

INSPECTION REPORT

SACRED HEART CATHOLIC PRIMARY SCHOOL

Hastings

LEA area: East Sussex

Unique reference number: 114575

Headteacher: Mrs A O'Connor

Reporting inspector: Mr R Sharman
1696

Dates of inspection: 4th – 8th March 2002

Inspection number: 197317

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

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INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Type of school: Infant and junior

School category: Voluntary aided

Age range of pupils: 4 to 11 years

Gender of pupils: Mixed

School address: Old London Road
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East Sussex
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Appropriate authority: The governing body

Name of chair of governors: Mrs C Agnew

Date of previous inspection: 22 September 1997

INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Team members			Subject responsibilities	Aspect responsibilities
1696	Mr R Sharman	Registered inspector	Special educational needs English as an additional language English Art and design Physical education	What sort of school is it? The school's results and pupils' achievements How well are pupils taught? How well is the school led and managed? What should the school do to improve further?
11414	Mrs A Bennett	Lay inspector		Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development How well does the school care for its pupils? How well does the school work in partnership with parents?
17208	Mrs G Briggs	Team inspector	Foundation Stage Mathematics History Music	
22778	Ms A Shannon	Team inspector	Equal opportunities Science Information and communication technology Design and technology Geography	How good are the curricular and other opportunities offered to pupils?

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PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

This is an average sized primary school with 224 pupils. There are slightly more boys than girls. Few pupils come from minority ethnic backgrounds and most of them are fluent in speaking English. When children start in the Reception class their attainment is below that found typically in East Sussex, and considerably below in literacy. However, there is a minority whose attainment is above average. Forty-seven pupils have special educational needs, a proportion that is average. Two pupils have a statement of special educational need. There is a little mobility in the school population. Twelve per cent of pupils are eligible for free school meals, a figure which is in line with the national average. The school serves a wide area and is the school that the fishing families traditionally send their children to. It is part of an Education Action Zone (EAZ). The majority of families come from middle to low income groups. The school is beginning to experience difficulties in recruiting staff and has had to employ staff on a temporary basis.

HOW GOOD THE SCHOOL IS

Sacred Heart Catholic Primary School is a very good school. Pupils' achievement is good and the standards attained by the eleven-year-olds are above average. The pupils learn in an environment of trust and respect which reflects the emphasis the school places on teaching Christian values. Teaching is good. Teachers hold high expectations for their pupils, who in turn work hard and speak well of their school. Relationships and pupils' personal development are very good. The headteacher provides very good leadership, ably supported by the two deputy heads and the effective governing body. The school has made good improvement since the last inspection and continues to provide very good value for money.

What the school does well

- Pupils' achievement is good and is reflected in the above average standards attained by the eleven-year-olds in English, mathematics and science.
- Teaching is good as seen in the pupils' achievement. Teaching is very effective in the Foundation Stage and in Year 6.
- The leadership of the headteacher is very good. The school is well managed and the governors are effective. This is reflected in the good improvement since the last inspection.
- Overall the curriculum is very good and that in the Foundation Stage is excellent. Pupils are interested in their work and are keen to learn.
- The provision for pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is very good and contributes significantly to the pupils' very good personal development and very good behaviour.
- The care the school provides is very good and this gives pupils the confidence to learn.
- Parents are very supportive of the school.

What could be improved

- The level of attendance is well below average.

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

HOW THE SCHOOL HAS IMPROVED SINCE ITS LAST INSPECTION

The school was last inspected in September 1997. Overall its strengths have been maintained. Pupils achieve well and their personal development is very good, reflecting the school's very positive ethos. The improvement since the last inspection has been good. There has been a steady improvement in the standards attained by the seven-year-olds in reading, writing and mathematics. Standards in writing are

rising as a result of the school's focus on improving writing. The eleven-year-olds continue to attain above average standards in English, mathematics and science. The results of the National Curriculum tests dipped in 2001, reflecting the particular make up of that group of pupils. Standards seen are now back to where they were two years ago. Across the school, standards in information and communication technology (ICT) have risen since the last inspection and are average overall. There has been good improvement in the development of schemes of work and the National Literacy and Numeracy Strategies have been successfully implemented. Consequently the curriculum is now very good. Good improvement in the Foundation Stage has resulted in there now being excellent provision. Procedures for assessment have improved and are now very good and the information is used well to plan both the curriculum and lessons. There has been some improvement in the use of the school grounds, for example the establishment of an orienteering trail. However, progress has been hampered by difficulties that have been caused by an underground stream and the collapse of drains.

STANDARDS

The table shows the standards achieved by eleven-year-olds based on average point scores in National Curriculum tests.

Performance in:	compared with				Key
	all schools			similar schools	
	1999	2000	2001	2001	
English	A	A	D	D	well above average A
mathematics	A	C	C	C	above average B
science	A	B	C	C	average C
					below average D
					well below average E

The standards seen in English, mathematics and science in the inspection are above average and show a considerable improvement on those attained in 2001. According to the school's analysis of the results, the make up of the group of pupils who took the tests was a significant reason why standards dipped especially in English and science. Fewer pupils in terms of their ability, reached standards higher than those expected for pupils of this age. However, the proportion of pupils that reached the standards expected for eleven-year-olds was above the national figure in English and science and was similar in mathematics. The targets set in 2001 were exceeded in mathematics and science but were not met in English.

The National Curriculum test results in 2001 showed that the seven-year-olds attained above average standards in reading, mathematics and science. Standards in writing were below average but have now improved and are average. The proportion of seven-year-olds that reached standards higher than those expected for pupils of this age in the tests was well above average in reading and science, above average in mathematics and below average in writing. Standards in all three subjects have been improving steadily over the past five years and the targets the school set in 2001 were exceeded. The achievement by the seven- and eleven-year-olds is good. The seven- and eleven-year-olds identified by the school as being very able achieve well. Pupils with special educational needs make good progress as they have very good support. The achievement of pupils from minority ethnic origins is similar to that of the majority of the pupils.

Children in the Foundation Stage achieve well as a result of the excellent teaching. They are well on track to exceed the standards set nationally in their creative and physical development and to reach these national standards in their communication, language and literacy, in their mathematical development, in their knowledge and understanding of the world, and in their personal, social and emotional development. The standards attained by the seven-year-olds are above average in art and design, music, geography, history, and average in physical education and in design and technology. The eleven-year-olds attain above average standards in art and design, music, geography, history and

physical development and average standards in design and technology. The standards attained by the seven- and eleven-year-olds in ICT are average.

PUPILS' ATTITUDES AND VALUES

Aspect	Comment
Attitudes to the school	Very good. Pupils are interested in their work and are keen to learn.
Behaviour, in and out of classrooms	Very good.
Personal development and relationships	Very good.
Attendance	Well below average, particularly the levels of authorised absence.

Pupils speak well of their school. A feature of the school is that pupils enjoy their lessons and feel that they are getting on well. They take pride in their work and in the successes of others. Pupils, including the few from minority ethnic backgrounds, work and play well together. Punctuality is satisfactory.

TEACHING AND LEARNING

Teaching of pupils:	aged up to 5 years	aged 5-7 years	aged 7-11 years
Lessons seen overall	Excellent	Good	Good

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

The excellent teaching in the Foundation Stage is imaginative and pays great attention to detail and leads to good achievement across the whole of the curriculum. The teaching in the first two years of Key Stage 2, where there is a teaching vacancy, is satisfactory. Teaching improves in the last two years with the teaching in Year 6 being very good with pupils attaining above average standards. Across the school, teachers work hard and are determined that their pupils will do well. The school's Christian ethos of respect and trust is reflected in the teaching. Teachers enjoy working with their pupils who in turn enjoy being taught. Pupils are well motivated, concentrate and work hard. They are keen to do well. The teaching of English and mathematics is good. The strong and effective partnership between the teachers and teaching assistants benefits all pupils, especially those who have special educational needs who have very good support and make good progress.

OTHER ASPECTS OF THE SCHOOL

Aspect	Comment
The quality and range of the curriculum	Very good. Teachers provide very good links between subjects which make the learning more interesting for the pupils. There is a good range of extra-curricular activities. The curriculum in the Foundation Stage is excellent.
Provision for pupils with special educational needs	Very good. Very good collaboration between the special educational needs co-ordinator, the teachers and the teaching assistants.
Provision for pupils with English as an additional language	Good support for the few pupils who are learning to speak English.

Provision for pupils' personal, including spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	Very good overall. The provision for pupils' social development is excellent. A particular strength is the 'buddies' arrangement where older pupils support younger ones.
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How well the school cares for its pupils	The school provides very good care for its pupils.
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The school has a good partnership with parents who are very supportive of their children's education. Pupils are taught about the dangers of the misuse of drugs and a sex education policy is satisfactorily implemented. The arrangements for the assessment of pupils' attainment and progress are very good. A strength in the teaching is that it builds on what pupils already know, as teachers have identified what their pupils can and cannot do and plan the appropriate next step.

HOW WELL THE SCHOOL IS LED AND MANAGED

Aspect	Comment
Leadership and management by the headteacher and other key staff	The leadership of the headteacher is very good, effectively supported by the two deputy heads who provide very good management. The good teamwork of all the staff provides the pupils with a good example of trust and respect which is at the heart of this very good school.
How well the governors fulfil their responsibilities	The governors are effective. They work closely with the school and have set a sound educational direction for the school. Finances are well managed.
The school's evaluation of its performance	Very good. The senior management team has a very good understanding of the school's work and what needs to be done to ensure improvement.
The strategic use of resources	Good.

Despite difficulties in recruiting teachers, there are sufficient teachers to meet the requirements of the school's curriculum. Unusually for a school of this size there are two deputy heads. They contribute an enormous amount to the school both in their teaching and in their management. Expenditure on this extra management is very good value for money. A substantial number of teaching assistants are employed who provide very good support for pupils, especially those with special educational needs. The accommodation is good. There is good provision of learning resources. Good attention is given to the principles of obtaining best value.

PARENTS' AND CARERS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

What pleases parents most	What parents would like to see improved
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Children enjoy coming to school The implementation of Christian values in all aspects of the life of the school Children are expected to work hard and make good progress The management of the school The partnership with parents 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Better traffic controls on the busy main road outside the school

Parents are very supportive of the school. The inspection findings confirm parents' positive comments. The school has very good arrangements for the end of the day. During the inspection, the pupils crossed the road safely. However, a recent road traffic accident has highlighted the dangers posed by illegally parked cars.

PART B: COMMENTARY

HOW HIGH ARE STANDARDS?

