

INSPECTION REPORT

WAINSCOTT PRIMARY SCHOOL

Wainscott, Rochester

LEA area: Medway

Unique reference number: 118325

Headteacher: Mrs A Tester

Reporting inspector: R E G Cross
154917

Dates of inspection: 12th to 14th February 2001

Inspection number: 197672

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

INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Type of school:	Community
School category:	Infant and junior
Age range of pupils:	4 to 11
Gender of pupils:	Mixed
School address:	Wainscott Road Wainscott Rochester Kent
Postcode:	ME2 4JY
Telephone number:	01634 717301
Appropriate authority:	The governing body, Wainscott Primary School
Name of chair of governors:	Mr C Taylor
Date of previous inspection:	September 1997

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INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Team members			Subject responsibilities	Aspect responsibilities
15915	Mr R E G Cross	Registered inspector	History, physical education.	What sort of school is it? The school's results and achievements. How well are pupils taught? How well is the school led and managed?
9092	Mr R Elam	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?
13160	Mrs J S Worden	Team inspector	Mathematics, information and communication technology, design and technology, the Foundation Stage.	
12918	Mr B Farley	Team inspector	Science, art, geography, pupils with special educational needs, equality of opportunity.	
22745	Mrs R L Johns	Team inspector	English, music, religious education, English as an additional language.	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

Wainscott Primary School educates boys and girls aged between four and 11 years. There are 203 pupils on roll altogether, which is about the same size as most other schools of its type. There are 29 pupils who are in the same class in the Foundation Stage. The school has 53 pupils with special educational needs which is above the national average. Two of these pupils have statements of special educational needs which is below the national average. The single biggest group of pupils with special educational needs, 26 pupils, have moderate learning difficulties as defined by the Local Education Authority. The school has only five more girls than boys on roll but the composition of most classes is unbalanced in terms of boys and girls. About two per cent of the pupils are from minority ethnic backgrounds, mainly Indian, which is low compared with most schools. Nine of the pupils speak English as an additional language although none is at the early stages of learning to speak the language. Around nine per cent of the pupils are entitled to free school meals which is below the national average. During the last school year, 13 pupils entered the school other than at the usual time of first admission and 21 left it at times which were not those of the normal leaving or transfer for most pupils. This is high compared with most primary schools. Pupils enter the school at average levels of attainment.

HOW GOOD THE SCHOOL IS

This is an effective school. The headteacher's leadership and management are very good and she is well supported by the governors. The quality of the teaching is satisfactory but, in the Foundation Stage, it is very good and, in Years 4 and 6, it is good. In Year 6, the pupils reach average standards in most subjects. There are, however, weaknesses in attainment particularly in information and communication technology throughout the school. The school gives satisfactory value for money.

What the school does well

- The very good leadership of the headteacher gives the school a clear focus on raising standards.
- The school's very good provision for the pupils' social development, including the role models provided by adults, helps the pupils to understand how to live in a community and to contribute to it.
- The very good attitudes which the pupils have towards their work, the very good quality of the relationships in the school and the pupils' good behaviour help them to make progress in their work.
- Curricular provision and the quality of teaching in the Foundation Stage are very good and help the children in that stage of their education to reach above average standards for their age.
- The good understanding which the governors have of its strengths and weaknesses helps the school to improve.
- The quality of teaching in Years 4 and 6 is consistently good and helps the pupils to make good progress in their learning.

What could be improved

- The standards reached by the pupils in Year 2, particularly in mathematics, science and geography, and especially higher achieving pupils who do not always receive work which is hard enough for them.
- Curricular provision in information and communication technology which does not meet the requirements of the National Curriculum and in which pupils reach below average standards.
- Aspects of the management of the school, for example, the effectiveness of the senior management team which does not sufficiently help the school to move forward.
- Equality of opportunity for all pupils, for instance, gifted and talented pupils for whom the school does not have an agreed policy for their identification and provision.
- The resources, accommodation and curriculum for physical education which do not enable the school to meet the requirements of the National Curriculum at Key Stage 2 and do not enable pupils to reach the highest standards of which they are capable.

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 and, since then, it has made a satisfactory improvement. The key issues for action resulting from that inspection have been soundly addressed although, in most cases, they have not been fully dealt with. For example, good assessment procedures are now in place in English, mathematics and, to a lesser extent, science, but these procedures have not been developed in other subjects. A similar picture emerges in many other aspects of the school. Standards in the Foundation Stage and design and technology are higher than at the time of the last inspection but those in geography are lower and the achievement of the current Year 2 is not high

enough. The amount of unsatisfactory teaching observed has been reduced from seven per cent to two per cent but the judgement of this inspection is that teaching is satisfactory rather than good because fewer good lessons were seen. Similarly, the school's provision for the pupils' social development has improved whilst that for their spiritual development is not as good as it was. However, curricular provision for children in the Foundation Stage has improved markedly. In addition, there has been a major improvement in management. At the time of the school's last inspection, it was judged that "The headteacher has a clear vision for the school, that includes the need to provide a demanding curriculum, but is failing to give a clear direction". The judgment of this inspection is that the headteacher's leadership and the direction that she gives to the school are very good. These factors, allied with the support of the governors and the strong team spirit and commitment of the staff, give the school a good capacity to continue to improve.

STANDARDS

The table shows the standards achieved by 11 year olds based on average point scores in National Curriculum tests.

Performance in:	compared with				Key
	all schools			similar schools	
	1998	1999	2000	2000	
English	D	C	C	C	well above average A above average B average C below average D well below average E
mathematics	C	C	C	C	
science	B	C	C	C	

The information shows that the pupils consistently reach average standards compared with all schools and with similar schools. Over the period 1996 to 2000, the trend in the school's rate of improvement in the three subjects shown was broadly in line with the national trend. The school exceeded its targets for the percentage of pupils expected to reach Level 4 and above in English and mathematics in the tests in 2000 and has set realistically challenging targets for 2001. The findings of the inspection are that, in Year 6, standards are above average in art and average in all other subjects, including literacy and numeracy, except information and communication technology where they are below average. At Key Stage 2, the pupils make good progress in art and satisfactory progress in all other subjects except information and communication technology where progress is unsatisfactory.

In the 2000 end of Key Stage 1 tests, standards were average compared with all schools and with similar schools in reading and writing. In mathematics, standards were average compared with all schools and below average compared with similar schools. In Year 2, the findings of the inspection are that standards are average in all subjects, including numeracy and literacy, except in science, information and communication technology and geography where they are below average. There was insufficient evidence to make a judgement about standards in music at either key stage. In Year 2, the pupils' achievement is unsatisfactory. These pupils entered the school at above average levels of attainment but, largely due to the unavoidable necessity for them to be taught by different teachers, they have failed to make sufficient progress to reach the highest standards of which they are capable. Achievement and progress in Year 1 are satisfactory.

Children in the Foundation Stage reach above average standards and make good progress in their learning. Pupils with special educational needs make suitable progress and achieve satisfactory standards relative to their previous levels of attainment. Pupils with English as an additional language make similar progress to that made by most pupils.

PUPILS' ATTITUDES AND VALUES

Aspect	Comment
Attitudes to the school	Very good. The pupils work well with each other and with the adults in the school. They are eager to learn and to make progress.
Behaviour, in and out of classrooms	Good. The pupils behave well in class, at playtimes, in collective worship and around the school. This means that little time is wasted disciplining them in lessons which helps them to complete their work and improve the standards

	that they reach. One pupil has been excluded for a fixed period in the last year.
Personal development and relationships	The pupils' personal development is good. They show an impressive knowledge and understanding of the targets for improvement which they have and how to achieve them. Relationships in the school are very good. The pupils and staff get on well together which creates a positive atmosphere that promotes learning.
Attendance	Good. Attendance is above the national average and unauthorised absence is below that average. Punctuality is good.

TEACHING AND LEARNING

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

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

During the inspection, 20 per cent of the teaching was at least very good, 98 per cent was satisfactory or better and two per cent (one lesson) was unsatisfactory. In the Foundation Stage, 75 per cent of the teaching was at least very good. The quality of teaching in Years 4 and 6 was consistently good and, sometimes, very good. The major strengths of the teaching are the way in which pupils are managed and controlled, the knowledge which teachers have of most of the subjects that they teach and the pace of many lessons. The most important weaknesses in teaching are the use made of assessment information to plan the pupils' work and the consequent weaknesses in teachers' planning of lessons. In Year 2, an analysis of the pupils' work shows low expectations of what they are capable of although all of the teaching in this year group during the inspection was at least satisfactory. The quality of teaching of English, including literacy, and mathematics, including numeracy, is satisfactory at both Key Stage 1 and Key Stage 2. Throughout the school, teaching is at least satisfactory in all subjects except information and communication technology which is unsatisfactory at both key stages and geography which is unsatisfactory at Key Stage 1. The teaching of physical education is good throughout the school as is the teaching of art at Key Stage 2.

The quality of the pupils' learning reflects the quality of teaching and is very good in the Foundation Stage and satisfactory in the rest of the school. Strengths in the quality of learning include the pupils' interest, concentration and independence and, particularly, the knowledge that they have of how to assist their progress through reaching the targets they have been set. The major weakness in the quality of learning is in Year 2 where pupils are not acquiring new skills and knowledge quickly enough. In addition to Year 2, the needs of the pupils are not met in information and communication technology throughout the school or physical education in Key Stage 2 as statutory requirements are not met. The school does not have a policy for the identification and possible development of gifted and talented pupils and pupils' research skills are not always fully developed. Throughout the school, pupils with special educational needs and those for whom English is an additional language receive satisfactory teaching which promotes a similar quality of learning.

OTHER ASPECTS OF THE SCHOOL

Aspect	Comment
The quality and range of the curriculum	The school provides a very good range of learning opportunities for children in the Foundation Stage. At Key Stage 1 and Key Stage 2, curricular provision is unsatisfactory as statutory requirements are not met in either key stage in information and communication technology. In addition, the requirements are not met in physical education at Key Stage 2. The school's teaching of literacy and numeracy is effective. There are weaknesses in the school's policy for equality of opportunity, for example, achievement is not formally monitored by gender or ethnicity. Extracurricular activities and the school's links with the community and other local schools make a sound contribution to the pupils' learning.
Provision for pupils with special educational needs	The provision made for pupils with special educational needs is unsatisfactory. The headteacher is also the special educational needs co-ordinator and there are heavy demands on her time for other duties. This has caused some of the individual education plans of some pupils with special educational needs not

	to be kept up-to-date which slows down their progress.
Provision for pupils with English as an additional language	The school provides sound support for the small number of pupils who speak English as an additional language. Class teachers and the specialist teacher work together effectively to enable these pupils to become increasingly fluent in English and to make satisfactory progress in all subjects. They are very well integrated into all aspects of school life.
Provision for pupils' personal, including spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	Good. Provision for the pupils' social development is very good, for moral development it is good and for cultural development it is satisfactory. The staff provide good role models for the pupils; they learn about the environment in geography and learn moral codes when studying world religions. The school's provision for the pupils' spiritual development is unsatisfactory. There is insufficient raising of the pupils' spiritual awareness in subjects such as music and science although some good work has been done in art.
How well the school cares for its pupils	The school takes good care of its pupils. There are good procedures for child protection and ensuring pupils' welfare. Assessment procedures in English, mathematics and, to a lesser extent, science, are good, but these procedures have not been developed in other subjects. Assessment procedures in the Foundation Stage are excellent.

The school's partnership with parents is good. There are some omissions in the statutory information which is provided for them.

