curricular activities) and the pupils' work was studied for a combined total of 36.5 hours. Meetings were held with pupils, members of staff, the Chair of Governors and other governors, as well as informal discussions. Non-teaching staff and volunteer helpers were also observed. Samples of pupils' work in all year groups were scrutinised. Several pupils in every year group were heard reading and discussed their number work with inspectors. The team examined school documentation before and during the inspection week. Members of the team met 21 parents at a special meeting held prior to the inspection to hear their views. The 31 written responses to questionnaires distributed to all parents of the school were also taken into account.

112. **Data and indicators**

PUPIL DATA

	Number of pupils on roll (full-time equivalent)	Number of pupils with statements of SEN	Number of pupils on school's register of SEN	Number of full- time pupils eligible for free school meals
YR - Y6	75	1	14	2

TEACHERS AND CLASSES

Qualified teachers (YR - Y6)

Total number of qualified teachers (full-time equivalent)	4.5
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	16.67

Education support staff (YR - Y6)

Total number of education support staff	5
Total aggregate hours worked each week	43.5

Average class size:	18.8
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112. **FINANCIAL DATA**

Financial year:	1998/1999
	£
Total income	162832
Total expenditure	152928
Expenditure per pupils	1718
Balance brought forward from previous year	16539
Balance carried forward to next year	26443

PARENTAL SURVEY

Number of questionnaires sent out:

110

Number of questionnaires returned:

31

Responses (percentage of answers in each category):

	Strongly agree	Agree	Neither	Disagree	Strongly disagree
I feel the school encourages parents to play an active part in the life of the school	29	48	10	13	0
I would find it easy to approach the school with questions or problems to do with my child(ren)	29	55	3	10	3
The school handles complaints from parents well	16	35	37	6	6
The school gives me a clear understanding of what is taught	16	55	26	3	0
The school keeps me well informed about my child(ren)'s progress	29	52	9	10	0
The school enables my child(ren) to achieve a good standard of work	39	45	13	0	3
The school encourages children to get involved in more than just their daily lessons	13	42	29	16	0
I am satisfied with the work that my child(ren) is/are expected to do at home	23	55	19	3	0
The school's values and attitudes have a positive effect on my child(ren)	45	48	7	0	0
The school achieves high standards of good behaviour	61	39	0	0	0
My child(ren) like(s) school	48	42	3	7	0

All questions have more than 50% agreement. None have more than 20% disagreement. This indicates a high level of satisfaction.

Other issues raised by parents at the meeting or on questionnaires included:

Strengths:

Most parents are satisfied with standards and progress at the school. They feel that the school is very successful in promoting positive attitudes and values. They consider that general information provided is good and that personal problems are solved quickly and professionally. Their children like school.

Weaknesses:

Some parents feel that not enough information is provided about curriculum issues or teaching methods. Others feel that there are communication difficulties and that there is inadequate homework for older pupils. Others consider that there is a lack of attention to suggestions and complaints. Parents are not actively encouraged to help in school.

Response of team during inspection:

The team agreed with the strengths. However, it judged that there was not a wide enough range of homework in English at the end of KS2 and that parents were not provided with enough advanced written information about curriculum issues. There was not enough evidence to support the other concerns.