The school's results and pupils' achievements

1. Compared with where they were when they started school, the pupils' achievement is good. This is due to the good teaching, high expectations and the very positive ethos of trust and respect that pervades the work of the school. Pupils with special educational needs are well supported and make good progress. The achievement of the seven- and eleven-year-olds identified by the school as being very able is good and is reflected in the high standards that they attain. The few pupils from minority ethnic backgrounds achieve similarly to the majority of pupils.
2. The National Curriculum test results in 2001 showed that the eleven-year-olds attained standards in English that were below average and attained average standards in mathematics and science. When compared with similar schools the standards were the same. These results were considerably lower than those in the previous year. After detailed and thorough analysis, the school puts this down to the make up of that particular group of pupils in that there were a significant number with special educational needs. The school had decided to ensure that as many pupils as possible should reach the national standards set for eleven-year-olds. The proportion of pupils that reached these standards was above the national figure in English and science and was in line with it in mathematics. However, fewer pupils reached standards higher than those expected for pupils of this age and this brought down the average points score as seen in the table in the summary report. The targets set by the school in 2001 were met. The standards attained by the eleven-year-olds seen during the inspection are much better and are above average in English, mathematics and science and this reflects a different group of pupils and the very good teaching in Year 6. The test results show that boys attain slightly higher standards than the girls but during the inspection girls were not seen to be underachieving.
3. The standards attained by the seven-year-olds in the National Curriculum tests in 2001 showed that standards in reading and mathematics were above average and were below average in writing. In comparison with similar schools, the standards were the same. The proportion of seven-year-olds that attained standards higher than those expected for pupils of this age was well above average in reading, above average in mathematics but below average in writing. When compared with similar schools, the proportion was above average in reading and mathematics and below average in writing. Teacher assessments in science showed that standards were above average and that the proportion that reached higher standards was well above average. These proportions were the same when compared with similar schools. The targets set by the school were exceeded. The attainment of girls was slightly better than that of the boys but no more than is seen in the national picture. The standards seen during the inspection reflected the National Curriculum test results in reading, mathematics and science. Standards seen in writing are average and have improved as a result of the setting of individual targets and of the emphasis placed on the teaching of writing in line with the school's improvement plan.
4. Changes to the national arrangements to measure schools' performance make comparisons with the standards reported in English, mathematics and science at the last inspection a little misleading. Nevertheless, these results show that broadly the standards attained by the seven-year-olds are steadily improving and that standards of the eleven-year-olds in English and science have been maintained, despite the dip in

2001, and they have improved in mathematics. The school is not complacent and has set challenging targets for this year's national tests. Good use is made of national initiatives, such as 'booster' classes in Year 6. The effective use of the information from the very good arrangements for assessment has contributed to the improving standards.

5. The standards reached by the eleven-year-olds in speaking and listening are above average and those of the seven-year-olds are average. Emphasis is placed in lessons on enabling pupils to explain their thinking and to share their ideas with others. The very effective 'buddies' system provides older pupils with even more opportunities to develop their skills in speaking and listening. Pupils across the school read well and attain above average standards. They enjoy reading and the teaching of reading is good with considerable emphasis paid to the teaching of the sounds letters make – phonics. The effective home-school reading arrangements make a significant contribution to the standards of reading. Standards of writing, including spelling, are improving as a result of the current concentration on raising standards in this area. Pupils' handwriting is well formed and the eleven-year-olds show high standards in the presentation of their work. Overall, standards of numeracy are good. The seven-year-olds are developing good mental agility when working out answers in their heads. By the age of eleven, pupils confidently and accurately recall number facts and confidently explain their methods of working.
6. Children's attainment on entry to the Reception class is below that typically found in East Sussex. Their attainment in literacy, communication and language is considerably below. Children make a very good start to their time in school. As a result of the excellent teaching, children's achievement is good across all areas of learning. They are well on track to exceed the nationally set standards in their creative and physical development and to reach the national standards in communication, language and literacy, in their mathematical development, in their knowledge and understanding of the world and in their personal, social and emotional development.
7. The standards attained by the seven- and eleven-year-olds in art and design, music, geography and history are above average, as they were at the time of the last inspection. This is due to the good teaching and the emphasis placed on teaching pupils the necessary skills. The standards these pupils attain in design and technology are average as they were at the time of the last inspection. In information and communication technology (ICT), the standards attained by the seven- and eleven-year-olds are average and reflect good improvement since the last inspection, as the school has had to work hard to keep abreast of a rapidly developing subject. Standards of the seven-year-olds are average in physical education and those of the eleven-year-olds are above average. This does not represent a fall in standards in Key Stage 1, rather it reflects the aspect of the subject being taught which was dance, an area identified for improvement by the school.

Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development

8. Pupils are very keen to learn and want to do well at school. This was the picture at the time of the last inspection. They take pride in their school, and believe that their teachers genuinely care for them. They are polite, look out for each other and visitors, and play a full part in the many activities open to them. Their personal development is very good.
9. Throughout the school, pupils are familiar with their classroom routines and enjoy learning, concentrating as hard as they can on their work. For example, nine-year-olds

know that when 'NQT' is written on the board it means 'no questions taken' and that they must work on their own. Younger pupils enjoy the freedom of their environment, and like choosing what to do next, but sit quietly when asked to do so.

10. Behaviour is very good, whether in the classroom or around the school during the day. Pupils know they are expected to behave well, but do so because they know it is right. They are comfortable with the school's Christian teachings and the way this is worked out from day-to-day. Teachers and pupils share common values and beliefs and this is central to the success of the school. When an incident of racist name-calling recently occurred, it was the older pupils who reported it, knowing this was inappropriate behaviour and would be dealt with swiftly. Eleven-year-old pupils can define racism, and are aware of different categories. They know that bullying happens, but make clear in their work on the subject that 'bullies are uncool'. One poster declared, 'Bullies beware! You are the weakest link. Goodbye!' Only one pupil has been excluded, just for one fixed-term, in the last year. Parents see behaviour as a strength of the school.
11. Relationships between pupils and with all the adults in the school are very good. Pupils are given structured opportunities to mature and to take responsibility for each other. Older pupils willingly take on the role of 'best buddy' to the youngest pupils, working with them at scheduled times, or joining them at playtimes, and supervising their drinks of milk. They are required to apply for the role, and this encourages them to think through what the task entails. They speak and write knowledgeably about their 'best buddy' because they see them as friends. The friendship provides the youngest pupils with security. Pupils with statements of special educational need are well supported by other pupils who relate to them well.
12. Children in the Foundation Stage have settled well into school. They eagerly join in activities and share and respect each other's views. The children are enthusiastic about their activities. They showed that they knew what was wrong as they listened intently when, at the end of lunch, they were shown a damaged piece of play equipment. Their serious faces indicated respect for the teacher and for school property.
13. Older pupils work well together as learning partners, a fluent reader supporting a weaker one. They reflect on the assembly theme of the week, good and evil, and show understanding of right and wrong and how this affects their own relationships.
14. Pupils' enjoyment of the celebration assembly, singing together and participating in each other's successes, shows how well they live out the school's mission statement. They take care of each other, and look out for the needs of others beyond their community. They applauded spontaneously the girl whose initiative successfully organised a fund-raising sale.
15. The attendance rate for the last school year was well below the national average, and it has been falling over the last three years. It is a little higher so far this year. The school believes that holidays taken during term time are the reason. Unauthorised absence is below the national average. Punctuality is satisfactory and lessons usually start promptly at the start of the school day.

HOW WELL ARE PUPILS TAUGHT?

16. Overall, the teaching is good, as it was at the last inspection. Teachers are hard working and conscientious. Teaching is excellent in the Foundation Stage and is very good in Year 6. Teaching was very good or excellent in a quarter of lessons seen and in

two-thirds of lessons was good or better. Teaching is good overall in both key stages. Whilst teaching is good overall in Key Stage 2, it is satisfactory in the first two years and then improves considerably in the rest of the key stage. This is partially explained by the staff absence during the inspection and the use of temporary teachers who are new to the school. The one instance of poor teaching in Key Stage 2 was due to inadequate planning and inappropriate use of learning resources.

17. The strength of the teaching across the school is that teachers have high expectations for their pupils and want them to do well. Pupils are aware of this and try hard. They speak well of their teachers and are particularly appreciative of the support they get when they are having difficulties and of the interesting work they are given. The relationships between teachers and pupils are very good, based on trust and respect, and this gives pupils confidence and so enhances learning. For example, in a lesson in Year 2, the teacher was asking questions to consolidate what had been learnt in the previous lesson; one pupil when asked replied 'I haven't got my hand up'.
18. Teaching in the Foundation Stage is excellent due in no small measure to the very good understanding of the needs of the children and the very high expectations of what the children can learn. The classroom and the adjoining areas are excellently organised so that children have a very rich environment in which to learn. Planning is very thorough and manages to make very good links between the areas of learning, which helps children make good progress. For example, when children arrive in the morning they 'sign in' by finding their name and writing it on the pads provided. Where necessary the teaching assistant provides timely support. By doing this, the children's personal and social development is improved, as are their skills in literacy as they learn to write using a list. The partnership between the teacher and the teaching assistant is very effective and enhances learning.
19. Across the school, teachers show good skills in questioning. They use questions effectively to check pupils' understanding and to consolidate their learning. This is particularly the case in the very good teaching in Year 6. In an excellent literacy hour, brisk sharp questioning by the teacher at the start of the lesson led to pupils barely containing themselves in their enthusiasm to answer the questions. All through the lesson, well-directed questions enabled pupils to identify correctly the different types of information writing being studied. Effective and regular questioning such as 'What makes you think that?' and 'Explain what you mean!' consolidated learning very well and made pupils think hard throughout the whole lesson. Similarly in a good mathematics lesson in Year 1, where pupils sang a counting song with decreasing numbers of frogs, the teacher's good questioning highlighted the mathematical operation of subtraction very well. At the start of most lessons, teachers use questions effectively to revise previous learning. In mathematics, quick-fire questions are used well to improve pupils' mental abilities.
20. Teachers have a good command of the subjects they teach. They work in close collaboration with the technician to ensure that ICT is used in other subjects. The teaching of English and mathematics is good overall and contributes to the improving standards in Key Stage 1 and the above average standards being reached by the end of Key Stage 2. Good use is made of the structure for lessons provided by the National Literacy and Numeracy Strategies. The 'round up' sessions at the end of lessons are at times a little rushed and do not always place enough emphasis on dealing with pupils' misunderstandings or on identifying things they have found difficult. In the predominantly good teaching, teachers take care to show or 'model' learning. For example in a good literacy hour in Year 2, where pupils were learning about non-fiction writing, the teacher carefully showed pupils how to write their ideas down using a

'spidergram' which she drew and completed on the whiteboard. In mathematics, teachers often model methods of calculation, including those devised by the pupils themselves. Although teachers regularly model reading and writing to the whole class, the modelling of writing to a group of pupils at similar levels of attainment is not well developed.

21. The specialist teaching of music is excellent. A combination of very good subject expertise allied to enthusiasm and thorough planning enables pupils to make good progress and reach above average standards, especially in singing. This happened in a lesson in Year 2 where pupils were learning about rhythms and dynamics. The teacher led the pupils through the lesson, improving their singing through very good questioning and explanations and excellent demonstration. Above all the teaching was enthusiastic and the pupils were carried along, enjoying the lesson and improving their performance.
22. Lessons are well organised and proceed at a brisk pace. Good emphasis is placed on developing pupils' skills and understanding. Teachers' planning is detailed and thorough and effectively builds on what pupils have already learnt because teachers have a good understanding of what pupils can and cannot do. Work is appropriately matched to their learning needs and this helps them to make good progress. In Year 6, the challenge provided for the pupils who have been identified as being very able is good and these pupils make good progress. Where the teaching is good, very able pupils have work that interests them and enables them to make good progress. It is in Year 3 and Year 4, where the teaching is satisfactory overall, that the challenge is less and these pupils make satisfactory rather than good progress. Good support is provided by the teachers for the very few pupils who are still learning to speak English.
23. The teaching of pupils with special educational needs is very good. Pupils with special educational needs have well-constructed individual education plans that the teachers use effectively when planning work. Of note is the very good support provided for these pupils by the teaching assistants who work skilfully with their targeted pupils. The teaching assistants keep careful note of how the pupils are getting on and this information is used well in preparing work. Good use is made by the teaching assistants of the national initiatives to help pupils improve their skills in reading. The pupils with a statement of special educational need are given very good individual support and are integrated well. An example of the very good support is the making of a book complete with photographs to help with the change of classroom the following term for a statemented pupil.
24. Teachers regularly mark pupils' work. Praise and encouragement is often given. Advice about how to improve the work is given but not as frequently. Teachers rarely refer to the recent targets that pupils have been given to improve their writing. Homework is encouraged and set regularly in Key Stage 2 with older pupils conscientiously keeping homework diaries. In Key Stage 1, pupils regularly take books home to read, and often take spellings and number 'tables' home to learn. Across the school pupils are encouraged to research at home. Overall, homework is completed and contributes satisfactorily to pupils' learning. Parents generally felt that levels of homework were about right.