HOW WELL THE SCHOOL IS LED AND MANAGED

Aspect	Comment
Leadership and management by the headteacher and other key staff	The headteacher gives the school very good leadership and management. She has an objective and practical view of what the school needs to do to improve and how to make this happen. However, the management role of the deputy headteacher, some co-ordinators and the senior management team is not sufficiently developed.
How well the governors fulfil their responsibilities	Good. The governors have a clear understanding of the strengths and weaknesses of the school. Their work is appropriately organised through a committee structure which makes fitting use of their particular strengths. The governors attend suitable training and make visits to the school which they report to the full governing body. The governors are well aware of the statutory curricular requirements which are not met and have plans to address them.
The school's evaluation of its performance	Satisfactory. Assessment data are analysed in great detail and suitable conclusions about how to improve standards are drawn and acted upon. Some useful comparisons with standards in other schools have been made. There has been some useful monitoring of teaching in literacy and numeracy. However, the monitoring in numeracy has not concentrated upon the standards achieved by the pupils and monitoring does not take place in all subjects. The procedures for the evaluation of priorities in the school development plan are not strong enough.

The strategic use of resources	Unsatisfactory. Expenditure is carefully and accurately accounted for. However, the budget is not forecast far enough ahead. Spending is not sufficiently well linked to the school development plan to allow suitable judgements about how well money has been spent. Comparisons with the spending of other schools have not been made. Support staff are not always deployed to the pupils' best advantage. The school office is not manned at the times of day when parents are most likely to require assistance.
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The school has a satisfactory number of appropriately qualified teaching and support staff although there are training needs in information and communication technology and design and technology for some staff. The school's accommodation and learning resources are unsatisfactory. Although they meet the needs of most subjects satisfactorily, there are shortcomings in both accommodation and learning resources for information and communication technology and physical education. The provision of resources for children in the Foundation Stage is good.

PARENTS' AND CARERS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

What pleases parents most	What parents would like to see improved
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The fact that they are comfortable about approaching the school with problems. • The expectations which the school has of their children. • The quality of the teaching. • The way in which the school helps their children to become mature and responsible. • The progress made by their children. • The fact that their children like school. • The way in which the school works with them. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The provision of homework. • The range of activities outside lessons. • The behaviour of some pupils. • The information they are given about how their children are getting on. • The school buildings.

The findings of the inspection support the positive views of the parents. In addition, the findings of the inspection show that the pupils' behaviour is good and that the school's provision for homework and extracurricular activities is satisfactory although there are few extracurricular activities for pupils in Key Stage 1. The findings of the inspection support the parents' views of the information they are given about how their children are getting on and the school buildings.

PART B: COMMENTARY

HOW HIGH ARE STANDARDS?

The school's results and pupils' achievements

1. The children currently in the Foundation Stage entered the school at average levels of attainment. The quality of their teaching and learning is very good and they make good progress. The children are on course to reach above average standards in all aspects of their development, except mathematics where standards are on course to be average, by the time that they enter Key Stage 1. These findings are a good improvement on those of the school's previous inspection when children aged under five were found to "attain national expectations for children entering compulsory education". Above average standards are very effectively promoted through their personal, social and emotional development and the emphasis on speaking and listening. Children are able to attend to their personal needs. They put on coats and help each other when aprons are required. Social skills are developing well and children listen carefully to teaching staff and children, allowing others to have their turn at speaking. In communication, language and literacy there are good opportunities to develop writing skills. Some tasks, such as correct letter formation, are closely monitored by an adult but, at other times, children are engaged in tasks of their own choice where writing skills are developed more freely. In the area of mathematical development, most of the older children can count reliably to ten and can record with both pictures and numbers unaided. Younger children can copy write their numbers but some, of lower attainment, find this difficult and need an adult to scribe for them. Good progress is made in knowledge and understanding of the world and creative development because of the wide range of exciting experiences available. Children have outside visits, use their sense of smell to sort different food and work hard to make little baskets that are strong enough to carry sweets. In art work, even the youngest children are learning about mixing paints and know that red and white makes pink. Children are achieving above average standards in their physical development. Coordination is developing well and they understand the need to warm up with gentle exercise before more strenuous activities.

2. In the 2000 end of Key Stage 1 tests, standards were average compared with all schools and with similar schools in reading and writing. In mathematics, standards were average compared with all schools and below average compared with similar schools. In Year 2, the findings of the inspection are that standards are average in all subjects, including numeracy and literacy, except in science, information and communication technology and geography where they are below average. Compared with the findings of the school's 1997 inspection, standards are higher in design and technology because of the school's efforts to raise standards in this subject, and similar in all other subjects except science and geography where they are lower. In this inspection, there was insufficient evidence to make a judgement about standards in music and so no comparison with the findings of the previous inspection is possible. In Year 2, the pupils' achievement is unsatisfactory. These pupils entered the school at above average levels of attainment but, largely due to the unavoidable necessity for them to be taught by different teachers, they have failed to make sufficient progress to reach the highest standards of which they are capable. This also explains why standards have fallen in science and geography since the last inspection. Achievement and progress in Year 1 are satisfactory.

3. In Key Stage 1, Year 2 pupils were enthralled by the teacher's enthusiastic and expressive reading of 'Katie Morag and the two grandmothers' and offered their ideas freely when questioned about the characters and setting. Most pupils spoke audibly and fluently but others did not develop their responses in any detail in spite of the supportive environment. In Key Stage 1, many pupils can recall simple elements of stories but few can comment on characters and only the more able know how to locate information. Most pupils have a growing awareness of the structure of a story and can write simple instructions. In general, pupils spell simple words correctly, and their handwriting is mainly clearly shaped and consistent in size. They use capital letters and full stops correctly and are already beginning to take a pride in the presentation of their work. In Year 2, in mathematics, simple mathematical diagrams have been used to represent the results of sorting items which may or may not use electricity. Most pupils are able to do simple addition up to

20 and when adding hundreds, such as $100 + 200$. They use multiplication (two times and ten times) and subtraction but some lower attaining pupils find difficulty with this. Pupils are able to measure with centimetres and know they must line up the zero with the starting point. In Year 2, in science, the quality of pupils' recorded work is not good enough. In a Year 2 lesson, pupils gained some understanding of healthy living and safety in the use of medicines. Analysis of pupils' work in Year 2 indicates that they have acquired some knowledge and skills in most of the curriculum requirements for science, but not in sufficient breadth or depth.

4. In history in Year 2, the pupils know how aspects of present day life, such as kitchens and aspects of communication, differ from the past but have less understanding of the historical sources that provide this information. In Year 2 in physical education, the pupils listen carefully and show suitable dodging and agility skills in warm up activities they do not always make the best use of the restricted space available. In religious education, Year 2 pupils have a satisfactory knowledge of religious stories including the creation and have taken part in certain aspects of the Divali celebration. In some lessons, work is too closely related to personal and social education to allow the in-depth development of religious education. In music in Year 2, pupils accurately reproduce rhythmic beats using body percussion and tambourines but do not evaluate and improve their work sufficiently. In Year 2 in design and technology, they are developing their knowledge of different tools and techniques and can join materials in a number of ways. Scrutiny of past work across the key stage shows that approximately half the pupils do insufficient recording and evaluation of their designs. No direct evidence of teaching and learning in information and communication technology was available at Key Stage 1 but from scrutiny of pupils' work on display, it is clear that standards are below average. There are weaknesses in the breadth of the curricular provision and pupils have insufficient time working with computers to make adequate progress. In both year groups, evidence shows that they can word process work in English and science lessons. In Year 2, they progress to being able to alter the size and colour of the words they produce. In Year 2, in art and design, pupils work capably on drawing from close observation, on collage and clay plate making although their skills in evaluating and improving their work are limited. In Year 2, in geography, only a very limited amount of work has been produced. This is on Islands and Journeys. There is insufficient challenge for pupils to explore geographical skills and knowledge and some work is simply the completion of a picture, map or diagram with labels and colouring.

5. In Key Stage 2, the pupils consistently reach average standards compared with all schools and with similar schools in the end of key stage national tests and assessments. Over the period 1996 to 2000, the trend in the school's rate of improvement in English, mathematics and science was broadly in line with the national trend. The school exceeded its targets for the percentage of pupils expected to reach Level 4 and above in English and mathematics in the tests in 2000 and has set realistically challenging targets for 2001. The findings of the inspection are that, in Year 6, standards are above average in art and average in all other subjects, including literacy and numeracy, except information and communication technology where they are below average. In this inspection, there was insufficient evidence to make a judgement about standards in music. Compared with the findings of the school's previous inspection, standards are higher in design and technology because of the school's efforts to raise them and similar in all other subjects except mathematics and geography where they are lower. However, the Year 6 pupils in 1997-98 reached average standards in the end of key stage national tests in 1998 which matches the findings of this inspection. The pupils' achievement at Key Stage 2, relative to their standards on entry to the school, reflects these standards and is good in art and satisfactory in all other subjects except information and communication technology where it is unsatisfactory.

6. At Key Stage 2, more able pupils in Year 6 convey points clearly, have a wide vocabulary and give opinions confidently. Average and less able pupils answer questions sensibly and join in class discussions but use a more limited range of words. This was seen in a lesson about the features of humorous writing. Under the skilful direction of the teacher, pupils were able to talk about how short, punchy sentences could build up humour and how descriptive detail could give dramatic interest to a story. In Key Stage 2, pupils are interested in books and generally read with enjoyment, accuracy and increasing confidence. Skills in locating, researching and using information are insufficiently developed across the key stage. In Year 6, pupils show a

growing confidence in experimenting with vocabulary and content and with the technicalities of writing. This is evident in the quality of their creative writing. Information and communication technology is used insufficiently to develop editing skills. In Year 6, in mathematics, pupils are able to identify the information necessary to solve problems. Most can recognise and use decimals and percentages to describe proportions of a whole but their understanding of fractions is less well developed. They understand terms such as, product, prime, factors and square numbers. In work on shape, lower attaining pupils measure and name the angles whereas higher attaining pupils estimate a series of connected angles, to the nearest degree, then to check using a protractor. They know that an obtuse angle is greater than 90 degrees but less than 180. In Year 5, the pupils understand measurements when related to rainfall and temperature data. In Year 6, in science, in a revision lesson on physical processes that demanded the pupils use investigative skills, they made circuits and discovered which materials were or were not insulators. In their work on life processes and living things, pupils have carefully investigated life cycles and have used appropriate vocabulary and investigative techniques. There are some scientific links with numeracy, but these are not well developed and insufficient use is made of information and communication technology in the teaching of the subject.

7. In history in Year 6, the pupils' neatly presented work on Britain in the 1930's and in World War II showed a sound understanding of this topic but there was limited evidence that they had interpreted information from different points of view. In physical education at Key Stage 2, the pupils' evaluative skills are soundly developed but those who are unable to take part in lessons are not suitably employed and watch rather than being given work related to the subject. In religious education in Year 6, the pupils have a sound understanding of the importance of religious writings, including the Bible and Torah, but this is not developed in sufficient depth. In music, pupils in Key Stage 2 sing tunefully with sound diction and expression but do not have sufficient knowledge of notation. During the inspection there was no evidence on which to form judgements for pupils in Year 6 in design and technology. However, in Year 5, pupils have designed and made shadufs (simple structures to raise water from a river). Their books contain labelled sketches, photos of finished products and helpful comments from their teacher. The finished models are simple and show limited progress on building structures and joining techniques but do show good application of scientific knowledge about forces – pupils have to use counterweights to balance the lifting lever. At Key Stage 2, the school does not have some of the resources required to teach aspects of the compulsory information and communication technology curriculum for this key stage. Pupils' work on display, from Year 4 and Year 6, demonstrate that they can word process work. They can sort data, are able to interpret findings and realise the need to frame questions carefully. However, the time available for teaching information and communication technology skills is too little and pupils have insufficient time using computers to make satisfactory progress. In Year 6, in art and design, the pupils are able to refine their composition and brushwork skills to develop a landscape, for example, after a discussion of the effects achieved by Monet although their knowledge of non-European art is limited. In Year 6, in geography, the pupils understand the use of symbols to construct a map that can be interpreted. Many pupils recognise the interrelation of the physical environment with patterns of human settlement. Pupils have insufficient opportunities to carry out independent work.

8. At both key stages, the average standards reached by the pupils in literacy and numeracy indicates that the National Literacy Strategy and the National Numeracy Strategy have been implemented satisfactorily.

9. Pupils with special educational needs make suitable progress and achieve satisfactory standards relative to their previous levels of attainment. Pupils with English as an additional language and those from minority ethnic groups make satisfactory progress. There is no formal analysis of the differences in attainment between boys and girls and of pupils from minority ethnic groups. Over the period 1998 to 2000, there have been variations between the attainment of boys and girls in Key Stage 1 national tests with girls doing less well in writing and mathematics. In the same period, there were no significant differences between boys and girls in Key Stage 2. However, nothing was observed during the inspection to suggest that there is any disparity in the achievement of boys and girls. Higher attaining pupils are not always fully challenged, for example, in English and mathematics.

Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development

10. Pupils' attitudes, behaviour, personal development and relationships with each other and adults are strengths of the school and make a positive contribution towards promoting their attainment and progress. This judgement is the same as the findings at the time of the previous inspection and reflects the widespread views of parents. Parents state that their children enjoy school. The attendance of the pupils is also good.

11. Throughout the school, the pupils' attitudes towards learning are very good. This includes those of pupils with special educational needs. The pupils concentrate well and show interest in what they are doing as was seen particularly in a Year 6 English lesson preparing a letter to an editor. At the other end of the school, pupils in the Reception class listened attentively to different versions of the story of *Little Red Riding Hood*. Year 1 pupils in a numeracy lesson showed their eagerness to help the teacher by holding up numbers and their desire to answer her questions. They listen carefully to other pupils as seen in a Year 4 literacy lesson looking at how writing is targeted at particular readers. This lesson also showed they had the confidence to contribute their own ideas in front of their classmates. Pupils settle quickly to group work in lessons and maintain their interest even when not being directly supported by any adults around them.

12. Pupils behave well in the classroom, in the playground and around the school. They are well mannered, polite and welcoming to visitors. They generally move around the school in an orderly way even when not supervised, though they do sometimes run on their way out at breaktimes. They wait patiently for other classes when going to and from the hall for assemblies. They show respect for property, for example, taking great care of the fruit and equipment when preparing a fruit salad during a Year 1 design and technology lesson. Many pupils behave well though, in a few of the lessons seen, there was occasional minor inappropriate behaviour such as chatting to their classmates about matters not related to their work. The teacher did not always stop this. No bullying occurred during the inspection and the school has appropriate procedures to deal with any aggressive behaviour that may take place. There was one fixed term exclusion in the last school year.

13. Relationships between pupils and with adults are very good and contribute to the quality of work in lessons. During a Year 6 science lesson with electric circuits, there was good interaction between the pupils and the teacher as she assessed their progress and gave them guidance. She also used humour well as they tried to answer questions during a numeracy lesson. Pupils get on well with each other in the classroom and when playing games at break and lunch times. Year 1 pupils worked well together during a dance lesson as one "oiled" the partner who was a rusty machine. Even the youngest in the Reception class willingly wait for their turn as, for example, when playing bingo during a numeracy session. Boys and girls and pupils from different cultural backgrounds work together very well when doing group work in the classroom and when playing at break and lunch times.

14. The pupils' personal development is good. Reception class pupils can understand the feelings of others when they showed they could understand why the character was upset in the story *Jamaica's Find*. Since the last inspection, the school has increased the occasions to work independently. Good co-operation was seen when Year 2 pupils working in pairs were rechecking the accuracy of their work during a mathematics lesson measuring lengths. Reception pupils organised themselves into groups during a physical education lesson practising throwing and catching skills. They are able to use their initiative and, for example, move around the classroom to find materials they may need. Nevertheless, such opportunities are limited and pupils explained they have few opportunities to go to the library to look for non-fiction books or to use CD-ROMs to research information. The teacher closely directed some of the lessons seen, especially science. Pupils respond well to taking responsibility both within the classroom and outside. For example, Year 2 pupils sell crisps at break time and can be relied upon to look after the money. Year 6 pupils teach younger pupils playground games. The pupils also benefit from collecting for charities during the year and meeting people in the community such as when they baked and delivered bread to older people in the community.

15. Children in the Foundation Stage feel very secure in their surroundings and are happy to come to school. They begin the day with enthusiasm and eagerly embark on activities. They are very well behaved and play agreeably alongside one another, sharing resources, talking about what they are doing and

collaborating on their own imagined games. Children are given very good opportunities to plan their work and to choose freely from a range of activities, which promotes their personal development very well. It develops their initiative and an early responsibility for their own learning.

16. Attendance and punctuality are also good. Over the past year, it was nearly 96 percent and makes a significant contribution to the standards achieved by the pupils. Absences are usually due to the inevitable childhood illnesses, although a number of parents insist on taking their children on holiday in term time. Unauthorised absence is very low reflecting the efforts the school makes to obtain explanations from parents. Pupils are keen to come to school and are rarely late. Registration takes place commendably promptly at the start of the day and lessons start and finish on time.

HOW WELL ARE PUPILS OR STUDENTS TAUGHT?

17. The quality of teaching and learning is satisfactory. The judgement of the school's last inspection was that the quality of teaching was good. However, during that inspection, 18 percent of the teaching was very good or better, 93 percent was at least satisfactory and seven percent was unsatisfactory. In this inspection, 20 percent of the teaching was very good or better, 98 percent was at least satisfactory and only two percent (one lesson) was unsatisfactory. There was, however, a higher percentage of good teaching in 1997 than in the present inspection. The findings of the current inspection also show that there are important variations between different parts of the school. In the Foundation Stage, the quality of teaching and learning is very good. In addition, in both Key Stage 1 and Key Stage 2, the quality of teaching is satisfactory overall but, in Years 4 and 6, it is good. The school makes good use of an advisory teacher for pupils with special educational needs and a specialist teacher for pupils with English as an additional language.

18. The major strengths of the teaching are the way in which pupils are managed and controlled, the knowledge that teachers have of most of the subjects that they teach and the pace of many lessons. The most important weaknesses in teaching are the use made of assessment information to plan the pupils' work and the consequent weaknesses in teacher's planning of lessons. In Year 2, an analysis of the pupils' work shows low expectations of pupils' capability although all of the teaching in this year group during the inspection was at least satisfactory. Throughout the school, the marking of pupils' work often highlights how pupils can improve but there are examples, for instance, in science, where marking is not well used to help pupils to progress.

19. The quality of teaching of English, including literacy, and mathematics, including numeracy, is satisfactory at both Key Stage 1 and Key Stage 2. Throughout the school, teaching is at least satisfactory in all subjects except information and communication technology which is unsatisfactory at both key stages and geography which is unsatisfactory at Key Stage 1. The teaching of physical education is good throughout the school as is the teaching of art at Key Stage 2. Throughout the school, there are training needs for some staff in information and communication technology and design and technology.

20. The quality of the pupils' learning reflects the quality of teaching and is very good in the Foundation Stage and satisfactory in the rest of the school. Strengths in the quality of learning include the pupils' interest, concentration and independence and, particularly, the knowledge that they have of how to assist their progress through reaching the targets they have been set. The major weakness in the quality of learning is in Year 2 where pupils are not acquiring new skills and knowledge quickly enough. In addition to Year 2, the needs of the pupils are not met in information and communication technology throughout the school or physical education in Key Stage 2 as statutory requirements are not met. The school does not have a policy for the identification, and possible development, of gifted and talented pupils and pupils' research skills are not always fully developed. There are no differences between the overall judgements of teaching and learning and those for boys, girls and pupils of different ethnicity.

21. The quality of teaching and learning for children in the Foundation Stage is very good in all areas of learning. This represents a significant improvement compared with the findings of the school's previous OFSTED inspection which judged the quality of teaching for these children to be satisfactory overall. The

class teacher and the learning support assistant have a very good understanding of how young children best learn. The quality of the planning, the teaching of basic skills, the challenge and quality of learning experiences and the use of assessment information are exemplary. Teaching methods are very effectively used to direct a child's learning, for example, in number work, letter formation and with practical skills. In addition, homework not only encompasses daily reading but also a mathematical game once a week. In the last report, learning opportunities were missed in free play through lack of guidance and challenge. This is no longer the case. A wide range of tasks and exciting experiences are provided which the children are free to explore for themselves. This promotes independence, confidence and creativity and staff are on hand to guide, to work alongside and to challenge their thinking as the need arises. The very effective organisation of resources and people, the efficient use of time and the skilled management of the class enable this to happen faultlessly.

22. At Key Stage 1, the quality of teaching and learning is satisfactory and, in Year 1, is promoting satisfactory progress and attainment. However, progress and attainment in Year 2 are unsatisfactory. Although all of the teaching observed in this year group during the inspection was at least satisfactory, the scrutiny of pupils' work showed that, largely due to frequent changes of teacher, the pupils are not making enough progress. They entered the school at above average standards but have achieved average standards in all subjects where a judgement could be made except science, information and communication technology and geography where standards are below average. There was no clear judgement about the quality of teaching at Key Stage 1 in the school's previous inspection.

23. A Year 2 literacy lesson in which the pupils shared the story of Katie Morag showed the satisfactory manner in which the National Literacy Strategy is being implemented throughout the school and the satisfactory nature of the teaching and learning at Key Stage 1. The teacher's expressive reading immediately captured the pupils' interest and roused their imagination. "Close your eyes. What can you hear?" - "waves, seagulls". The pupils listened carefully and appreciatively to the story and the teacher drew out personal responses from them very productively. "What do you think they are going to do?" she asked as she encouraged the pupils' early prediction skills effectively. The pupils responded well to the teacher's focused questioning. "How do you know it's an island?" "Water goes all the way round it." Some pupils spoke fluently and confidently but others did not develop their answers in any detail. The teacher's secure knowledge of the subject and teaching of basic skills was evident in her clear and informative explanations and illustrations of the past tense. Initially, she drew examples from the story they were reading but when the pupils found these difficult replaced them with her own examples. This was more productive and her warm, calm manner promoted a good climate for learning in which the pupils were not afraid to make mistakes. The teacher did not make her expectations of the quality and amount of work required before the pupils settled to their group work. However, they were well aware of the routine of the class and quickly concentrated on the task.

24. At Key Stage 2, the quality of teaching and learning is satisfactory and promotes sound progress and attainment. This judgement is not as good as that made by the school's previous inspection when the teaching in one third of lessons was very good. However, the current inspection also finds that, in Years 4 and 6, the quality of teaching and learning is good and promotes good progress and attainment.

25. The National Numeracy Strategy is satisfactorily implemented at Key Stage 2 and throughout the school. A Year 6 numeracy lesson about angles illustrated the strengths of the teaching at Key Stage 2 and of the way the National Numeracy Strategy is implemented throughout the school. The lesson proceeded at a good pace; the pupils listened carefully and most responded quickly. The teacher questioned specific pupils when they appeared unsure. The pupils were able to describe what an angle is and, for example, to name correctly right angles, reflex angles and obtuse angles. The teacher used an overhead projector well to display a protractor. The pupils estimated an angle projected onto the board and explained how to use a protractor while the teacher modelled it for them on the board. Two estimates, 50 degrees and 60 degrees were given. The result was 55 degrees which represented good estimation by the pupils and earned them praise from the teacher. The pupils worked hard and the teacher supported them well. There was a good

rapport between them as was shown when the teacher joked, “No you can’t phone a friend”. This lesson was set at a challenging but achievable level and the pupils made effective progress.

26. Another Key Stage 2 lesson showed the weaknesses in teaching and learning at Key Stage 2 and in the school’s implementation of the National Numeracy Strategy. In this lesson, the introduction was too long and the teacher focused on one group at a time. This meant that the others lost concentration while waiting to be told what to do. Even so, a significant number of the class required extra support before they could start work as they did not understand what they had to do. There was a significant lack of concentration and pupils talked about matters not related to their work. At the end of the lesson, four pupils had still not understood the task and had made no progress.