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

25. The curriculum is very good. The school's motto, 'Excellence through faith and learning', permeates every aspect of its work and this enables pupils to make good progress in their learning. Parents are very supportive of this. The school provides its pupils with a rich and wide-ranging curriculum which meets the requirements of the National Curriculum and the Foundation Stage. In addition, a good programme of personal, social and health education that takes account of drugs awareness and sex education is provided. These important areas are also effectively dealt with in 'Here I am', the school's religious education scheme. Parents at the meeting held before the inspection expressed their keenness that their children should learn about the dangers of the misuse of drugs. Abuse of drugs is also satisfactorily covered in the science curriculum.
26. There has been good improvement in the curriculum since the last inspection. Schemes of work have been drawn up for all subjects and have been successfully implemented. The effect of this is seen in the good planning and the good attention paid to ensuring that pupils learn key skills in subjects as well as learning important information and developing their understanding. Planning for the development of pupils' skills in ICT is good and there is effective planned use of ICT to support work in most subjects, particularly in English, mathematics and science. These improvements have enhanced pupils' learning.
27. The curriculum in the Foundation Stage is excellent and this too is an improvement since the last inspection. The classroom, the adjacent working areas, and the outdoor area provide the children with rich and stimulating experiences. The teacher, ably assisted by the teaching assistant, ensures that these areas are well planned and are very well organised. Nothing is left to chance. An important feature is the careful way the teacher plans the curriculum so that areas of learning are effectively linked together. For example, when the children are learning about a hospital, they have the opportunity to play in a 'hospital' in the role play area and a nurse from the Accident and Emergency department in the local hospital pays them a visit. Very good assessment of children's different levels of attainment enables the teacher to plan the curriculum so that children successfully build on what they already know and can do. Such planning enhances children's learning so that they make good progress across the whole curriculum.
28. Careful planning to make useful links between subjects is a strength of the curriculum and makes learning more interesting for the pupils and enables them to develop further skills they have learnt in one subject and apply them in another. For example in Year 5, pupils are reading the book 'The Iron Man'. In mathematics and ICT they use a program that enables them to create pictures of the character and in science they learn about metals. Other pupils write imaginatively about being a child in Victorian Britain as part of their study of Victorians. Skills pupils learn in art and design are used effectively to illustrate work being undertaken in geography and history. Where it is appropriate, teachers provide good opportunities to develop pupils' skills in literacy and numeracy in other subjects. The National Literacy and Numeracy Strategies have been successfully implemented and the teaching of basic skills in literacy and numeracy are good overall.
29. The school seeks to ensure that all pupils have full access to the curriculum. The provision for pupils with special educational needs is very good and these pupils make good progress. Good procedures are in place for identifying pupils, together with well-constructed education plans that are shared with parents. The successful

implementation of these plans by the teachers and teaching assistants ensures that these pupils have full access to the curriculum. Contacts with external agencies, such as educational psychologists and speech therapists, are good and benefit the pupils. The few pupils with English as an additional language are well supported and play a full part in lessons and in the life of the school.

30. The provision for extra-curricular activities is good and makes a strong contribution to pupils' learning and personal development. Physical education is particularly enhanced by a good range of activities, including netball, football, gymnastics, athletics, cricket and short tennis. Plans are in hand to establish a dance club. In addition, there are clubs for history, gardening, led by the caretaker, and a young engineers' club. Due to staffing difficulties, the art club is not meeting at the moment. Most parents are supportive of the range and amount of these activities.
31. Good links have been established with the local community and these add considerably to the curriculum and pupils' learning. Very good use is made of the local environment, which offers a wealth of learning experiences. Pupils have regular opportunities to take part in local events such as 'Walking the Fish', successfully enter competitions such as young engineers, and they were the 2001 East Sussex mathematics champions. There are very close and strong links with the parish community to which the school belongs. The parish is a source of very good support to the school. Effective use is made of visitors, for example pupils in Year 1 welcomed a visitor from the RSPCA who talked to them about taking care of their pets. The police liaison officer visits and talks to the pupils about 'Stranger Danger' and other personal safety topics.
32. Links with partner institutions are very good and benefit the pupils considerably. Older, more able pupils have the opportunity to learn Latin at a local primary school and attend a local secondary school for work at higher levels in mathematics. Useful meetings are held between teachers in the school and those in the secondary schools. In addition, the teacher in Year 6 visits the secondary schools. Visits by teachers from local secondary schools to meet pupils and well-organised induction days for pupils in Year 6, enable pupils to make a successful transfer to their secondary school.
33. The provision for pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is very good. It is central to the whole life of the school. The ethos of the school is based on Christian gospel values where the individual is respected and trusted.
34. Provision for pupils' spiritual development is very good. A very good contribution is made to pupils' spiritual development through collective acts of worship. Pupils are asked to close their eyes while they think about some aspect of the theme of that day, for example younger children were asked to think about what made them sad or happy. Pupils concentrate well and are willing to share their experiences. The teachers always treat these moments sensitively. In addition, there are other times devoted to reflection and prayer, for example at the end of the school day. Prayer corners in every classroom and beautiful displays around the school encourage the pupils to reflect upon and appreciate the world around them. The school has developed a climate in which all pupils can grow and flourish, respect each other and be respected.
35. Provision for moral education is very good. From an early age pupils are helped to understand the difference between right and wrong. The school's strong moral code is successfully underpinned by the Christian values, which are central to its ethos. Pupils know right from wrong in a moral sense, rather than just obeying school rules and they expect to make reparation if they do something wrong. Pupils are encouraged to take responsibility for their own actions and property and to care for their environment.

36. Provision for social development is excellent and is reflected in the very good quality of the relationships that exist in the school. Strengths of the provision include a high expectation that pupils will co-operate and try to do their best in all activities. Pupils are helped to develop personal qualities of honesty, thoughtfulness and respect for difference. They are encouraged to think of those less fortunate than themselves by supporting a major charity, CAFOD (Catholic Agency for Overseas Development). There is a strong sense of community. The 'best buddy' system is a strong feature of the provision where older pupils support younger ones, as is the 'community service' aspect of the behaviour policy. Learning partners have also been successfully introduced and used to improve reading and behaviour in some classes.
37. Provision for cultural development is very good. Pupils learn about aspects of their own culture, for example through history and geography lessons where visits contribute substantially to their learning experiences. They are introduced to other religions and cultures through religious education, art and design, geography, history, literature and music. The school is mindful of preparing the pupils for life in a multicultural society. The school provides opportunities for pupils to participate in extra-curricular clubs and organises visits and visitors to extend the pupils' cultural awareness. The school's values are seen in the high quality displays in the classrooms and around the school.

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL CARE FOR ITS PUPILS?

38. Teachers know their pupils through and through. They treat them as individuals, aware of their needs, as shown by their practice and the provision of a policy for supporting twins and multiple births. In their classrooms, teachers establish a good working environment, give praise constantly and, in partnership with their teaching assistants, encourage each pupil in their academic work and behaviour. Teachers know their pupils' family situations so well, because they often meet them on the playground, and they can be sensitive and supportive if there is a problem. The pastoral care of pupils is very good and gives the pupils confidence to learn. Very good arrangements enable children in the Foundation Stage to settle into school quickly and ensure that the environment they come into feels safe and secure.
39. Pupils who are injured or unwell at school receive a good level of care from a qualified first aider, although they have little privacy sitting outside the office. The school is vigilant in its care for pupils, shown by its good arrangements for child protection and the ready access to support agencies. Health and safety matters are checked regularly and reported to governors. Parents are concerned about the amount of busy traffic on the main road outside the school. They are supportive of the good arrangements the school makes at the start and end of the day. However, illegally parked cars reduce the width of a road that has many lorries driving down the hill towards the town. The danger this poses is highlighted by a traffic accident earlier this term. Secure arrangements have been made to ensure that the water damaged playground area is not accessible to the pupils.
40. There are very effective systems in place to promote behaviour based on the school's values; teachers expect good behaviour and provide praise and encouragement. The school actively provides pupils with opportunities to look out for others, and to take responsibility for them. Finance from the Education Action Zone has been used to improve pupils' lunchtimes. The midday supervisors have benefited from training and are used well to promote a variety of play activities and games. There are very effective systems for monitoring older pupils' lunchtime behaviour and for acting on the information gained. These are overseen and implemented consistently. Any

punishments are designed to be useful 'community service' around the school. There are effective arrangements for teaching about racism and its effects, as shown in discussion with the oldest pupils.

41. The school is aware that attendance figures are low, and believes this to be a result of holidays taken in term time. It is unable to use its computerised registration system to confirm this or to monitor holiday absences effectively. This is because the attendance module, recently installed in line with the local education authority's advice, is not up-to-date enough. An individual pupil's attendance is carefully followed up, but there is insufficient focus on promoting full attendance. Although levels of unauthorised absence are published for parents, levels of authorised absence are not. The school is aware of all the drawbacks of holiday absences, to the pupils, their teachers and the class, but has not been able to convince parents of these.
42. The procedures for assessing pupils' attainment and progress are very good. Improvement since the last inspection has been good. All staff understand the needs of each pupil they are working with in great detail. The records they keep on pupils' progress in many cases are very detailed. Portfolios of work are kept in all subjects, which clearly identify progress made throughout the school. Overall the educational support for pupils is effective in raising achievement because teachers identify the next stage of learning through clear assessment strategies which are incorporated into the lessons. Marking of work is not always sufficiently focused on targets to direct improvement in the next piece of pupils' work.
43. Very detailed information about each pupil's performance is kept by the headteacher. This process would become more efficient with better use of ICT. They have analysed the information from national tests, as well as internal school tests, to identify trends over time and to identify specific elements of writing in English that will enable the school to raise standards. Individual targets have been set for pupils to aim for in writing. They are involved in their targets for writing and can tell, when questioned, what they are. Pupils in Year 3 knew that their targets were to improve the use of full stops and capital letters; a boy in that class said 'I'm not very good at using paragraphs'. Teachers often refer to these targets during the lesson, although this is not a consistent approach throughout the school. Targets, up to now, have only been set for writing and not for any other subject.
44. Pupils identified with special educational needs have very clear targets to aim for, and these are always referred to by the teaching assistants working with them. These are often on the table in front of them for easy access and reference. Pupils with a statement of special educational need have detailed learning plans which are accompanied by very good illustrated booklets which remind them of what they are trying to get better at. Overall, very good support is provided for pupils with statements of special educational needs. Good support is provided for the few pupils with English as an additional language.

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL WORK IN PARTNERSHIP WITH PARENTS?

45. This area of the school's work remains a significant strength and makes a good contribution to the progress pupils make. Although only a quarter of the parents responded to the pre-inspection questionnaire, the overwhelming tone of their responses was very positive, with all of them feeling that behaviour in the school is good, that teaching is good and that the school is helping their child to become mature and responsible. All would feel comfortable approaching the school with questions or a problem. Teachers are in the playground every afternoon talking with parents; one

teacher was seen approaching a parent about concerns from the day. There is a strong commitment to the school, and a very good working relationship between teachers and parents. Many parents comment on the family atmosphere of the school; they feel their children want to do well and one parent wrote that the school 'treats my child with respect and dignity'.