27. The quality of teaching for pupils with special educational needs is satisfactory and promotes a similar rate of progress for these pupils. Class teachers and teaching assistants have access to the individual education plans of pupils with special educational needs. However, individual education plans are not all up-to-date and this hinders the effective teaching of those pupils who do not have current plans. Learning support assistants play an important role in supporting pupils with special educational needs and this is done through their close liaison with classroom teachers. The needs of all pupils are met satisfactorily in Year 1 and at Key Stage 2 but those in Year 2 do not make enough progress.

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

28. At the time of the previous inspection, the curriculum was broad and relevant across the school although there was an imbalance in the allocation of teaching time to various subjects. There were good policies and schemes of work for science and geography but in other subjects, they were not, or only partially, in place. The lack of a whole school approach to planning meant that teachers were not able to ensure progression in the teaching of skills and knowledge year by year. One of the key issues of that inspection was to improve the curriculum management of the school in order to support teaching and learning.

29. The school has made a satisfactory response to this key issue. The curriculum has been developed soundly along with systems for short and medium term planning. Policies are now in place although some are in draft form or are due for review. Schemes of work, some incorporating guidelines from the Qualifications and Curriculum Authority now enable teachers to plan their work within a whole school framework and to build on pupils’ previous learning. Units of work are selected to match pupils’ interest and local resources. There is a strong focus on differentiated teaching in the core subjects. Total weekly teaching time is now adequate to meet the needs of the curriculum except for some fine tuning.

30. The findings of this inspection are that although children in the Foundation Stage have a very good range of relevant and exciting learning opportunities, which interest and motivate them, the range of learning opportunities for pupils at Key Stages 1 and 2 is unsatisfactory and does not promote the school’s aims effectively. Statutory requirements are not met in information and communication technology across the school and in physical education at Key Stage 2. Consequently, the breadth, balance and relevance of the curriculum are unsatisfactory. Religious education is taught satisfactorily according to the locally agreed syllabus.

31. The curriculum has an appropriate emphasis on the teaching of English and mathematics. The frameworks of the national strategies are used as the starting point for planning and refinements are made to meet the needs of pupils. The National Literacy Strategy is having a positive impact on raising standards in English especially at Key Stage 2 where results have risen steadily. Numeracy is generally successfully planned and taught in Key Stage 2 but there has been a recent improvement in Key Stage 1 where formerly some pupils had a narrower curriculum. Teachers usually follow the guidance for a three-part lesson but not all use the plenary effectively. Numeracy skills are well used across the curriculum and literacy skills are

developed satisfactorily although the use of undemanding work sheets, for example, in history and religious education, limits the style, quantity and quality of pupils' writing.

32. The quality and range of learning opportunities for children in the Foundation Stage are very good which is a marked improvement since the last inspection when it was judged to be satisfactory. The medium and short-term plans are expanded from the Qualifications and Curriculum Authority guidance for the Foundation Stage. They are clear and so well developed that another teacher could take over at a moment's notice should the need arise. The learning support assistant is also involved and, on a half-termly basis, the planning is shared so they can develop topics and incorporate new ideas together. The teacher keeps a daily diary and the learning support assistant has separate plans for the groups that she is supporting. In addition she writes out task notes to assist parent helpers and briefs them beforehand. Weekly plans effectively cover each area of learning and the needs of individual children. The Reception class does not have any pupils with special educational needs, however, children with lower abilities are very well provided for. There are excellent opportunities for children to be taught by an adult and also to choose for themselves. There is a very good range of resources available from which children can choose freely. This, in turn, increases the opportunities for the children to use language for conversational and imaginative purposes and develops their personal, social, emotional and creative development very well. It also enhances their independence by enabling them to choose, experiment, explore creatively and initiate ideas of their own.

33. The curricular planning documentation for pupils with special educational needs is of good quality. However, as already noted in this report, individual education plans for pupils are not all completed which makes the provision for pupils with special educational needs unsatisfactory. Class teachers have the main responsibility for the learning of pupils with special educational needs but they are also well supported by learning support assistants. Most support is given to pupils in class lessons, but when pupils are withdrawn for intensive work, this is carefully organised so that they do not regularly miss other subjects. This situation is an improvement, because the previous inspection found that withdrawal often led to pupils missing important parts of other lessons.

34. A significant number of parents who responded to the pre-inspection questionnaire were not satisfied with the range of activities provided for pupils outside lessons. The findings of the inspection are that, although provision is limited at Key Stage 1, the school offers a satisfactory range of extra-curricular activities including football, netball, athletics, gymnastics, recorders and Bible studies. These clubs are run by parents and teachers and pupils successfully take part in local competitions. The curriculum is enhanced by instrumental music tuition by specialist teachers as well as by a number of visitors to the school and visits to places of educational interest. Visitors, such as members of the fire brigade, community police officers and representatives of local churches, and visits like Rochester Museum, Riverside Country Park and Hever Castle are important and regular features of the curriculum.

35. The school makes sound provision for pupils' personal, social and health education although there is no written policy. Relevant issues, including the maintenance of a healthy diet and life style and the dangers of smoking, alcohol and drug misuse, are taught in specific lessons and through 'circle time'. The school effectively uses the knowledge and expertise of a number of visitors such as the school nurse, representatives from the railways and the school crossing patrol to raise pupils' awareness of keeping safe. Children in the Reception class showed a good understanding of right and wrong when they listened to the story of 'Jamaica's Find' in their lesson and described how feelings of guilt could make them feel 'horrid'. Sex education is taught in Year 6 and governors have currently devised a questionnaire to ascertain parents' views on the government's proposed 'Sex and Relationships Education Guidance'.

36. There are sound links with the wider community that contribute effectively to pupils' experience and provide them with opportunities to develop their awareness of citizenship. Pupils learn to consider the needs of others when they sing to the elderly at Frindsbury Hall Nursing Home or take part in an assembly about Help the Aged. Pupils visit a local allotment and Year 1 pupils went to the lambing sheds at Wainscott to see the new lambs. There are good connections with parishes like All Saints and St Justus at Rochester. A

highlight was when the headteacher and six pupils buried a time capsule in an area of new local housing and, later in the year, were invited to the key ceremony when they planted a tree. Strong links also exist with the Rochester Air Training Corps that shares the school site. Relationships with partner schools also help to ease the transition for pupils from one stage of education to the next. There are good contacts with pre-school groups and with local secondary schools. The school also works closely with a group of 22 local schools, which meet regularly in a consortium.

37. The school's policy for equality of opportunity is not monitored effectively and the achievement of boys and girls and pupils of different ethnicity is not monitored. The school does not have an effective policy for identify and meeting the needs of gifted and talented pupils.

38. Overall the provision for pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good. Firm judgements about the provision were not clearly stated in the previous report, but, overall it is clear that it has been well maintained and, in the cases of social and cultural education, improved. Provision for spiritual development is not as good as it was at the time of the school's last inspection.

39. Provision for pupils to gain insight into values and beliefs, in order to develop their spiritual awareness, is unsatisfactory. Collective worship and religious education provide a limited range of experience for pupils, but this does enable them to reflect on some spiritual issues. Pupils visit different places of worship and some aspects of their work, particularly in Key Stage 1, help them to gain some understanding of spirituality. However, other aspects of spirituality and its inclusion in subjects of the curriculum have no clear focus and are not planned. Collective worship meets statutory requirements.

40. The provision for the moral development of pupils is good. The school has a positive ethos and collective worship and religious education contribute well to the development of pupils' moral understanding. In one act of worship, the headteacher imaginatively explored the issues that arise in the quest for any form of improvement. This helped pupils to appreciate that improvement always needs effort if success is to be achieved. The weekly 'Merit Assembly' reinforces pupils' understanding that good work and behaviour are both valued. Pupils are given opportunities to consider moral issues. For example, they discuss with teachers and decide upon classroom rules of behaviour. There is a good emphasis upon teaching pupils the difference between right and wrong. Teachers concentrate on the positive reinforcement of good behaviour and of attitudes. This helps pupils to develop a sense of moral responsibility. Parents in the pre-inspection meeting, expressed positive views about the quality of the moral and social education that the school provides.

41. Provision for pupils' social development is very good. Adults provide first-class role models for pupils and demonstrate respect and courtesy in their dealings with them. Pupils have some opportunities to exercise responsibility. For example, in Year 6, they often help with those in the Foundation Stage. Wider social awareness is developed when, each term, pupils raise money for various charities, or when they take gifts to the local home for older people at Harvest time. They take good care of their school and its environment. There are good opportunities for pupils to work cooperatively together, for example, in physical education or scientific investigations. During the inspection, pupils were friendly and polite at all times. Year 6 pupils also have the opportunity to live and work together in a different environment when they take part in a residential visit to Carrotty Wood.

42. The provision for pupils' cultural development is satisfactory. Through subjects such as art and geography, they begin to develop an appreciation of their own culture and that of others. For example, they produce artwork in the style of Matisse or Monet. In connection with their work, pupils have visited places such as Rochester Cathedral and art galleries and have benefited from the work of a visiting local photographic artist. Provision for them to learn about other cultures has improved since the previous inspection although it is not systematically planned. There has been a visit from a Ghanaian dance group and an Asian teacher has led collective worship. Religious education has made a good contribution to pupils' understanding of other faiths and cultures and some aspects of art have led them to explore artistic technique in Aboriginal, South American Indian and African designs.

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL CARE FOR ITS PUPILS?

43. Staff show appropriate concern for the needs of the pupils encourage their development. Parents are pleased with the level of support in the school and see it as a caring community where staff are approachable if there are any problems.

44. The school has good procedures for child protection and for ensuring the welfare of the pupils. The headteacher is the designated officer for child protection and the school follows local procedures. The staff have received guidance on how to deal with any situations that may arise and know who to report to in the school if necessary. The arrangements with the Local Education Authority have resulted in several changes of social workers and the school is not kept informed whether any of its pupils are on the at risk register. The provision for first aid is good with several trained staff, records kept of any treatment and letters or telephone calls home to parents if necessary.

45. The school has a good health and safety policy in place. The Local Education Authority has carried out a risk assessment and oversees the arrangements throughout the school. The governors are actively involved in touring the school to identify any potential hazards. The teachers ensure that pupils are made aware of health and safety issues during lessons such as science, physical education and design and technology. The local road safety team and police have given talks about road safety and Year 6 pupils take a cycling proficiency course. The procedures for monitoring pupils' academic progress and personal development make a satisfactory contribution to raising pupils' achievement.

46. Overall, the procedures for assessing pupils' attainment and progress are satisfactory. At the previous inspection, formal assessment procedures were underdeveloped and inconsistent, and the policy was unclear. End of key stage assessments were analysed but important issues were not identified and decisive action not always taken. A key issue for action was to improve assessment procedures and practice, ensuring that recording information was better used to plan future work and to develop the curriculum.

47. The school has addressed this key issue satisfactorily. An assessment co-ordinator has been appointed, data analysis procedures are now in place involving subject co-ordinators, the senior management team and a named governor and pupils' work is scrutinised regularly by the headteacher and co-ordinators. The school's assessment documents now set out the aims and procedures very clearly and much work has been done to put these into practice. However, although practices are good in English, mathematics and, to a lesser extent, science, they are unsatisfactory in other subjects. There are no whole school systems in place and assessment relies too heavily on the recording methods of individual teachers.

48. In English, mathematics and science, assessment is clearly linked to the National Curriculum levels and the results of interim, national tests, internal reading tests and termly mathematics assessments are carefully analysed. These comparisons and analyses are used effectively to inform planning and to address any topics that need revision. Teachers use these findings to reorganise groups within their classes and in Year 6 booster classes and in a breakfast club. Every child is tracked in the three core subjects and the details recorded on the sheets are used to give each pupil an anticipated attainment level. However, there is no monitoring of the achievements of different groups of pupils.