46. There are very thorough and effective induction arrangements when children start in Reception which parents find helpful. These, together with well-organised home visits, make a significant contribution to building parents' confidence. This is further strengthened through the expectations of 'gospel values' and the continuity of links with the local church.
47. Parents who volunteer to help in school are used sensitively and very well. A parent who is an artist was seen showing the youngest pupils how to draw flowers and the parents used in 'book week' reading in their first languages, are enabled to make unique contributions. There is an active 'Friends' association that generously fundraises on behalf of the school.
48. The school offers parents good and regular opportunities to discuss their child's progress, and interim reports give enough information to be a framework for discussion. End of year reports are good; they tell the parent clearly what their child can do, and without too much educational jargon. Some reports, which give targets to improve the standard of work in each subject, are exceptionally good. Usefully, parents are also given a report at the start of each year telling them how well their children are settling into their new classes. Parents whose children have special educational needs are properly involved in the review of their children's progress.
49. Parents receive plenty of other information written in a good style that indicates an established working partnership between the school and home. There is a wide range of high quality leaflets available about aspects of the school's work, and courses entitled 'Keeping up with the Children' are run with support from the EAZ to help explain what is going on in school. Details about what is being studied in class used to be sent to parents, but when asked if it was useful, there was a disappointing response. Parents of the youngest pupils support them well with reading at home.

HOW WELL IS THE SCHOOL LED AND MANAGED?

50. The school continues to have a very positive ethos which is at the heart of its success. The school's aims and values are reflected very strongly in all its work. This is a feature of the very good leadership of the headteacher. The whole staff work together effectively as a team to implement the Christian gospel values which guide the school. Trust and respect are central to this and are reflected in the teaching, in the very good relationships and in the common purpose shared by all the staff. A considerable strength of the school is its 'inclusiveness' that is drawn from these values. Care is taken to ensure that barriers are not built which could hinder pupils' progress. Equality of opportunity is taken seriously and any form of prejudice is not tolerated for any pupil. This is seen in the way pupils work and play together and take pride in each other's achievements and in the firm rejection by older pupils of any form of discrimination.
51. The very good leadership of the headteacher ensures that this ethos is maintained and that it leads to good academic achievement and very good personal development. The headteacher is determined that pupils' should achieve as well as they can. Parents are very appreciative of the quality of the leadership of the school. Central to this very good leadership is the attention paid to detail and not leaving anything to chance, for example

by the development of a policy to support pupils from multiple births. This clear vision for the school is achieved through the very good leadership by the headteacher allied with very good management by the senior staff.

52. The headteacher and the two deputy headteachers, who act as key stage co-ordinators, form a very effective senior management team that ensures that the management of the school is very good. The positive response to the recommendations following the last inspection reflects this. The Foundation Stage is very well managed and this is reflected in the excellent provision made. Collectively the senior management team has a very good understanding of the school's strengths and weaknesses. Detailed analysis of the results of the National Curriculum tests is undertaken and this information is used effectively to draw up and implement the school improvement plan which is detailed and thorough. It clearly sets out what needs to be done to improve the quality of education and good links are made with the school's finances.
53. The co-ordination of subjects is good overall. Emphasis is placed on observation of teaching. Co-ordinators have a secure understanding of the strengths and weaknesses in their subjects and have drawn up useful action plans which are incorporated in the school improvement plan. A particular strength is the regular completion by co-ordinators of comprehensive portfolios of pupils' work that enables them to gauge the standards pupils attain. There is a degree of overlap between the work of the key stage co-ordinators and that of the co-ordinators for English and mathematics. Clarification of these respective roles would help to reduce workloads.
54. The governing body is effective and meets its statutory duties. The chair has a very good understanding of the school and of the role of the governing body. The current vacancies have hindered the useful arrangements where governors are linked to subject co-ordinators. The curriculum committee looks closely at the results of national tests and works in good partnership with the headteacher to set out areas for improvement. Governors are fully involved in the development and implementation of the school improvement plan. The plan forms a standard item on all agendas. The governors have ensured that proper arrangements are in place for performance management and that the headteacher's targets are in place.
55. The management of the support for pupils with special educational needs is very good and pupils make good progress. The well-qualified and experienced special educational needs co-ordinator (SENCO) ensures that pupils receive appropriate support. Pupils' progress is regularly reviewed and this information is used effectively to plan work that enables them to build successfully on what they have already learnt. The SENCO works closely with the class teachers to ensure that the targets in the pupils' individual education plans are appropriate. The management of the team of teaching assistants is good and makes the best use of their skills and dedication. The governors keep proper oversight of the support provided for pupils with special educational needs. Good progress has been made with the implementation of the new Code of Practice.
56. The school has a sufficient number of teaching staff that are suitably qualified and experienced to meet the demands of the National Curriculum and the Foundation Stage. The school benefits from a staff, including teaching assistants and lunchtime assistants, which has a good range of expertise, experience and length of service. Teachers have good expertise in teaching English and mathematics and this is seen in the standards pupils attain. There is considerable expertise in the Foundation Stage, which is shared on a regular basis with other teachers in East Sussex. The teaching assistants are skilled, hard working and conscientious and contribute a great deal to

the progress pupils make, especially those with special educational needs. There are, however, problems with the recruitment of suitably qualified teachers. These difficulties have led to the appointment in Key Stage 2 of teachers on a temporary basis.

57. Arrangements for the professional development of staff are good and take due account of teachers' personal needs and the objectives identified in the school improvement plan. As a result, teachers' expertise in the use of ICT has improved and is used across the curriculum. This is an improvement since the last inspection. Aspects for development are discussed during the performance management process that has been firmly established. Teachers have targets and these are effectively linked to the school's current area of improvement. There are good procedures for the induction of staff new to the school. These ensure that new staff are fully briefed about school routines and curriculum planning.
58. The very effective financial and administrative procedures identified in the last inspection have been maintained. The secretary works hard and makes a significant contribution to the smooth running of the school. The school improvement plan links financial planning to the school's priorities well, so that its aims can be achieved. The day-to-day financial management of the school's budget is undertaken efficiently, using new technology by the bursar and headteacher. This technology is not used as effectively in the analysis of data from the national test results or in analysing aspects of attendance. A recent financial audit by the local authority found procedures to be satisfactory. The governors, through the finance committee, are updated regularly on spending. Specific grants and funding, such as Capital Buildings Grant and money for information technology developments within classrooms, are used appropriately and have a direct impact on raising standards. The rise in pupils' standards of attainment in ICT is a very good example of the finances having a direct impact on pupil performance.
59. There is good application of best value principles. Major spending decisions are consulted upon, competitive quotes are sought and comparisons are made of results and spending, particularly against national, local schools and other similar schools. Governors have sought parents' views about bullying. The headteacher and governors are proactive in setting themselves new challenges. At the moment they are trying to improve the safety of children coming to and from school, by starting a 'walking bus'. Any possible financial implications have been justified through rigorous debate and challenge.
60. The accommodation is of good quality; the stark exterior belies the rich environment that teachers and teaching assistants have provided inside. Classrooms are large and pupils' work is well displayed throughout the building. The library was out of action during the inspection as it was being used as a staff room during the building work to the staffroom itself. though the new computer suite was well used. The building and its historic features are well cared for by the caretaker, who takes a pride in the school and also contributes significantly to the work of the school. The governors are planning a rolling redecoration and maintenance programme.
61. There is a good range of external spaces, although underground water and fallen drains still cause problems on playground areas. In particular, the hard play area used for football and netball cannot be used for games for health and safety reasons. There is limited playground space at break-time at this time of year for the number of pupils.
62. Resources for learning are good overall, with strengths in the provision made for children in the Foundation Stage. Here provision is excellent, and new storage units,

designed and made by a parent, make all the resources readily available. Each classroom has a wall-mounted television and video recorder, which allow teachers flexibility in using them, and saves time and organisation. New computers in part of the library mean that pupils now have greater access to ICT. All the teachers have laptop computers and this enables them to work more effectively.

WHAT SHOULD THE SCHOOL DO TO IMPROVE FURTHER?

In order to continue to raise standards, the governors, headteacher and staff should:

Improve attendance by:

- raising the profile of full attendance with parents and pupils;
- reducing the amount of absence caused by term-time holidays;
- monitoring attendance more effectively with the use of ICT;
- reporting levels of authorised absence to parents.

(Paragraphs 15 and 41)

Other issues which should be considered by the governors

- Improve the consistency of the challenge provided for pupils who the school has identified as being very able. * (Paragraphs 22, 88 and 93)
- Clarification of the respective roles of the key stage co-ordinators and subject co-ordinators in English and mathematics. (Paragraphs 53, 86 and 95)
- The extension of setting targets for pupils to aim for into mathematics. (Paragraphs 43 and 95)
- Greater emphasis on providing 'guided' writing sessions in the teaching of English. * (Paragraphs 20 and 85)

** These issues are being dealt with in the current school improvement plan*

PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS

Summary of the sources of evidence for the inspection

Number of lessons observed	52
Number of discussions with staff, governors, other adults and pupils	25

Summary of teaching observed during the inspection

	Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
Number	8	5	22	16	0	1	0
Percentage	15	10	42	31	0	2	0

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

Information about the school's pupils

Pupils on the school's roll	YR – Y6
Number of pupils on the school's roll (FTE for part-time pupils)	224
Number of full-time pupils known to be eligible for free school meals	27

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Special educational needs	YR – Y6
Number of pupils with statements of special educational needs	2
Number of pupils on the school's special educational needs register	47

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

Pupil mobility in the last school year	No of pupils
Pupils who joined the school other than at the usual time of first admission	13
Pupils who left the school other than at the usual time of leaving	10

Attendance

Authorised absence

	%
School data	6.9

Unauthorised absence

	%
School data	0.1

National comparative data	5.6
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National comparative data	0.5
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Both tables give the percentage of half days (sessions) missed through absence for the latest complete reporting year.

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

Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 1 for the latest reporting year	Year	Boys	Girls	Total
	2001	16	17	33

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		Reading	Writing	Mathematics
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	13	14	15
	Girls	17	16	16
	Total	30	30	31
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	91 (82)	91 (91)	94 (94)
	National	84 (83)	86 (84)	91 (90)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	14	15	15
	Girls	16	16	17
	Total	30	31	32
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	91 (88)	94 (85)	97 (100)
	National	85 (84)	89 (88)	89 (88)

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

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

Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 2 for the latest reporting year	Year	Boys	Girls	Total
	2001	18	16	34

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys	15	14	15
	Girls	9	10	16
	Total	24	24	31
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	71 (86)	71 (86)	91 (93)
	National	75 (75)	71 (72)	87 (85)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys	14	14	15
	Girls	11	11	15
	Total	25	25	30
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	74 (71)	74 (89)	88 (93)
	National	72 (70)	74 (72)	82 (79)

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

Ethnic background of pupils

	No of pupils
Black – Caribbean heritage	2
Black – African heritage	5
Black – other	1
Indian	0
Pakistani	0
Bangladeshi	0
Chinese	0
White	216
Any other minority ethnic group	0

This table refers to pupils of compulsory school age only.