49. Day-to-day assessment is good in literacy and numeracy, for example, if pupils are insufficiently challenged or difficulties occur. In some classes, there is good ongoing oral assessment but, generally, there is insufficient recording of pupils' individual strengths and weaknesses in other subjects to inform planning. In addition, co-ordinators, other than English, mathematics and science, do not have information that is easily accessible for monitoring the subject and tracking pupils' progress.

50. Target setting in literacy and mathematics is a good initiative. Pupils are encouraged to be analytical about their work and can receive guidance from a critical friend. Their targets are challenging but realistic

and effectively instil in pupils a sense of responsibility for their own work. They also provide good motivation as pupils know what they have to do to achieve the next level. Marking is often specific and positive and highlights how pupils can improve their work but there are examples, for instance, in geography, where marking is not well used to help pupils to progress. The 'traffic light' system is a good exercise in self-evaluation and involves pupils effectively in their own learning.

51. Children in the Foundation Stage are well cared for and it is evident that they feel at ease in their surroundings. The well-planned induction procedures are an important factor of this positive situation. The children play happily in their own play area, which is fenced off from the main playground, but are equally eager to go in the 'big' playground. Staff are on hand to deal with any mishaps and children display their feeling of security by the way they move around the classroom and confidently take the register to the office, unsupervised by an adult. Since the last inspection, there has been a very good improvement in the procedures for assessing children's attainment and progress and how the information is used to guide curricular planning. This aspect is now excellent and a strength of the Foundation Stage. Very soon after children enter the school, they are assessed in relation to the Early Learning Goals using a procedure designed specifically for this age range. It provides valuable information for planning the early activities so that they meet the children's individual needs. A whole host of other methods are then used to keep track of progress over time. These include, for example, daily group assessments of literacy and numeracy and termly or half-termly assessments of word recognition, letter sounds and number work. An ingenious idea is used to log informal assessments when children are working on activities that they have chosen for themselves. Plastic pockets, dotted around the classroom, are used to collect the notes made by staff about specific children working in that area. These are collated weekly and updated on their individual profiles. Each child also has specific targets to aim for over a period of time.

52. The monitoring of progress of pupils' personal development is good. The Reception class teacher keeps good records of the pupils' personal qualities building upon the information provided by the parents. Teachers in Key Stage 1 keep notes each term, or more often if necessary, recording pupils' attitudes, how well they are settling and any problems they may have. In Key Stage 2, the approach is less structured with pupils' general progress usually being recorded only at the end of the year for the new class teacher. Since the last inspection, the school has increased the opportunities for pupils to take on responsibilities for their work and to learn to be independent, for example, through involvement in the targets set for their improvement. Nevertheless there are limited opportunities for pupils to seek out information and in some lessons, especially science, the teachers closely direct the work of the pupils. The school encourages pupils to recognise the value of good work and positive attitudes by the award of merits by both teachers and support staff. 'Circle time' and personal, social and health education lessons help pupils to learn to listen to others and to be tolerant of other points of view.

53. The school has good procedures to identify those pupils that have special educational needs. The co-ordinator for these pupils and class teachers work carefully together to set learning targets for pupils in individual education plans. Staffing difficulties have hindered the review of pupils' progress. This is because new targets have not been established for all pupils. The needs of pupils with statements of special educational need are appropriately met.

54. The procedures for promoting discipline and good behaviour are good. The teachers agree class rules with the pupils at the beginning of the year. Discussions with the pupils show they have a good understanding of how to behave. The behaviour policy is extensive, has a variety of rules and describes the school's approach to rewards and sanctions. The lunchtime supervisors have clear procedures to follow and award merits to pupils who are especially helpful or show good manners. The teachers generally adopt a consistent approach in ensuring that pupils behave well in the classroom. During the inspection, it was apparent that pupils are familiar with the well-established routines and do not need close supervision. Nevertheless, in a few of the lessons seen, teachers occasionally did not stop some pupils from chatting about matters not related to the work. The pupils could not recall any instances of aggressive behaviour, either bullying or racism, and parents confirmed that the school takes appropriate action if any occurs. Pupils who

show any sustained difficulty with behaviour are monitored appropriately through the school's special educational needs system.

55. The procedures for monitoring and promoting attendance and punctuality are very good. The good relationships with parents and the desire of the pupils to come to school result in little absence by the great majority of pupils. In the prospectus, the school reminds parents of the need for regular attendance and the importance of arriving on time. Any unexplained absence results in the secretary telephoning home during the morning of the first day. She also produces weekly statistics to enable the headteacher to see whether there is any change in the pattern of attendance. Punctuality is monitored well. Registration takes place promptly at the start of the day and a late book records any pupils who arrive more than ten minutes after the start of the day.

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL WORK IN PARTNERSHIP WITH PARENTS?

56. In their responses to the questionnaire and at the meeting with the inspectors, parents showed that they are generally pleased with all that the school does. The inspection team supports all of their positive comments and the parents' reactions are similar to the comments made at the time of the previous inspection. Some parents are concerned about the range of activities outside lessons. The inspectors consider that the provision of clubs and activities are good for the older pupils although the lack of any such provision for the younger pupils is unsatisfactory. Some doubts were expressed about the amount of homework but the inspectors concluded that the homework set is appropriate and related to the age of the pupil. A few parents also felt that they were not well informed about the progress of their children although the great majority are satisfied with the amount of information provided. The inspectors consider that there are good opportunities for parents to meet staff although the reports at the end of year are inadequate. A few parents were also dissatisfied with the level of behaviour in the school. The inspection team concluded that, overall, behaviour is good with only minor problems in a few lessons. At the meeting, parents expressed a concern about the buildings and the inspectors agree that the accommodation is unsatisfactory in some areas.

57. The school has established good links with the parents and these contacts are effective. Overall the quality of information provided by the school is satisfactory. The headteacher sends home a newsletter every week providing general administrative information as well as, for example, encouraging parents to help in school. Every term, teachers send details of what they will be teaching in their class. Other letters refer to more specific matters. The prospectus and newsletters encourage parents to meet teachers though it would normally be by appointment. There are some omissions in the statutory information required to be provided for parents in the prospectus and the governors' Annual Report. In their replies to the questionnaire, the great majority of parents indicated they would be comfortable approaching the school if they had any problems. Nevertheless, they are told not to come into the playground at the start and end of the day. The formal meetings with teachers take place in the autumn and spring terms to discuss children's progress. In addition, in Key Stage 2, the school sends home the results of mental mathematics tests. The annual report on progress is sent home in the summer term. Many of these reports are unsatisfactory. The one produced for the Reception children is very good. For the other years, they are completed inconsistently. There are some instances where the report provides a reasonable summary of what the pupil knows and can do for English, mathematics or science together with targets to help the pupils to improve. Nevertheless, it is poor in several classes and in other subjects it is very brief and concentrates on the work covered or attitudes rather than the skills and understanding acquired.

58. Parents of pupils with special educational needs are not always involved in the setting and review of their individual education plans. The school prospectus gives clear information about the provision made for pupils with special educational needs. Parents are involved with the school in most of the aspects that affect their children, but there is no clear procedure established so that all are fully involved in the review of the progress of their children. Overall, parents expressed satisfaction about the provision made for pupils with special educational needs when invited to comment about this before the inspection.

59. The induction programme for the youngest pupils is very good. Early Years staff liaise with the Wainscott playgroup and there is a meeting for parents and children, who are invited to attend half-day sessions in school. There is also an information pack for parents. Induction days are also arranged with local playgroups and children can spend time in school with their key workers. Parents are seen as an essential element of the children's progress in reading and numeracy, and weekly mathematical games are given as homework.

60. Parents' involvement with the school makes a good contribution to its work and to the attainment of the pupils. Pupils are keen to come to school and are happy being there. These attitudes reflect the support that parents give to the school. The school has held meetings with parents to discuss homework, the home-school contract and the way the curriculum has changed. The connections which parents have with the local playgroup, brownies and old people's home help to develop links with those organisations. The Reception class benefits from the meeting with the teacher where parents provide important information about their children. The Friends' association is very supportive and arranges many fund raising and social events. A good number of parents come to help in the classroom on a regular basis and many more are willing to help on trips out. Particular mention must be made of the efforts of parents in providing a very attractive painted Studio Area in Key Stage 1.

HOW WELL IS THE SCHOOL LED AND MANAGED?

61. The leadership and management of the school are good and the headteacher's contribution to leadership and management is very good. This is a strong improvement on the findings of the school's 1997 inspection which stated "there is a lack of clear educational direction for the current needs of the school". The headteacher has clearly identified what the school needs to do to improve and has taken significant steps to ensure that improvements happen. She provides objective and analytical leadership for the school which is moving forward. For example, the co-ordination and monitoring of English, and mathematics has been strengthened as have assessment procedures in these subjects. Additionally, the school development plan already identifies many of the issues for improvement recognised by this inspection, for example, standards in information and communication technology. The governors report that this impetus has been generated while preserving the essential supportive and friendly ethos of the school. The findings of the inspection confirm a strong team spirit and an effective commitment to the aims of the school amongst all of those associated with it which gives it a good capacity to improve in the future.

62. The school was last inspected in September 1997 and, since then, it has made a satisfactory improvement. Since her appointment some two years ago, the headteacher has systematically addressed the key issues for action resulting from that inspection. Sound progress has been made in this work although, in most cases, they have not been fully dealt with due to lack of time. For example, although good assessment procedures are now in place in English, mathematics and, to a lesser extent, science, these procedures have not been developed in other subjects. Similarly, standards in the Foundation Stage and design and technology are higher than at the time of the last inspection but those in geography are lower and the achievement of the current Year 2 is not high enough. In this inspection, only two percent of the teaching (one lesson) was unsatisfactory compared with seven per cent at the time of the last inspection. However, the judgement of this inspection is that teaching is satisfactory rather than good because fewer good lessons were seen. Furthermore, the school's provision for the pupils' social development has improved whilst that for their spiritual development is not as good as it was. However, curricular provision for children in the Foundation Stage has improved markedly and there has been a major improvement in management. Nevertheless, the management role of the deputy headteacher, the co-ordination and monitoring of some subjects and the function and composition of the senior management team are not sufficiently effective.

63. The governors support the school well. They have a clear understanding of its strengths and weaknesses and fully participate in plans to improve the school. Their involvement in the analysis and interpretation of assessment data and the development of information and communication technology is especially strong. The governors organise their work appropriately through a committee structure which

makes fitting use of their particular strengths. They attend suitable training and make visits to the school which they report to the full governing body. The governors are well aware of the statutory curricular requirements which are not met and have plans to address them.

64. There are shortcomings in the school's provision, policy and monitoring of equality of opportunity for all pupils. For example, assessment information is not always used to provide pupils with work which is matched to their needs in all subjects and this does not enable them to reach their full potential. In addition, not all pupils' research skills are fully developed. The school's policy for equality of opportunity is not monitored effectively and the achievement of boys, girls and pupils of different ethnicity is not monitored. The school does not have an effective policy for identifying and meeting the needs of gifted and talented pupils.

65. The school's evaluation of its performance is satisfactory. Assessment data are analysed in great detail and suitable conclusions about how to improve standards are drawn and acted upon. Some useful comparisons with standards in other schools have been made. There has been some appropriate monitoring of teaching in literacy and numeracy. However, the monitoring in numeracy has not concentrated upon the standards achieved by the pupils and monitoring does not take place in all subjects. School development planning has improved significantly since the school's last inspection. However, there are still weaknesses, for example, the procedures for the evaluation of priorities in the school development plan are not strong enough.