Exclusions in the last school year

	Fixed period	Permanent
Black – Caribbean heritage	0	0
Black – African heritage	0	0
Black – other	0	0
Indian	0	0
Pakistani	0	0
Bangladeshi	0	0
Chinese	0	0
White	1	0
Other minority ethnic groups	0	0

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

Teachers and classes

Qualified teachers and classes: YR – Y7

Total number of qualified teachers (FTE)	8.9
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	25.2
Average class size	31.4

Education support staff: YR – Y7

Total number of education support staff	10
Total aggregate hours worked per week	210

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Financial information

Financial year	2000/2001
	£
Total income	498,063
Total expenditure	476,704
Expenditure per pupil	2,110
Balance brought forward from previous year	- 11,662
Balance carried forward to next year	9,697

Recruitment of teachers

Number of teachers who left the school during the last two years	2
Number of teachers appointed to the school during the last two years	1
Total number of vacant teaching posts (FTE)	1
Number of vacancies filled by teachers on temporary contract of a term or more (FTE)	1
Number of unfilled vacancies or vacancies filled by teachers on temporary contract of less than one term (FTE)	0

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Results of the survey of parents and carers

Questionnaire return rate

Number of questionnaires sent out	224
Number of questionnaires returned	53

Percentage of responses in each category

	Strongly agree	Tend to agree	Tend to disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know
My child likes school.	81	17	2	0	0
My child is making good progress in school.	60	38	2	0	0
Behaviour in the school is good.	68	32	0	0	0
My child gets the right amount of work to do at home.	42	49	6	0	4
The teaching is good.	68	32	0	0	0
I am kept well informed about how my child is getting on.	57	40	4	0	0
I would feel comfortable about approaching the school with questions or a problem.	74	26	0	0	0
The school expects my child to work hard and achieve his or her best.	83	15	2	0	0
The school works closely with parents.	53	43	4	0	0
The school is well led and managed.	79	19	2	0	0
The school is helping my child become mature and responsible.	68	32	0	0	0
The school provides an interesting range of activities outside lessons.	47	30	9	0	13

Other issues raised by parents

Parents were concerned about the levels of traffic on the busy main road outside the school.

PART D: THE STANDARDS AND QUALITY OF TEACHING IN AREAS OF THE CURRICULUM, SUBJECTS AND COURSES

AREAS OF LEARNING FOR CHILDREN IN THE FOUNDATION STAGE

63. Children in the Reception class are making good progress in their learning due to the excellent teaching and the secure, supportive and very stimulating environment created by both the teacher and the teaching assistant. The children's achievement is good. The staff have effectively built upon the positive findings in the previous inspection report.
64. Children's attainment when they enter school is considerably below that typically found in East Sussex in communication, language and literacy, and is below in all the other areas of learning. A small minority has levels of attainment above average. This is confirmed by the initial assessments that are conducted very effectively with these young children shortly after they start school. The children are well on track to exceed the nationally set standards in their creative and physical development and to reach the national standards in communication, language and literacy, in their mathematical development, in their knowledge and understanding of the world and in their personal, social and emotional development. This good progress is being achieved through the teacher's determination to provide these children with a very rich range of experiences, securely embedded in their understanding and by not rushing through the curriculum too quickly.
65. The teacher has a thorough understanding of the needs of the pupils. This results in activities that are well matched to those needs and are intellectually challenging. Very effective and regular assessment and note taking by the teacher, and the teaching assistant, of children's individual responses provides the basis for this very good knowledge. Excellent use is made of the teaching assistant to support, whenever necessary, those children encountering difficulties with their learning. This assistant makes an excellent contribution to children's learning and attainment, and works in close tandem with the teacher. The special educational needs co-ordinator works effectively with those children who have been identified as needing extra help. Extra challenge is provided by the teacher for those who are ready to move on in their learning. Links between areas of learning are made at every opportunity, and this enhances the provision tremendously, because children make more sense of their learning in this way. The most impressive feature of teaching is the teacher's own high expectations of what these children can learn.

Personal, social and emotional development

66. The teacher is very keen to place emphasis on this area of development throughout the Reception year. Attainment on entry is below average. The children are well on track to achieve the standards set nationally in this area. There are a number of reasons for this. Mainly, it is the skilful teaching which provides opportunities all the time for children to grow in confidence, participate in activities and share and respect each other's views. Alongside this, children experience, through the adults they are with, feelings of security and care. The teaching assistant and other adults coming into the class to work with the children also demonstrate a calm and reassuring manner. Even when there are 'small accidents', they are dealt with unobtrusively and with sensitivity.

67. The 'buddy' system makes a significant contribution in this area of learning. The Year 6 'buddies' really 'look out for' their young partners. The care and support shown by these older children was clearly evident in the paired work on the computer. They are excellent role models of care, compassion, courtesy and respect. These young children responded in a similar way and clearly feel tremendous friendship towards their 'buddies'.
68. The children play and work together well. They celebrate each other's success, for example when friends are taken to photocopy the work they have written on their individual whiteboards. They share resources well when working together, and use imaginative play when working in the role-play area, taking on different roles and interacting well together. Children are very enthusiastic about their activities. They were totally engrossed in a whole-class session, using a silver, precious box. Their imaginations were stimulated and their interest captured by the teacher when waiting to see what could possibly be inside the 'precious box'. The children thoroughly enjoyed their work in the school hall on music and movement, keen to always do their best.
69. The adults help pupils' personal development considerably by providing easily accessible resources and opportunities to make choices, seen when creating their pictures of houses. The children are becoming independent through a good range of opportunities, including finding their own name for registration.

Communication, language and literacy

70. Children enjoy listening to stories and are attentive when the teacher is leading a session. They are confident to speak in their role-play session, when working in groups and when answering questions posed by adults. In their work on 'Titch' (the book being read to the class) a group of children retold the story in the correct sequence after a successful reading session led by the teacher with the class as a whole. Children's speaking and listening development is greatly supported when the adults 'model' the language. For example, role-play in the hospital improved when the teaching assistant joined in, using the correct vocabulary, which the children were later heard using.
71. Children enjoy books and are beginning to use a range of clues when looking through them, for example looking at pictures. The more able readers are learning the sounds letters make (phonics) and are trying to tackle new words phonically, by sounding out the letters that they recognise. The teacher uses every opportunity to teach new words. For example, in their movement lesson as part of their physical development they heard words such as turning, revolving, spiralling and rotating. This is a feature of the excellent teaching that leads to good learning – a high expectation of what is possible.
72. The children are keen to participate in writing and are encouraged to undertake 'have a go' writing at all times. They are beginning to include letters in their writing, which are appropriate and well formed. They are writing their own names confidently and hold a pencil to effectively form letters. Most children's early writing is satisfactorily developing as a result of excellent teaching.

Mathematical development

73. Excellent teaching has enabled children to make good progress in this area of learning since they started at school. They count to ten, with some children able to count up to 18. They use their beads on a rope to demonstrate one more than and one less than a single digit. They understand terms such as 'tallest' and 'smallest' when looking at a set of Russian dolls. The teacher makes excellent links with other areas of learning.

Children read words in the big book on 'sizes' and develop an understanding of the world around them. They discussed colours on the dolls, pointed to patterns, pointed out similarities and differences and also demonstrated an understanding of whole and half when commenting on the different flowers. Links such as these help the children a great deal in making sense of what they are learning.

Knowledge and understanding of the world

74. The rich environment provided by the teacher and her excellent teaching enables children to continually build on their growing knowledge of the world. They are developing a sound understanding of the world in which they live. They identify different stones found in fruit, such as a mango, and the need for seeds. When the teacher provides interesting opportunities to learn about planting seeds, they take great care making sure the seeds are covered in compost and are well watered. One child had remembered the word 'compost' well. They learn about shoots and roots and many repeat the words confidently. Children also enjoy their work about hospitals in the carefully constructed role-play area and the visit by a nurse takes their learning further. They enjoy finding out about homes and different constructions, and select tools and use techniques to shape their homes and join materials. They are making good progress in developing skills using computers. They are helped by a parent visiting for a session a week and the 'buddy' system when pupils in Year 6 are paired with these children when working on the computer. They are competently using 'Dazzle' or 'Art Attack' programs to produce a design for their 'Mother's Day card', with support from their 'buddies' and the technician.

Physical development

75. Many children are attaining above the nationally expected standard in this area of learning. As a result of the excellent teaching they move with confidence, imagination and without bumping into each other in their dance lesson in the school hall. They travel around the hall and show good co-ordination. Children understand about finding 'a space' to practise their movements. During the lesson a child recognises that she is 'getting hot' and the need to 'cool down'. The teacher makes very good use of a parachute to teach pupils how to work together. They throw 'teddy' up in the parachute carefully and run underneath it with care and dexterity before it drops down again. Back in the classroom they demonstrate good hand to eye co-ordination when using musical instruments, making a delicate pattern with sunflower seeds in the play dough, and using scissors and cutting tools.

Creative development

76. Children's achievement in this area is very good, particularly in their artwork, due to the excellent teaching. Many are well on track to exceed the standards set nationally as the teaching is so good. The visit of an artist, organised by the teacher, to lead the children has resulted in some good portrait drawings and pictures of daffodils and hyacinths of an above average standard. Children are experimenting with colour, shape and form and are learning to use a 'cross', which helps them to place the eyes correctly, when drawing the face. In music, they learn new songs and enjoy the well-taught whole-school singing session on Friday morning. The teacher ensures that musical percussion instruments are always available for the children to use and experiment with. In dance, they match movement to music in a very sensitive and competent way – their absorption in watching their fingers move to the music is very impressive. They develop an understanding of dynamics in a piece of music – moving slowly to quieter movements and building to a crescendo.

ENGLISH

77. Standards in English have been maintained since the last inspection, despite the dip in the results of the eleven-year-olds in the National Curriculum tests in 2001. The standards attained by the eleven-year-olds are above average. The standards attained by the seven-year-olds have been edging upwards since the last inspection. The attainment of these pupils in reading is above average and in writing they attain average standards. Across the school, pupils' achievement in English is good overall. It is better in reading than it is in writing, which is now a targeted area for improvement. Seven- and eleven-year-olds who have been identified by the school as being very able achieve well and reach high standards. Pupils with special educational needs have very good support and make good progress especially in reading, as do the few pupils with English as an additional language. This good achievement is due to the good teaching, the successful implementation of the National Literacy Strategy, the implementation of individual targets for pupils in writing, and the good management of the subject.
78. The standards attained by the seven-year-olds in speaking and listening are average. Teachers have successfully built on the work in the Foundation Stage. By the age of eleven, pupils attain above average standards. Across the school, pupils listen attentively to the adults they are working with and to each other. Teachers' effective questioning provides pupils with good opportunities to develop their skills in explaining their ideas. The encouraging teaching leads to pupils being confident in Key Stage 1 to ask their own questions. For example, in a lesson in Year 2 where pupils were learning about the parts of a sentence, one pupil asked 'What is a verb?' Pupils were keen to answer this question when asked to by the teacher. Not only did they give a clear account, but went on to provide a further example. Older pupils confidently explain their ideas. This happened in a discussion about racism where they gave well-argued reasons against discrimination and a good number gave good explanations of the forms in which racism can occur.
79. The reading standards of the seven- and eleven-year-olds are above average. Pupils enjoy reading and many read at home for pleasure. Younger pupils have a good understanding of the sounds letters make (phonics) as this is emphasised consistently in the teaching in Key Stage 1. Lessons often start with a quick-fire consolidation of the sounds. For example, a lesson in Year 1 started with pupils saying the sounds from cards shown rapidly by the teacher. The pupils were keen to get them right and responded well when they became more challenging when they had to distinguish correctly between 'th' and 'f'. In Year 2, pupils confidently identify the 'silent' letters in 'laugh'. The teaching assistants provide very good support for pupils who are having difficulties in learning these sounds and make effective use of nationally produced learning resources. When pupils read, they make good use of their knowledge of phonics to read words that are unfamiliar. As they move through the school, pupils read with growing fluency and accuracy and develop a good appreciation of a range of books. By the age of eleven, a significant majority have sufficient reading skills to cope with most books. The reading skills of those who are confident are further enhanced when they act as a 'learning partner' to the few pupils in the class who are less confident in reading.
80. The writing standards of the seven-year-olds are broadly average. The National Curriculum test results for the past few years have shown them to be below average. This improvement is due to the current emphasis being placed on improving pupils' writing, especially the setting of individual targets for pupils to aim for. The seven-year-olds spell reasonably accurately for their age. Where they make mistakes these are

usually phonically correct, for example when they write 'sor' for saw and 'kitchin' for kitchen. Most use full stops and capital letters correctly. Higher attaining pupils use elements of dialogue in their stories and use words such as 'next' rather than 'and' to join their sentences. Handwriting is of a satisfactory standard.

81. Across the school, pupils write for a good range of purposes. In Year 2, they retell stories they have heard and take notes following the visit of a parent who spoke about growing up in Nigeria. In Key Stage 2, pupils write interesting accounts of visits they have made in history and geography. By the age of eleven, writing standards are not as high as those in reading. Overall, they are about average. Spelling is usually accurate and punctuation, such as speech marks, question marks and commas are often used correctly. Standards of presentation and handwriting in Year 6 are very good. A feature of the writing in Year 6 is its wide range, from the writing of spells for a well-produced 'Wizastic book of spells', to the writing of diaries and poetry. At times the quality of the writing is high. In a poem about looking inside a bubble one very able pupil wrote 'a vast castle sluggishly coming into view through misty moors'. When writing about silver, another wrote:
- 'The bush hides a secret seen by few –
spider webs sparkling with glittering dew.'*
82. The teaching of English is good overall because teachers make good use of the structure provided by the National Literacy Strategy and have adapted it carefully, where appropriate. The majority of the teaching seen was good and pupils made good progress. The session at the end of the lesson where teachers recap on the main points of the lesson and identify areas where the pupils have experienced difficulties tend to be a little rushed. Very good use is made of the skilled teaching assistants to support pupils with special educational needs and as a result they achieve well and make good progress. Good use is made of ICT to help pupils improve their writing and to illustrate their work.
83. Teaching in Year 6 was excellent due to the very good preparation, very good questioning and encouraging teaching. The lesson got off to a very good start when the teacher gave pupils feedback from a recent spelling test. 'I have only one word to say, Wow!' Throughout the lesson the teaching was very brisk and challenging, even for the very able pupils. Pupils responded well to such a combination of encouragement and challenge. Very effective use was made of the structure provided by the literacy hour.
84. Teachers make it clear at the start of lessons what the purpose of the lesson is and this helps pupils to become fully involved in their lessons. The introduction of individual writing targets this year has helped pupils to focus more precisely on what they need to do to improve their work. These targets are often used in lessons but are rarely referred to when marking pupils' work.
85. A strength in the teaching is the way teachers show or 'model' reading and writing. Teachers use large books well to show pupils how to read expressively or how to use a non-fiction book effectively. Such teaching provides good support for pupils with English as an additional language. In a good lesson in Year 5, the teacher wrote his version of the first three lines of a poem he had just read to the class. As he wrote he explained what he was doing and what he was thinking. The pupils then gave suggestions as to how it might be improved. Teaching such as this helps pupils to improve their own writing. In Year 1, the teacher wrote the pupils' ideas on the board, deliberately making mistakes with the spaces left between the words and in the punctuation. The pupils were delighted to quickly point out the mistakes and so consolidated their learning. The teaching is mainly satisfactory rather than good in the first two years of Key Stage 2

and this is mainly due to the modelling of reading and writing not being central enough to the teaching. Across the school as a whole not enough attention is given to modelling or 'guiding' writing to groups of pupils with similar levels of attainment in writing.

86. The management of the subject is good. Teaching has been observed and detailed analysis is regularly undertaken of the results of the national tests. As a result, writing has been identified as an area where improvement is needed. A detailed action plan has been drawn up and is being implemented effectively. The result of this is that standards of writing of the seven-year-olds are improving as is writing across the school. There is a degree of overlap of the responsibilities of the co-ordinator and those of the key stage co-ordinator which leads to an element of duplication. The arrangements for the assessment of pupils' attainment and progress are very good and the information has been used successfully to identify individual targets for pupils to aim for in writing. The resources are good but due to building work it was not possible to make a judgement on the quality of the library which was an area for improvement at the last inspection.

MATHEMATICS

87. Overall, pupils' achievement is good and is due to the good teaching and the successful introduction of the National Numeracy Strategy. The seven-year-olds make good progress and attain average standards. These standards reflect the results of the National Curriculum tests in 2001. Pupils continue to make good progress and by the time they are aged eleven, their progress is very good in all areas of mathematics, which leads to the standards they attain being above average. These standards are higher than those attained by the eleven-year-olds in the national tests in 2001. The school's detailed analysis shows that these results in 2001 reflected the nature of the group of pupils that took the test in that there was a significant number of pupils with special educational needs. The higher standards seen during the inspection are from a different group and are a result of the excellent teaching in Year 6. Pupils across the school have good skills in working out answers quickly in their heads.
88. There are no marked differences in the performance of girls and boys. Pupils with special educational needs are very well supported and make very good progress. The 'Booster' class in Year 6 provides good support for pupils with difficulties in the subject. Due to this one-to-one support, these difficulties are being successfully addressed and the pupils are growing in confidence and making very good progress. Very able pupils in Year 6 are being very well challenged and attain high standards. Across the school, the challenge for such pupils is inconsistent and they make satisfactory rather than good progress.
89. By the age of seven, pupils are growing in confidence in their mathematics. They are working out answers quickly in their heads and their mental agility is developing. These pupils are adding multiples of ten to two-digit numbers and some higher attainers are beginning to go beyond 100 with confidence. More able pupils have made a start in working with problems involving 1000 but they are not yet fully confident in this work. Pupils add and subtract two-digit numbers confidently in their books, and in lessons they often clearly explain the methods they use. Pupils use standard units of measure accurately, measuring lengths in centimetres and metres, and weight in grams and kilograms. They know some of the properties of common two- and three-dimensional shapes, tell the time using hours and half-hours correctly and show reflected symmetry through drawings. Pupils are particularly confident when undertaking problem solving with money and accurately work out the change and total cost of a range of items.

90. The eleven-year-olds recall multiplication and division facts very quickly. They are very eloquent when explaining their methods of calculating. Pupils undertake addition and subtraction of decimals, accurately and with understanding, when measuring height. They are not only able to work out estimates accurately, but are satisfactorily developing the ability to set out their work in an organised and logical way. The very good teaching emphasises investigations and real-life problem-solving activities, and this enhances learning. For example, the pupils' investigation based on a box of chocolate is impressive in the way the pupils work accurately on a wide range of mathematical ideas, including data handling, working out mode, range and median, dealing with fractions, perimeter, area, volume and probability. It is also impressive in the way the work is set out on the paper; it is logical, well presented and reflects a thorough understanding.
91. An investigation, by pupils in Year 6 identified as being very able, to make the best use of available space in the car park whilst builders were working in the school, was of a very high standard. The pupils calculated lengths accurately and made hypotheses, which they then tried out, until eventually they found the most effective way for staff and visitors to use the car park. This project shows maturity, motivation and challenge. Pupils presented their work very well.
92. The quality of teaching is good overall in both key stages and this enables pupils to make good progress. In Key Stage 2, teaching is satisfactory in Year 3 and Year 4, and is better in Years 5 and 6. In Year 6 the teaching is excellent. Across the school, teachers consistently build on what the pupils already know and this develops confidence and reinforces facts already learnt. There are clear purposes to lessons, which are shared with the pupils so they know what they are learning and become fully involved in the lesson and know when they are successful. Throughout the school, pupils are well managed and classrooms have a good work ethic. Pupils behave well and so learning takes place. Pupils experiencing difficulties are very well supported by teaching assistants within the classroom. As a result, they achieve well and make good progress, as do the few pupils with English as an additional language. Pupils work hard and co-operate well working in a group. They are enthusiastic and very keen to learn.
93. In the most effective lessons, pupils are continually involved because there is a very good pace to the lesson. There is an excellent rapport between pupils and their teacher. This leads to enjoyment, mathematics becomes fun and there is an ethos in which mistakes can be made and pupils are not embarrassed. The teacher makes it a learning opportunity, which maintains pupils' confidence and self-esteem. In lessons such as these, questioning is targeted appropriately to pupils. In this way every pupil is suitably challenged, based on what they already know. This is possible because these teachers have clearly assessed individual pupil performance and they know exactly where the pupils are, what they know and what they need to know next. Work is usually well matched to pupils' needs. With the exception of Year 6, at times the very able pupils are not always challenged enough.
94. The National Numeracy Strategy has been implemented successfully and this contributes significantly to the quality of teaching. The plenary or 'recap' at the end of lessons is not always used sufficiently well to reinforce what has been learnt, and to identify areas where pupils have misunderstandings or things they have found difficult. The teachers use a good range of appropriate mathematical language, which is reflected in the pupils' answers and descriptions on how they have reached answers. There are good examples of the use of ICT in mathematics especially in graph work and to extend very able pupils in Year 6. Pupils use mathematics to aid learning in other

subjects such as geography, when plotting weather charts, and in science, when plotting readings.

95. Overall, the subject is well managed. Teaching is regularly observed and a careful eye is kept on the standards pupils attain. There is an overlap in the responsibilities of the co-ordinator and the key stage co-ordinator that needs clarification to cut down workload. The co-ordinator undertakes after-school weekly lessons for those parents who want to support their children and has an overview of resource needs. The senior management team has an overview of results, which it analyses and monitors. Very good arrangements are in place to assess pupils' progress. This information is not used as well as it is in English to set targets for pupils to aim for.

SCIENCE

96. Pupils' achievement is good and is reflected in the above average standards attained by the seven- and eleven-year-olds. These standards are similar to those reported in the last inspection. The standards seen reflect those attained by the seven-year-olds in the 2001 National Curriculum tests and are an improvement on those attained by the eleven-year-olds in the tests. The standards of the eleven-year-olds fell in the 2001 national tests as they had been above average the year before. The improvement in standards is due to there being a different group of pupils, with fewer pupils having special educational needs, and the very good teaching in Year 6. The standards at the time of the last inspection were also above average. The national test results showed that at the end of Key Stage 2, boys were achieving better than girls. Inspection evidence did not show any underachievement by the girls. Pupils with special educational needs make good progress and attain at levels appropriate to their abilities as they have very good support, particularly from the skilled teaching assistants.
97. Across the school, pupils of all abilities make good progress in acquiring knowledge about plants and animals, materials, forces and friction and electricity as teachers provide them with good opportunities to investigate and to observe and experiment during well-planned lessons. Planning has improved as a result of the school's adoption of a nationally produced scheme of work as the basis for planning. Improvement since the last inspection has been good.
98. One of the strengths in teaching is the amount of time and the emphasis given in the planning for the pupils to observe, investigate and experiment for themselves. Consequently, pupils are particularly strong in their understanding of what is needed to make a test fair and in their ability to observe closely. The seven-year-olds are interested in how an electrical circuit works and they know how to complete a simple circuit. They carefully explain that the lamp will not light if the circuit is broken. They learn about their senses and how they help them to be aware of the world around them, for example they know that the sense of hearing helps to detect hazards and dangers as well as allowing animals and humans to communicate and to enjoy pleasant sounds. They develop good skills in asking questions about what they are going to do and to think about what might happen before deciding what to do. They then explain their actions and use words like 'because' to explain the outcome.
99. Pupils in Key Stage 2 continue to successfully develop these skills. For example in Year 3, pupils conducted a simple experiment to see how the length of shadows changed according to the light source. Some of the pupils were able to relate this to the change in the length of shadows during the day and explain that a shadow is formed when an object is blocking the light source. Older pupils have experimented with materials to find which ones are magnetic. Others find out which materials are good

conductors of electricity and which are insulators. They confidently made a hypothesis about what would happen if they inserted, for example, a copper coin into the circuit. With skilful questioning by the teacher they were then able to suggest a way to conduct a fair test. They make sensible predictions before carrying out the investigation. By the age of eleven, pupils have a thorough understanding of a fair test, including having a control and they write up the investigation in a scientific manner using the technical terms of prediction, method, result and conclusion. They know that, in order for a conclusion to be beyond doubt, they would need a much bigger sample. They have a good knowledge of plants and animals, materials, and forces, such as friction, and electricity.