66. The school's strategic use of resources is unsatisfactory although expenditure is careful and accurately accounted for. However, the budget is not forecast far enough ahead and spending is not sufficiently well linked to the school development plan to allow suitable judgements about how well money has been spent. Comparisons with the spending patterns of other schools have not been made. Support staff are not always deployed to the pupils' best advantage and the school office is not manned at the times of day when parents are most likely to require assistance. At approximately seven and a half percent of its income, the school's budgetary reserves are higher than usual. These funds are allocated to improve the school's provision for information and communication technology and a detailed and suitable plan for this has been produced. This plan is about to be put into effect. However, at 40 pupils to one computer, the school's ratio of pupils to computers is very high which has restricted their learning unnecessarily as funds have been available to correct this situation. The school's use of new technologies is, therefore, unsatisfactory. Similarly, shortcomings in physical education equipment have not been sufficiently addressed.

67. The headteacher is the co-ordinator for special educational needs. This situation is not satisfactory because there is insufficient time for her to carry out the considerable duties of both roles efficiently. There is good liaison between the headteacher, the teachers and the learning support assistants, and this has a positive effect on pupils' progress. However, lack of time has meant that the review of pupils' progress and the setting of new targets have not all been completed. Learning support assistants feel valued by the school and work very well with teachers. Governors take a keen interest in special educational needs, but they do not have sufficient information about the progress of pupils to help them decide how successful is the school policy. The school development plan clearly sets out how the school intends to improve the provision for special educational needs. The funding allocated for pupils with special educational needs is suitably spent.

68. The Foundation Stage co-ordinator is first rate. She is knowledgeable, exceptionally well organised and pro-active in her management of the Foundation Stage. There is considerable rigour when monitoring the quality of children's learning and their progress. Curricular provision for children in the Foundation Stage has improved since the last inspection and there is now good quality outdoor play provision and a very good range of resources including wheeled toys. However, the outside play area is not covered which prevents its use in certain weather conditions. The classroom accommodation for Reception children is small but very well organised with a stimulating environment. However, there is not enough room for the computer, which is in the area outside the classroom. In order that staff can oversee it, it has to be positioned close to an external exit which older pupils use when going to the school hall which distracts children from their work.

69. There is a sufficient number of suitably qualified and experienced teachers and support staff to meet the demands of the curriculum although there are training needs for some staff in information and communication technology and design and technology. Staff are deployed appropriately. Good administrative support is provided by the administrative staff and the premises officer. The school has good

arrangements for supporting newly qualified teachers and any other staff new to the school. Staff development is linked to the school development plan but also takes account of the individuals' needs which helps to ensure that the funds provided for staff training are put to a suitable use. It is effective in improving both teaching and learning. The arrangements for appraisal of staff and for the introduction of performance management are appropriate

70. The accommodation has a number of attractive features but overall, it is unsatisfactory and limits the attainment of the pupils. Both the modern and the Victorian buildings are well looked after and kept clean. The modern building has the main teaching areas and is made particularly attractive with displays of information and pupils' work. The classrooms are of sufficient size apart from the one for the Reception pupils. In addition, there is no suite for information technology and the library is too small for teaching any group larger than three or four. The lack of classroom doors allows noise from adjoining lessons to distract pupils. The hall in the Victorian building is too small for physical education lessons, especially for Key Stage 2 gymnastics. This building is also used for music and assemblies and movement between the two buildings, although well managed, results in a loss of teaching time especially in cold or wet weather. The playground has been resurfaced since the last inspection. Whilst most subjects have an appropriate range of resources, the provision is unsatisfactory overall. The particular weaknesses are in physical education, which lacks large gymnastics apparatus and wall bars, and information and communication technology where the numbers of computers are exceptionally low. The provision of resources is good for children aged under five.

71. WHAT SHOULD THE SCHOOL DO TO IMPROVE FURTHER?

1. **Raise standards, particularly in mathematics, science and geography , at the end of Key Stage 1 by ensuring that the pupils, especially those capable of higher attainment, receive work which challenges and extends them.**

(Paragraphs 2,18,20,22,81,95,114)

2. ***Improve standards in information and communication technology throughout the school by:**

- improving the quality, quantity and use of resources;
- providing training for teachers;
- making more use of information and communication technology in other subjects;
- implementing fully the requirements of the National Curriculum.

(Paragraphs 2,7,19,69,70,104,121 to 124)

3. **Develop the quality of management through:**

- enhancing the role of the deputy headteacher;
- improving the effectiveness of the school development plan particularly its links with financial planning and evaluation;
- developing the co-ordination of subjects other than mathematics, English and science where this work has already been undertaken;
- strengthening the role of the senior management team and reviewing its membership;
- reassessing the advisability of the headteacher acting as special educational needs co-ordinator in view of the heavy demands on time made by this role.

(Paragraphs 62,65,66,67,99,108,112,116,120,134,142)

4. **Enhance equality of opportunity for all pupils by:**

- monitoring the effectiveness of the school's policy for equality of opportunity and multi cultural development;
- monitoring the achievement of boys, girls and pupils of different ethnicity;
- introducing an effective policy for the identifying and meeting the needs of gifted and talented pupils;
- ensuring that the needs of all pupils with special educational needs are met;
- being certain that assessment information, including the marking of their work, is always used to provide pupils with work which is matched to their needs in all subjects;
- further developing the pupils' research skills.

(Paragraphs 9,14,18,20,27,33,37,50,55,64,67)

5. **Improve resources and the accommodation available for the teaching of physical education so that the requirements of the National Curriculum are fully met at Key Stage 2 and standards are improved throughout the school.** (Paragraphs 70,130 to 134)

*Identified in school development plan

OTHER ISSUES WHICH SHOULD BE CONSIDERED BY THE SCHOOL

- Developing assessment procedures in those subjects where this report identifies the need. (Paragraph 47)
- Improving the written reports to parents about the attainment and progress of their children. (Paragraph 57)
- Reviewing the provision for the pupils' spiritual development. (Paragraph 39)
- Continuing to make efforts to improve the school's accommodation. (Paragraph 70)
- Ensuring that the statutory information provided for parents meets requirements. (Paragraph 57)
- Reviewing the times when the school office is manned so that cover is provided when it is most needed by parents. (Paragraph 66)
- Re-examining the deployment of the school's learning support staff. (Paragraph 66)

PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS

Summary of the sources of evidence for the inspection

Number of lessons observed	50
Number of discussions with staff, governors, other adults and pupils	38

Summary of teaching observed during the inspection

Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
4	16	38	40	2	0	0

The table gives the per cent age of teaching observed in each of the seven categories used to make judgements about lessons.

Information about the school's pupils

Pupils on the school's roll	Nursery	Y R – Y 6
Number of pupils on the school's roll (FTE for part-time pupils)		203
Number of full-time pupils known to be eligible for free school meals		21

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Special educational needs	Nursery	Y R – Y 6
Number of pupils with statements of special educational needs		2
Number of pupils on the school's special educational needs register		53

English as an additional language	No of pupils
Number of pupils with English as an additional language	9

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	21

Attendance

Authorised absence	%
School data	4.58
National comparative data	5.4

Unauthorised absence	%
School data	0.1
National comparative data	0.5

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

Attainment at the end of Key Stage 1

Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 1 for the latest reporting year	Year	Boys	Girls	Total
	2000	21	9	30

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		Reading	Writing	Mathematics
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	17	17	21
	Girls	*	*	*
	Total	*	*	*
Per cent age of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	83 (87)	83 (81)	100 (90)
	National	[83] (82)	[84] (83)	[90] (87)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	16	19	17
	Girls	*	*	*
	Total	*	*	*
Per cent age of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	80 (87)	90 (87)	83 (84)
	National	84 (82)	88 (86)	88 (87)

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

* Information not included as fewer than 10 girls involved.

Attainment at the end of Key Stage 2

Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 2 for the latest reporting year	Year	Boys	Girls	Total
	2000	11	20	31

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys	9	7	11
	Girls	18	17	19
	Total	27	24	30
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	87 (74)	77 (67)	97 (85)
	National	75 (70)	72 (69)	85 (78)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys	7	7	9
	Girls	18	17	18
	Total	25	24	27
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	81 (70)	77 (70)	87 (67)
	National	70 (68)	72 (69)	79 (75)

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

Ethnic background of pupils

	No of pupils
Black – Caribbean heritage	1
Black – African heritage	0
Black – other	0
Indian	4
Pakistani	0
Bangladeshi	0
Chinese	0
White	197
Any other minority ethnic group	1

This table refers to pupils of compulsory school age only.

Teachers and classes

Qualified teachers and classes: Y R – Y 6

Total number of qualified teachers (FTE)	8
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	25
Average class size	29

Education support staff: Y R – Y 6

Total number of education support staff	9
Total aggregate hours worked per week	146

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.

Financial information

Financial year	1999/2000
Total income	380654
Total expenditure	370193
Expenditure per pupil	1772
Balance brought forward from previous year	17615
Balance carried forward to next year	28076

Results of the survey of parents and carers

Questionnaire return rate

Number of questionnaires sent out	203
Number of questionnaires returned	98

Percentage of responses in each category

	Strongly agree	Tend to agree	Tend to disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know
My child likes school.	45	39	8	4	4
My child is making good progress in school.	36	47	8	3	6
Behaviour in the school is good.	25	50	15	3	7
My child gets the right amount of work to do at home.	26	45	20	7	2
The teaching is good.	44	45	6	0	5
I am kept well informed about how my child is getting on.	43	40	15	0	2
I would feel comfortable about approaching the school with questions or a problem.	49	46	5	0	0
The school expects my child to work hard and achieve his or her best.	45	46	4	0	5
The school works closely with parents.	34	50	11	1	4
The school is well led and managed.	36	42	11	1	10
The school is helping my child become mature and responsible.	36	49	5	1	9
The school provides an interesting range of activities outside lessons.	19	52	22	4	3

Other issues raised by parents

Seventeen parents made additional comments on their questionnaires. The only recurring themes were support for the school, concern at the poor facilities offered by some of the accommodation, the behaviour of some pupils and a desire for more information about how their children are getting on.

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

72. Overall, standards are above average for most children in the Foundation Stage. Many of the older and more capable children are already achieving the expected standards, or beyond, and most of the younger children are on course to achieve the expected outcomes by the end of the Foundation Stage or before. This shows a good level of progress since most children begin school with average levels of attainment for their age. At the time of the last report, attainment was average whereas currently it is above average in all areas of development except for mathematical development where it is average. This shows a good level of improvement and is clearly linked to the very good quality of teaching and curricular provision, which meets the needs of all children, including those of lower achievement. There are no children with special educational needs. The co-ordinator is knowledgeable, exceptionally well organised and pro-active in her management of the Foundation Stage. The teaching staff show considerable rigour when monitoring the quality of children's learning and their progress. The quality of teaching and learning in all areas of development is very good and promotes a similar rate of progress.

Personal, social and emotional development

73. Standards are above average in this area of learning and most children are happy and secure in their surroundings and have settled in well since starting school. They are eager and motivated to learn and this is directly related to the very good quality of teaching led by the teacher or the learning support assistant. Activities, stories and resources are carefully chosen to engage their interest. They sit quietly, listen attentively to explanations, and work productively and at a good pace for their age. The use of very good visual aids – pictures and artefacts - helps children to sustain their concentration. They are confident and willing to share their progress, in reading, for example, with an inspector. Relationships are very good. Children take turns in games and are polite to each other, to teaching staff and to visitors. They are well behaved and are aware of what is expected of them both inside and outside the classroom when with parent helpers. The story 'Jamaica's Find' was used very effectively by the teacher to further develop their understanding of what is right and wrong. They were able to identify the right approach to a problem and understood why the little girl in the story felt upset. A sensitive approach by the teacher enabled children to understand and reflect on times when they had done something wrong and how it made them feel. Effective use of picture cards enabled children to think and talk about what they would do in different situations as they listened to the views of others and the teacher. Children are able to attend to their personal hygiene appropriately and most can put on their coats independently. This independence is extended to helping others put on their aprons for art and preparing the tables by covering them with newspapers. They are also sufficiently confident to take the register back to the office with a partner. During the afternoon, children can choose activities from a wide range available which allows them to initiate ideas of their own. Timers are used effectively so that children know how much time is left before they can move on to another activity. These opportunities enhance their progress in social interaction, awareness and sensitivity to the needs of others and give the children a clearer understanding of co-operation and taking turns with one another.

Communication, language and literacy

74. Very good quality teaching and learning enable most children to achieve above the standards that would be expected for their age. The teacher's dynamism when reading stories engages their interest exceptionally well. Already children understand the words 'author' and 'illustrator', some even know where to find the 'blurb'. Children also know that well loved stories can have different endings depending on which version is read. Excellent control is kept while also engaging the whole class in actions and voices for different characters in the story. The children respond to this very quickly and adapt their behaviour in relation to the different characters. For example, when listening to the story of 'Little Red Riding Hood' they

gave the wolf a gruff voice and one little girl showed a twitchy grimace to denote how nasty he was. Literacy lessons flow easily from one teaching point to the next and very good, well-prepared resources maintain interest. Concentration is very high. Most children have a good understanding of the sounds of letters and can suggest words that rhyme with a particular ending, such as 'ed' and older and higher attaining children can find word families which rhyme. They know the difference between real and 'gobbledy-gook' words and are beginning to understand when like-sounding words, such as could, do not actually fit with 'oo' words such as hood and good. Generally, children speak clearly though some are still shy when 'performing' in front of others. However, they use speech and language well when imagining and recreating their own experiences. In the home corner, which is currently used as a health centre, children sing out 'Next please' and 'What's the matter with you?' as they develop their imaginative play. Good progress is being made with writing. The skills of letter formation are well taught through opportunities to trace over patterns, copy-write and then to scribe for themselves. There is a wide range of experiences for developing writing. Some are led by the teaching staff, such as recording work in science, and at other times initiated by the child when using the writing area or in the home corner. Children are making good progress with reading. Most pupils can read familiar words. Lower achieving pupils require some help but some can read simple sentences albeit hesitantly. Average and higher achieving pupils read simple sentences independently and can talk about the main characters in their books. A few children are making very good progress. In addition to reading fluently from simple books, they recognise a large number of words in their word bank and occasionally respond to comments in their exercise books. One little girl responded by writing below her teacher's written comment, 'Yes, Mrs ... I wil.'

Mathematical development

75. Most children are achieving average standards in this area of learning. Very good planning, teaching and learning are ensuring they develop a broad sense of mathematics. Most of the older and higher achieving children can record numbers in writing and by counting spots. They use counters to make simple addition sentences, count reliably to ten and some can add three numbers together, to total beyond ten, when problem solving. Younger and lower achieving children can copy-write their numbers and a few are able to record numbers unaided. In work on measurement, they have an early understanding of capacity, are able to compare length, describing which is shorter or longer, and can add simple numbers such as, three plus two. In a lesson on two-dimensional shapes, the teacher emphasised the naming and recognition of the shapes and asked frequent open-ended questions posing them to specific groups of children with differing abilities. This ensured that they all worked hard and, using the evidence on display, thought carefully. Children do this well because the teacher holds their attention and is very well organised and the pace is brisk. Games such as bingo and songs are used effectively to learn about numbers. Mathematical development is further enhanced through homework and mathematical games are taken home each week on a Friday.

Knowledge and understanding of the world

76. Standards are above average with most children on course to attain, or surpass, the Early Learning Goals by five. Work on display shows how an early understanding of geography is being developed. They know, by marking a map of Great Britain, that some of their grandparents do not live close by. Artefacts, such as a baby photographs, are used well to help children compare the difference between times past, in their own life, and now. The quality of teaching is very good, and sometimes outstanding, and this has a very good effect on the quality and rate at which children learn. Lessons are very well organised with stimulating and relevant activities for this age range. A display of baby shoes demonstrates how much they have grown since babyhood and links well with work on measurement. First rate planning, linked to the Early Learning Goals, shows clearly how the teacher, learning support assistant and parent helpers are involved. Notes on laminated 'lesson' plans ensure that parents are well prepared to assist with specific tasks. Effective questioning focuses children's attention and probes their understanding. In work related to scientific enquiry, they are able to sort food into those that are healthy or not and also by using their sense of smell. They are given considerable responsibility and independence in their learning, for example, by working with a partner to identify which smells they like or dislike. First-hand experience is also used when they go on local walks to

see the signs of winter and spring. Children make good attempts at drawing designs of things they are going to make. Work on display shows they have used different methods for joining card to allow legs and arms to move on card puppets. Some have used paper fasteners, others have used pipe cleaners. They are able to apply this knowledge well in lessons when making little baskets to hold Red Riding Hood's sweets. Some attach the handle with glue or staples and then reinforce them with sticky tape. The children make appropriate progress when using computers but it is difficult for teaching staff to keep a good oversight of their progress, even though support is given to them as much as possible while they work. The classroom is small and, although very well organised, there is insufficient room for the computer, which is situated just outside in the shared area. The program, which links well with work in literacy, absorbs children. They can match pictures to an initial letter by using the mouse to drag them to the correct position and know how to proceed through the program. However, even though the children are well behaved, they are distracted from their work when pupils from another class have to pass behind them to use the outside door. Children have plenty of opportunities to use other forms of technology, such as cassette players and headphones, but have insufficient access to computers. This aspect of their learning is developing more slowly and some pupils find difficulty controlling the mouse.

Physical development

77. An improvement since the last inspection is the addition of an appropriately fenced outdoor play area with suitable toys for developing the children's co-ordination and control. There is a small slide, a seesaw, sand tray and a range of wheeled toys, including tricycles and prams. Standards are above average, which is clearly related to the teacher's confident manner and excellent control during lessons for physical development. Children change quickly and quietly and go across the playground to the hall in very good order. They are asked and know why they have to have a warm-up session and then suggest suitable activities. They work well in pairs and the learning support assistant is effectively employed in helping. Children show good levels of poise and quality of movements and their enthusiasm is very well maintained by the provision of varied items to throw and catch. They are given responsibility for their own learning by having choice but this is guided by the teacher's emphasis on their choosing items that suit their ability. Pupils respond very well to this independence and weaker catchers choose big balls to help them. Hand control is also developing well through the many experiences planned. Most children are now able to use a pencil and paintbrush with appropriate control and know how to handle scissors correctly when cutting out. Staff give effective help by demonstrating or guiding their hand when there is obvious difficulty. They use construction equipment to build models and are refining their dexterity with simple sewing projects.

Creative development

78. Children are above average in this area of learning and progress is good. The quality of teaching and learning is very good with a wide range of opportunities for children to explore creatively and imaginatively. This also promotes their independence to choose, experiment and initiate ideas of their own. To ensure all children have equality of access to the range on offer, teaching staff carefully monitor the activities they choose. During a music lesson, the teacher gave a lively presentation to the children to introduce them to the music and story of 'Peter and the Wolf.' They listened well, as happy and scary sounds were demonstrated on musical instruments, and made good contributions, which the teacher made skilful use of, frequently reinforcing the names and sounds of the instruments. A simple form of notation was revealed which children easily understood. Good explanations were given so that pupils were clear about what they had to do. They responded with a very good effort and explored in some detail how sounds were made and changed. The learning support assistant worked well with a small group of children, maintaining their concentration and taking part when they had difficulties. Artwork encompasses a broad range of opportunities such as children drawing pictures of their family, and labelling them, observational drawings of baby shoes, self-portraits, collage, fantastic fish, a class project of Elmer the Elephant and painted patterns. The work is good quality and shows individual expression. Younger aged children are learning about mixing paint and know that red and white make pink. Older pupils have developed this much further and can mix tonal colours in various shades of pink and orange. Communication, language and literacy are also effectively developed through

opportunities for imaginative role-play. Interaction by staff is good and focuses on developing the children's language and ability to communicate. The classroom has a writing corner with all the necessary office-type materials such as pens, stapler and paper clips and this too inspires interest in writing for their own purpose.

ENGLISH

79. As at the previous inspection, standards in English are typical for seven and eleven year olds. This reflects the school's results in the end of Key Stage 1 national tests and assessments in 2000, which showed average standards in both reading and writing when compared with all schools and with similar schools. Over the past four years, standards in reading have fluctuated but those in writing have broadly followed the national trend. The findings of the inspection are also the same as the school's results in the end of Key Stage 2 national tests and assessments in 2000, which were average when compared with all schools and with similar schools. At Key Stage 2, results have risen steadily over the past four years. The school's target of 83 per cent of its pupils to reach the expected levels at the end of Key Stage 2 in 2001 is realistic in view of the ability of the year group. The school has identified the need to improve pupils' progress in writing and to address the underachievement of some boys in both reading and writing. These and other targets are appropriate.

80. Most pupils achieve satisfactorily in English although there is underachievement in Year 2 as a result of changes in staff. As they move through the school, they are given sound opportunities to explore, and become competent in, most aspects of language. Pupils with special educational needs achieve satisfactory standards compared with their previous attainment especially when they receive well-targeted support in class. The Additional Literacy programme in Years 3 and 4 supports their needs well. No marked differences in the attainment of boys and girls were noted during the inspection.

81. At both key stages, standards in speaking and listening are average. In the last inspection, pupils were reported to be making 'satisfactory progress through the school'. In Key Stage 1, pupils listen carefully, answer questions appropriately and are confident when talking about topics that interest them. This was evident in a 'Birthday Assembly' when younger pupils listened and talked appreciatively at the celebration of the fifth birthday of a pupil from the Reception class. They also enjoy listening to stories, rhymes and poetry and concentrate well during class reading sessions. Year 2 pupils were enthralled by the teacher's enthusiastic and expressive reading of 'Katie Morag and the two grandmothers' and offered their ideas freely when questioned about the characters and setting. Most pupils spoke audibly and fluently but others did not develop their responses in any detail in spite of the supportive environment.

82. In Key Stage 2, pupils continue to listen carefully and develop their ideas thoughtfully. More able pupils in Year 6 convey points clearly, have a wide vocabulary and give opinions confidently. Average and less able pupils answer questions sensibly and join in class discussions but use a more limited range of words. This was seen in a lesson about the features of humorous writing. Under the skilful direction of the teacher, pupils were able to talk about how short, punchy sentences could build up humour and how descriptive detail could give dramatic interest to a story. Opportunities within personal, social and health education also enable pupils to consider alternative viewpoints and debate health issues such as smoking. Drama is insufficiently developed across the curriculum.

83. Standards in reading are average across the school. In Key Stage 1, pupils handle books confidently and have good understanding of their organisation. Most of them read simple texts accurately and fluently and have a useful range of strategies to tackle unknown words. Some less able pupils guess unfamiliar words rather than using their knowledge of sounds to help them. Many pupils can recall simple elements of stories but few can comment on characters and only the more able know how to locate information. The

weaknesses reported at the previous inspection, such as inadequate reading records and infrequency of pupils' reading, have been suitably rectified.

84. In Key Stage 2, pupils are interested in books and generally read with enjoyment, accuracy and increasing confidence. In Year 6, average and less able pupils respond well to various forms of reading and have a satisfactory understanding of characters, events and ideas. More able pupils read with pace, fluency and obvious enthusiasm but they do not sufficiently develop their ideas when discussing characters and authors or support them by reference to the text. They are also not always challenged by the books that they read. In general, pupils do not use their voices expressively to convey emotions or build a sense of drama in their reading. Most teachers are aware of the importance of inflection and intonation in their reading to engage pupils' interest but some read in a flat, monotonous voice that does not provide a good model for pupils. Skills in locating, researching and using information are insufficiently developed across the key stage.