100. The overall quality of teaching is good in both key stages with some very good teaching seen in Year 6. In most lessons, planning is detailed and thorough and the tasks set are well chosen and capture pupils' interest. Pupils enjoy their lessons and work hard. In Year 6, pupils collaborate well in pairs and groups to discuss the variables in their experiment and agree on a hypothesis before starting on the experiment. This happened in a lesson where the pupils were designing a fair test to find out which of two washing powders was the best value. Pupils in Year 5 were especially delighted when their predictions about which materials are good conductors were proved to be correct. Teachers skilfully encourage the pupils to think by using probing questions, for example 'Why do we think we need a control?' and 'How are you going to make sure there is the same amount of stain?' Questions such as these extend pupils' understanding of their investigations. Teachers ensure that pupils with special educational needs participate fully in the discussion part of lessons by asking them specific questions, which enables them to contribute successfully to the lesson. These pupils and the few with English as an additional language are also well supported by classroom assistants who know the pupils well and offer help and encouragement so that appropriate learning takes place. Work is usually sufficiently challenging for those pupils who have been identified as being very able and they make sound progress.
101. Effective use is made of ICT to produce graphs, charts and diagrams. Good opportunities are made to develop pupils' skills in literacy and numeracy. The introduction of '5 minute science', a time when the teacher shows the pupils, for example, a flower and then asks questions about it, has led to an improvement in pupils' knowledge and understanding.
102. The co-ordination of science is very good and this is reflected in the standards pupils attain. Teachers' confidence in teaching the subject has been raised, particularly in the use of investigative and experimental methods. Teaching is monitored by the co-ordinator. Good assessment is made of pupils' progress, and the use of this information to set targets is an ongoing development and is an improvement since the previous inspection. A well-organised 'science week' made a significant contribution to pupils' learning. Resources are adequate to teach the subject. Good use is made of visits to places of scientific interest, and outside specialists contribute to the good learning that takes place. The subject makes a good contribution to pupils' personal development through various projects such as 'plant a tree'.

ART AND DESIGN

103. The standards attained by the seven- and eleven-year-olds are above those found typically for pupils of this age. This was the case in the last inspection. Pupils' achievement, including those with special educational needs, is good. Art and design was not being taught during the inspection in line with the school's curriculum planning whereby the teaching of the subject alternates with the teaching of design and

technology. A feature of the school is that detailed portfolios of pupils' completed work are kept by subject co-ordinators and sometimes by individual teachers. These portfolios, together with work on display around the school, provided sufficient evidence on which to make a secure judgement on the standards being attained. In conversation, pupils show that they enjoy art and take a pride in their work. There has been satisfactory improvement since the last inspection.

104. The strengths in the pupils' work lie in their successful development of skills in using a good range of materials, especially paint, pencil, pastels, fabric and clay and in the links teachers make with other subjects. The seven-year-olds successfully mix colours with pastels when they make lifelike portraits. They use wax crayons effectively to illustrate stories in other subjects such as the 'Odyssey'. Their paintings show good skills in mixing colours, for example in the paintings that arose from listening to music from the film 'Beetlejuice'. Good links were made with music as pupils looked at a diagrammatic composition of the music and then gave their paintings titles such as 'an out of control train' and 'being chased in a maze'. They show good skills in drawing when they make detailed drawings of bicycles. Successful work in three dimensions includes the use of clay and fabric.
105. The eleven-year-olds have effectively built on these skills in Key Stage 2 and produce work of a good quality. Their colour mixing skills have developed further and are seen to good effect in paintings based on Monet's pond at Giverny. They use pastels effectively to make good quality drawings of training shoes and then use clay effectively to produce interesting clay relief tiles based on the patterns on the soles. Good links are made with geography as they illustrate the flora of St Lucia. They look carefully at the work of artists and interpret the style in their own way. For example, after seeing the painting 'Gurnica' by Picasso, they made pictures using their own shapes to represent death, fear and panic and went on to write poems based on these themes.
106. Across the school, effective use is made of ICT in the subject. Younger pupils carefully use programs that enable them to 'paint' sunflowers as part of their work about Van Gogh. Older pupils successfully use more advanced programs that enable them to make images of fish based on their work about St Lucia. Detailed planning ensures that the requirements of the National Curriculum are met. Pupils are provided with rich experiences to develop their skills, knowledge and understanding. The school is fully involved in the wider community and art and design plays a significant part in this. In 2000, the school designed and made good quality large-scale silk hangings for the parish church. Each year the school plays a part in the local tradition of 'walking the fish' where pupils make and decorate large artefacts.
107. The co-ordination of the subject is satisfactory. Detailed portfolios of pupils' work are kept and are used to keep a check on the standards pupils attain. Currently plans are in hand to develop these with examples of pupils' work carefully chosen to enable teachers to judge more precisely the standards of work in line with the descriptions provided by the National Curriculum. Resources are good and contribute to the standards being attained.

DESIGN AND TECHNOLOGY

108. Pupils' achievement in design and technology is satisfactory and the attainment of the seven- and eleven-year-olds is in line with that expected nationally for pupils of these ages. These standards are similar to those reported at the last inspection. Since the last inspection the school has developed a scheme of work to take account of the revisions to the National Curriculum and this has improved planning in the subject. A

good feature of provision the school makes is that all year groups use a design sheet and the pupils are taught how to evaluate their finished work. Even the youngest pupils are encouraged to say what they like or don't like about what they have made and this enhances their learning. Particular strengths in the subject are the good links with other subjects, particularly ICT and the school's participation in a Young Engineers project. Pupils with special educational needs achieve well and make satisfactory progress. Improvement since the last inspection has been satisfactory.

109. Younger pupils make a sunflower effectively using a planning guide that asks pertinent questions such as 'how?' and 'what equipment?', and 'what I did.' This useful prompt enables them to think carefully through the design process. When the task is completed they successfully complete the evaluation of their work as they decide whether making it was hard/easy/boring/fun and draw a picture of what it looked like. They also make a judgement about whether they did or did not like the finished result. Pupils in Year 1 enthusiastically made Mothers' Day cards during the inspection. They used the skills of cutting and weaving carefully to create their individual cards, which were based on a picture of a basket of flowers. They showed considerable skill in drawing round a template and in using scissors accurately. Pupils in Year 2 look at healthy eating and make fruit drinks from whole fruits and fruit salads, taking care to make sure that both their hands and the area they are working in are as hygienic as possible. By the age of seven, pupils, including those with special educational needs, have sound skills in construction and use a range of simple hand tools safely and sensibly.
110. Achievement in Key Stage 2 is satisfactory. Older pupils continue to make sound progress when they design and make more advanced projects because work is often linked by teachers to other subjects. Pupils usefully extend their knowledge of the topics they are studying in mathematics and ICT and satisfactorily develop their language skills when new technical words in technology are introduced. At the end of Year 6, pupils have sound construction skills and continue to design creatively. This was evident from looking at a display of slippers that they had designed and made. Their design brief to design an advertising package for a healthy fruit drink produced work of good quality with very good use of ICT. Pupils with special educational needs make satisfactory progress because they are well supported by teachers, teaching assistants and their fellow pupils.
111. The quality of teaching in the few lessons seen was good and pupils made good progress. Teachers encourage pupils to work creatively and have high expectations of good standards of finished work and methods of working. Pupils learn from a very early age to make independent decisions about the materials they use and how their products will look. This was seen to start well in Year 1 where pupils had a good range of materials to help them design their Mothers' Day cards. In Year 3, an emphasis on teaching skills of measuring, scoring, cutting and gluing gives pupils a good grounding in the skills they need to develop their work later in the key stage. Pupils have a good attitude to their work and they take pride in their achievements.
112. Since the last inspection design and technology has not had high priority in the school but standards have been maintained. The lack of priority in the subject has meant that monitoring of standards and provision has not been consistently maintained. The co-ordination of the subject is satisfactory. Teachers regularly assess pupils' progress. Resources and equipment for the subject are satisfactory and a well-balanced range of experiences is offered to pupils.

GEOGRAPHY

113. The seven- and eleven-year-olds attain standards that are above those expected nationally for pupils of these ages and this reflects their good achievement. Standards are similar to those reported at the last inspection. Pupils make good progress as the teaching places emphasis on developing pupils' skills such as making plans and using maps, as well as researching information about the places they are studying. For example, pupils in Year 1 took advantage of the current building work to make plans of the best way to reach the school hall whilst parts of the school were out of action. Good use is made of the local area and of visitors to the school. These activities further enhance pupils' learning, as pupils are interested in what they are doing and concentrate on their work. Pupils with special educational needs make good progress as they are very well supported by their teachers and the skilled teaching assistants.
114. The seven-year-olds have learned about the differences between living on a small island and living in a town on the mainland. They understand what is meant by a landscape and what is natural and what is man-made in our environment. Pupils also have a good understanding of the jobs people could do who live on an island and why the ferry is so important to the islanders. They make good comparisons between Hastings and the Island of Struay. They also look further afield to other continents and learn about life in Africa, taking very good advantage of the experiences of one pupil's mother who spent her childhood in Nigeria.
115. By the age of eleven, pupils have successfully learnt about the human and physical features of an area. They confidently identify the similarities and differences between their own local area and other parts of the world, such as St Lucia. They know how to use and interpret maps beginning with a simple key and devising their own keys to show, for example, the major mountain regions of the world. They have developed a good understanding of rivers and the influence of the water cycle. Those that have Internet access at home do their own research and bring new information to the lesson, which benefits the whole class.
116. A limited number of lessons were seen. Overall, the teaching in both key stages is good. There was one instance of poor teaching in the early part of Key Stage 2 and that was due to poor planning and inappropriate use of resources. However, this is the exception and lessons are usually well planned and the work is challenging for all pupils. Good attention is paid to developing pupils' skills and applying them. This happened in a lesson in Year 5 where pupils were using an atlas to find major mountain ranges and then to place them on an outline map of the world. The teacher carefully explained how to use a key. The work was challenging, and one pupil moved on to use the Internet to research information about specific mountains such as Mount Everest and Mount Kilimanjaro. Teachers make very good use of the support staff, who make a very good contribution to the pupils' learning. Relationships between teachers and pupils are very good and also between pupils. Good opportunities are provided for pupils to use their growing skills in literacy, numeracy and in the use of ICT, which enable them to learn more effectively.
117. The subject is well managed. The co-ordinator is very knowledgeable and experienced and keeps the profile of the subject high. Areas of the subject that need to be developed, such as fieldwork, have been identified and useful plans are in hand to make the necessary improvements. There are many displays around the school drawing pupils' attention to the larger world. Geography makes a good contribution to the pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. They are encouraged to be responsible for their environment and to be aware of differences in other cultures. Pupils' attainment is assessed regularly against national standards and this data is

used effectively to plan what is needed to improve work in the subject. Learning resources are adequate. Overall, there has been good improvement since the last inspection, especially in the use of ICT and in the planning.

HISTORY

118. There was no history being taught during the week of the inspection in line with the school's planning. However, by talking to pupils, looking at portfolios of work provided by the history co-ordinator and looking at pupils' work in their books, it was possible to make a secure judgement of the standards attained.
119. By the ages of seven and eleven, pupils' achievement is good and they attain standards higher than those expected nationally for their age. This is due to the good range of experiences provided for the pupils that make history come alive. These include visits to historical settings, the information provided by visitors to the school and the opportunities given to the pupils to take part in real-life events from the past. For example, pupils in Year 4 enjoyed a visit to Hever Castle and the day when they, and some of their teachers, dressed in traditional costume from the Tudor time. Pupils with special educational needs make very good progress in knowledge and understanding through this more hands-on approach to learning. The above average standards reported at the time of the last inspection have been maintained.
120. By the age of seven, pupils have developed a good understanding of chronology and how changes occur over time. For example, they have looked at toys from the past and compared them with their own toys. Pupils have studied people and places in history through their work on the Battle of Hastings and King Harold and have gained a good understanding of important events. They have shown their ability to use a number of sources to gain information. For example, they have used a picture from a book to find out the dress of Norman soldiers and then visited a Norman castle to find out more about life at that time. Pupils record their growing knowledge in a number of ways, through writing about their visit and drawing pictures. They enjoy talking about their visits. It is clear to see, from their books, that pupils take a real pride in their work, with illustrations and writing neatly presented. By the age of eleven, pupils' knowledge and skills have been developed much further and pupils present their work in a very clear and mature way.
121. Older pupils use the Internet effectively to find out more information about the period they are studying. For example, pupils in Year 6 have collected information about Ancient Greece and, in Year 5, pupils have searched for information about the Victorians. The greater use of ICT in the subject is an improvement since the last inspection.
122. Another strength of this subject is the way in which teachers use it to further the skills within other subjects. Pupils see links and make sense of the overall picture, deepening their understanding. Links are made with English, art and design, ICT, design and technology, geography, music and mathematics. Pupils write factually and imaginatively. For example in Year 5, pupils write from the viewpoint of a child in Victorian Britain. They carefully draw up a job vacancy for a kitchen maid. There is good quality artwork from pupils in Year 6 on Greek columns. Pupils studying Ancient Greece have produced a detailed piece of embroidery on Pegasus, and have prepared a Greek meal. Pupils use computer programs, such as 'Dazzle', to enhance their work. When studying the Tudors, pupils look at maps of the world and name routes taken by famous people at that time, such as Sir Francis Drake. Pupils in Year 6 look closely at

the lyre and look for evidence of music in Ancient Greece. Their drawings and descriptions are very detailed.

123. This subject area is well led by a very keen and knowledgeable co-ordinator, who has ensured the teaching is enhanced by purposeful visits and invited visitors. The pupils enjoy this and the subject 'comes to life' for them through these experiences, which they remember years later. Portfolios of pupils' work are kept and used effectively to monitor levels of attainment and to ensure that all the necessary aspects of the subject are being taught. Pupils' work is assessed regularly. Resources available are of good quality and the co-ordinator is aware of future purchases and developments for the subject to overcome the rising cost of visits.

INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY

124. The seven- and eleven-year-olds attain the nationally expected standards and their achievement is satisfactory. These standards are similar to those reported at the last inspection. Overall, pupils make satisfactory progress. Pupils with special educational needs make good progress and often attain the same standards as their peers. All pupils have access to the ICT curriculum. Considerable improvement has been made to the teaching and organisation of the subject which has been necessary to keep up-to-date in a rapidly developing subject and to extend the use of ICT in other subjects. Pupils now have access to a computer suite, although it is too small to accommodate a whole class. However, the timetable has been efficiently reorganised to give the pupils the opportunity to learn in small groups, which gives them the advantage of much greater specialist support. Teachers have received training through national initiatives as well as from funding provided from the Education Action Zone. This training has raised staff confidence and the school is now in a good position to improve further.
125. Pupils at the age of seven select from the tool bars to give various effects. They use programs such as 'Splosh' and 'Dazzle' effectively to create pictures. Pupils are competent in their use of the mouse and know what the 'desktop' is and how to double click to open a file. They use a wordprocessing program confidently to present their work. By the age of eleven, pupils competently change the print size, style and colour of text and know how to use the spell checker and print off their own work. They satisfactorily use data-handling programs to enter and present data, which supports their work in mathematics, science and geography. They make good use of ICT to enhance their work in art and design, for example looking at the work of famous artists, and successfully use ICT to design leaflets for advertising. The eleven-year-olds competently send e-mail messages and have a sound understanding of how to access appropriate websites to gain information, using a search engine. The school is to revive the excellent links it had last year with a school in Hastings, New Zealand.
126. No direct teaching was seen in Key Stage 1. Teaching in Key Stage 2 is good. The school is fortunate in having a skilled technician who effectively teaches and supports the pupils in the ICT suite, working in close collaboration with the teachers. Lessons are very well planned by the teachers. Good classroom management and organisation enables pupils to make the best of the time they have available. The introduction of the nationally recommended scheme of work has been effective in ensuring clearly focused lessons and a structure which enables pupils to build on what they already know. Keyboard skills are effectively taught through the use of special 'teach typing skills' programs. Pupils work on the computers enthusiastically and are keen to learn and build on the skills they have learnt at school or at home.

127. ICT is used well in English, mathematics, science and design and technology. For example, pupils learning to use a logo program had their work linked to the book, 'The Iron Man', they are reading and then drew pictures of the Iron Man using the Super Logo program. The use of ICT is satisfactorily developing in other subjects. Pupils in Year 6 have helped to design a school website, which it is planned will keep parents informed about school events and give them information about class topics and school news. Older pupils have had the opportunity to use the digital camera and competently insert their pictures into their writing.
128. The subject is well led and managed. The co-ordinators work well with teachers to develop their confidence and skills in areas that have been identified as being a particular weakness. Sound assessment procedures are in place, which are used satisfactorily to plan work. The timetable is well planned so that the new computer suite is in constant use. There has been very good improvement in terms of resources since the last inspection.

MUSIC

129. The pupils are achieving well throughout the school with very good progress by the time they are age eleven. The visiting music teacher is so knowledgeable and enthusiastic about the subject that the attainment of the seven- and eleven-year-olds is above average. These standards show good improvement since the last inspection. Pupils of all abilities progress well. Those with special educational needs thoroughly enjoy their music, and it is helping them to feel part of the school, develop confidence and participate effectively. The more talented pupils are effectively supported through visiting music teachers and are learning to play instruments including the violin and the keyboard. The overarching strength of this subject area is the total enjoyment of the pupils in all that they do, and a very good development in skills as they move from one musical activity to the other.
130. In all aspects of the subject, pupils make very good progress. They listen to and appreciate a wide variety of music, including modern works by Abba and folk songs from different cultures. Pupils perform to a very good standard in their singing, and actively enjoy creating music. This was seen in the whole-school singing practice in which pupils sang a two-part chorus with clear pitch, diction and a good rhythm. Pupils evaluate their work, with direction from the teacher, and then improve upon it.
131. The seven-year-olds came into their lesson moving in rhythm to the piece of music, sang songs to the guitar accompaniment and then composed some sensitive atmospheric work on unpitched percussion instruments to play alongside a poem they were reading. The eleven-year-olds sing some very complicated two-part harmonies, rounds in four parts and sing with good quality and with enthusiasm and enjoyment. In the lesson seen, they improved their overall performance of a song 'The Wreck' by improving their diction, being more aware of the rests and the dynamics of the piece. The final performance had greater expression. The pupils were actively involved in creating music from the beginning of the lesson through to the end, either by singing or by using instruments.
132. All pupils are receiving a breadth of knowledge and understanding through a varied range of musical activities. These include performing, composing and appraising their own performance. They react well to a range of starting points, including pictures, poems, live performances using piano and guitar and from recorded musical performances.

133. The quality of teaching is excellent and this results in very good learning. The visiting teacher who takes music with all the pupils, either in whole-school singing practice or in year group lessons, is the vital element in the progress made and attainment reached. This is because the teacher has a thorough knowledge of, and love for, the subject. High expectations are held and pupils are challenged to meet them. A very good feature of the teaching is the modelling of singing which pupils then copy, and the good support of two-part harmonies. Pupils, in this way, keep their part and succeed in their performance. This develops confidence and high self-esteem. There is very good pace to the lessons with interesting introductions using music and movement to capture the pupils' interest. This then moves into a range of activities, which start with what the pupils know then develops onto new learning. The teacher has a skill in teaching new ideas without losing momentum and pupils' interest. This is achieved by having a longer-term view and revisiting and refining skills over the following weeks. The learning is well consolidated and there is often an aim, such as a forthcoming performance after Easter for pupils in Year 6. The teacher uses musical terms continually with the pupils and they then adopt these themselves quite naturally.
134. There is a good overview to the teaching of music because one teacher undertakes all of the teaching. The management of the subject is less secure as there is no school co-ordinator. This provision has only been in place since September. The challenge for the school will be when it reviews provision for music at the end of the year, and make decisions on ways of maintaining these high standards within the financial constraints of the budget.

PHYSICAL EDUCATION

135. At the last inspection the standards of the seven- and eleven-year-olds were judged to be above average. Due to the timetabling arrangements during this inspection it was not possible to observe areas which were strong at the time of the last inspection, for example games. During the inspection, almost all the observations were of dance. The standards attained by the seven-year-olds are in line with those expected nationally for pupils of their age. The eleven-year-olds show standards in dance higher than those expected for their age, due largely to the good teaching. Most pupils learn to swim 25 metres in Year 5 and the few who do not are given opportunities to try again when they are in Year 6. The school continues with its success in competitive sport and has won the local netball championship in 2001 and shared the title this year. The school won trophies in the town sports in 2000 and 2001.
136. The remainder of the physical education curriculum is properly planned for. Part of the good improvement since the last inspection has been the establishment of an orienteering photo trail in the school grounds. Pupils have access to outdoor pursuits when they visit a local outdoor centre. In addition, pupils run in competitive cross-country races. Good opportunities are provided for sport in the extra-curricular activities. A strength in the provision the school makes is the effective use of coaches from the local authority for dance, tennis, rugby and cricket. In a tennis coaching session in Year 3, pupils made good progress in developing their skills in using a racquet as a result of the good coaching and the lively and encouraging banter between the coaches and the pupils. In dance, the coach has worked closely with teachers and the influence of this coaching is to be seen in the quality of the teaching of dance which is good overall.
137. In dance, the seven-year-olds make good use of the available space and improve their work as they focus on the space they are going to move into. They successfully begin to develop a sequence of movements linked to work they are undertaking about Africa.

For example, in one sequence they made a good attempt to reflect a vulture falling on its prey. The eleven-year-olds dance well, based on their work on the journey of a river. They make sequences, at times in collaboration with other pupils, that tell the story of the river, for example as it rushes over rocks and makes eddies. The quality of the pupils' movements is sharp as they concentrate on their dance. They dance to their own music that had been composed in a previous music lesson. This adds considerably to the quality of their work.

138. Overall, the teaching is good in both key stages. Teachers have responded well to the input from the coach and this is seen in their use of technical language that the pupils fully understand. For example, when about to start a performance teachers use the phrase 'the curtain is opening'. As the lessons progressed, terms such as 'phrases', 'sequences' and 'motifs' were correctly used to help explain to pupils how to improve their performance. Pupils with special educational needs are fully involved and make good progress. Pupils with statements of special educational need joined in the dance well supported by a teaching assistant and they too made good progress. Teachers are generally confident in their teaching and show a good example to their pupils by changing for the lessons and by wearing correct footwear.
139. The co-ordination of the subject by the well-experienced co-ordinator is good. Audits are made of the staff's skills and views and the information is used well to provide staff training. A recent audit showed that staff were not as confident in teaching dance and so the current input from a coach was organised by the co-ordinator. Pupils are encouraged to become involved in sport outside school. A local Olympic athlete has visited and explained how he became involved in sport. The tennis coaches report that as many as 40 per cent of the pupils who have tennis coaching in Year 3 go on to be involved with tennis outside school. The resources are good and well organised.