85. Standards in writing are average in Year 2. Most pupils have a growing awareness of the structure of a story and can write simple instructions. More able pupils are beginning to use interesting vocabulary and to develop their ideas imaginatively as in their work on traditional stories inspired by a willow patterned plate. Less able pupils use simple sentences and phrases, which often show a lack of coherence. In general, pupils spell simple words correctly, and their handwriting is mainly clearly shaped and consistent in size. They use capital letters and full stops correctly and are already beginning to take a pride in the presentation of their work.

86. In Year 6, standards are average in writing and pupils tackle a broad range of styles. They show a growing confidence in experimenting with vocabulary and content and with the technicalities of writing. This is evident in the quality of their creative writing from the vivid, adventurous vocabulary of Shakespearean insults to the thoughtful images of their poems about different emotions. The richness of their imaginations was also shown as pupils fantasised about what they would like to put in 'The Magic Box' and wrote sensitively about 'the scream of a child riding a huge roller coaster', 'silent whispers from an ancient tree', 'shiny shimmers from a unicorn's back' and 'a thirteenth month'. More able pupils write with flair and pace and perceptively vary style and mood. However, in the case of some other pupils, their extended pieces of writing start well but lose their momentum and endings are weak. The work of less able pupils is often lively and interesting but the output is frequently small and ideas are not sustained consistently enough. Spelling, punctuation and grammar are generally accurate and handwriting is well established, fluent and mostly neat and legible. Information and communication technology is used insufficiently to develop editing skills.

87. In all classes, standards in literacy are the same as those found in English and the development of literacy skills across the curriculum is broadly satisfactory. In subjects like history and religious education, there is often an over dependence on work sheets which limit the scope for extending pupils' range of experience in writing and are insufficiently challenging for more able pupils.

88. The quality of teaching and learning in English is satisfactory at both key stages. This was broadly the finding of the previous inspection, which also reported that there were too few opportunities for pupils in Key Stage 1 to write creatively and expressively. However, this is no longer the case. All teachers in the school have warm, supportive relationships with pupils, which create a good work ethos where pupils have the freedom to express themselves and enjoy their learning. The Year 2 teacher drew skilfully on this rapport with the pupils to draw out their personal responses when discussing a story setting. 'Close your eyes – What do you hear? What do you smell?' 'splashing noises, seagulls shrieking', 'salt water, sea weed'. As a result, some pupils were able to describe the island using lively and imaginative language. Teachers' high expectations of the quality of work and response and the intensive focus on pupils' individual or group targets also promote learning well. In Year 6, pupils made good progress in their ability to analyse a humorous text 'Spaghetti Pig-out' and to write a persuasive letter to an editor because of the demands placed upon them by the teacher. 'You know how to use half an hour's writing time...work it out...think about your targets.' Imaginative use of resources enlivens lessons and stimulates learning effectively. In a Year 3 lesson about exploring and evaluating characters, the teacher opened a case that had supposedly been left

behind by an imaginary person and asked her pupils what the contents told them about the character. Pupils were intrigued, shared their ideas thoughtfully and made sound gains in their knowledge of how to write a character portrait.

89. Strengths in the teaching and learning of English across the school were illustrated in a Year 4 lesson about how texts are targeted at different readers. The teacher immediately captured pupils' interest and close attention by showing parts of book covers and asking pupils what information they could glean from the illustrations. A series of quick fire questions – 'What kind of genre is this?' 'What is fantasy?' – challenged pupils' thinking and the pace of the lesson accelerated as the teacher's skilful questioning about science fiction increased the demands made on the pupils. Timed targets maintained the impetus of the lesson as pupils settled to well planned group activities – 'Come on now everyone, thinking caps on!' The pupils were caught up in the air of excitement created by the teacher and became active and enthusiastic learners. They made very good progress in their ability to identify the intended reader as a result of very well structured, knowledgeable and spirited teaching.

90. In general, pupils are keen and well motivated learners and if the pace of the lesson flags due to bad timing or lack of organisation by the teacher, their positive attitudes often keep its momentum going. If there is an underlying restlessness in the class, it is usually directly related to the quality of teaching. Planning does not always meet the needs of the more able, but they continue to persevere and adopt a mature approach to their work. From an early age, pupils usually take great care with the presentation of their work and pay good attention to planning, drafting and refining.

91. The main strengths of pupils' learning in English are their strong awareness of their individual and group targets and their responsibility for, and commitment to, their own learning. These targets, which are specific and challenging, but achievable with effort, are an integral part of pupils' learning in the subject. This was evident when younger pupils referred to them frequently in class and in a Year 6 lesson where 'response friends' discussed their persuasive letters together and made critical yet constructive comments.

92. The curriculum in English is balanced and meets the requirements of the National Curriculum. The subject is well led and the co-ordinator has played an important role in addressing the weaknesses, such as reading records, an up-to-date policy and an audit of books, identified at the last inspection. Monitoring of literacy teaching has been carried out by external sources. Assessment procedures are good and pupils are made aware through feedbacks about what they must do to achieve the next level. Marking generally gives good guidance in helping pupils to understand how to improve their work. Resources are satisfactory and most class libraries provide a suitable challenge for pupils and are sensibly used. English makes a good contribution to pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development as they write creatively about their feelings and learn about different cultural traditions in literature. Displays of pupils' work and good links with art including 'Goodnight Mr Tom' and 'Elmer the Elephant' raise the profile of the subject effectively and show that pupils' efforts are valued.

MATHEMATICS

93. Pupils in Year 2 attain average standards in mathematics, including numeracy. This finding is similar to that of the previous inspection. The school's results in the national end of Key Stage 1 tests in 2000 were also average, when compared with all schools, but below average when compared with similar schools. There was a significant improvement in the number of pupils who achieved the average level and the school's performance, when compared with the national average, was very high although it was well below the national average for the higher Level 3 attainment. Taking the average of the three years 1998, 1999 and 2000 together, it shows that girls do less well than boys. However, no significance can be attached to this because, as well as the gender imbalance in the year groups, the lower levels of performance alternate between boys and girls from one year to the next.

94. In Year 6, standards are average. The results of the national end of key stage tests in 2000 showed that, compared with all schools and similar schools, standards were average. The results for level 5 were above average. Analysis of the school's results for the Year 6 national tests from 1998 to 2000 have shown continued improvement and, except for 1999, results have slightly exceeded the national average, although broadly in line. The standards currently achieved by Year 6 are lower when compared with the last inspection (attainment was judged to be above national expectations) but similar to their test results, which were average for that year group. Past results have shown that girls do better than boys in the tests. This was not apparent during the inspection nor does it appear to have any significance when considering the three years 1999 to 2000 together as it was only in 1998 that there was a distinct difference in boy/girl results which is explained by the girls' aptitude for mathematics being better in that year. The school continues to set challenging targets to raise standards and individual targets are effectively shared and developed with pupils at this key stage.

95. In both key stages, pupils with special educational needs, pupils from an ethnic minority and those for whom English is an additional language, make satisfactory progress and attain suitable standards although there is underachievement in Year 2 because of the changes in teacher. The school does not have procedures to identify gifted and talented pupils.

96. At Key Stage 1, the overall quality of teaching, learning and pupils' progress is satisfactory, which is similar to the judgement of the previous inspection. However, using evidence from scrutiny of pupils' work this has not always been the case in Year 2. In that year, the curriculum has had inadequacies in its breadth and practical application and insufficient use has been made of information from on-going assessment. For example, higher achieving pupils were not always adequately challenged. There has been a recent, good improvement in Year 2. Two lessons were observed in that year group during the inspection and in both of them the quality of teaching and learning was good. Teachers manage the pupils well and use support staff and resources effectively. They start lessons promptly and lesson plans are appropriately detailed to show how different ability groups are challenged. In Year 1, the pupils responded to the teacher's speedy input and counted forwards and backwards to 30 confidently. The teacher made good references to mathematical vocabulary and comparison of size as she interacted with the pupils and most pupils were able to order three or four numbers below 20 although a few were unsure. From time to time insufficient oversight was kept of all groups to ensure they make progress. For example, a few pupils had difficulty recording because they did not understand what to do. In Year 2, the teacher gave clear instructions with a good focus on accuracy. Most pupils were able to measure with centimetres and knew they must line up the zero with the starting point. Helpful guidance was given, such as rotating the paper, and this enabled pupils to measure more easily. Levels of concentration were good and all worked hard to complete their work. A good challenge was posed to one boy who was ahead of the class. Most pupils were able to do simple addition up to 20 and when adding hundreds, such as $100 + 200$. They used multiplication (two times and ten times) and subtraction but some lower achieving pupils found difficulty with this work. In science, simple mathematical diagrams have been used to represent the results of sorting items which may or may not use electricity.

97. At Key Stage 2, the quality of teaching and learning is satisfactory overall where previously it was judged to be good. The quality of teaching and learning in the lessons observed varied from unsatisfactory to very good, with particular strengths in Year 4 and Year 6. Analysis of pupils' work over time reflects these strengths. Work is regularly marked and this helps pupils to understand how well they are progressing. For example, comments such as, "Well done, you understand" or "I can see you need more practice." Teachers' knowledge of the subject and the management of pupils are mostly good. This is evident from the good methods employed and the way basic skills are taught. Most pupils in Year 4 and Year 6 are very well behaved and have very good attitudes to their work enabling them to make good progress in lessons. In Year 6, pupils are able to identify the information necessary to solve problems. Most can recognise and use simple fractions, decimals and percentages to describe proportions of a whole. They understand terms such as product, prime, factors and square numbers. The teachers' good planning ensures there is the correct level of challenge to meet pupils' needs, including those pupils with special educational needs and English as an additional language. For example, in work on shape, lower achieving pupils measure and name the angles

whereas higher achieving pupils are required to estimate first, to the nearest degree, a series of connected angles, then to check using a protractor. This enables them to improve their estimation skills. They know that an obtuse angle is greater than 90 degrees but less than 180. Occasionally, teaching is unsatisfactory and a lesson that starts well loses pace. In these lessons, overlong explanations impair pupils' attention span and a significant number of pupils require extra support because they have not understood what they have to do. Some pupils begin to misbehave and methods of control are not fully effective because a few pupils remain off-task and continue to chatter. There are lessons at both key stages that have weak plenary sessions in otherwise good lessons. The end of the lesson does not focus on reviewing, assessing and challenging pupils' learning. This leaves pupils unsure of how well they have done and what they need to do to improve. Overall, progress is satisfactory through the key stage although it is greater in some years than others.

98. The school has appropriately implemented the National Numeracy Strategy and all classes have a daily numeracy lesson. Teachers in both key stages are mostly fully conversant with the framework, which they use appropriately as the starting point for planning. Refinements are made to meet the needs of most pupils. Generally, this is more successfully planned and taught in Key Stage 2, although there has been a recent improvement in Key Stage 1 where formerly some pupils had a narrower curriculum. Lessons follow the guidance for a three-part lesson but not all teachers use the plenary effectively. Year 1 pupils are developing their number bonds to 10 with higher achieving pupils moving on to the number bonds for 20. The use of mental strategies for addition and subtraction are just beginning in Year 2 for most pupils, although many can use doubling. Good activities in Year 3, where pupils have to add on five to different starting points, enable them to see a pattern in the numbers and predict the next. For example, 3, 8, 13, 18. By Year 4, they are using the value of digits to break down numbers into hundreds, tens and units to aid mental addition and in Year 5, the various mental strategies are put to good use to find out if 147 is a multiple of the seven times table. By the time pupils are in Year 6, they use mental calculation appropriately but their understanding of fractions is less developed. Even higher achieving pupils have a weaker understanding of the relationship between decimals, percentages and fractions and find it difficult to convert from one to another unless there are very simple examples. The implementation of the National Numeracy Strategy has suitably improved the pupils' investigative skills compared with the findings of its 1997 inspection.

99. The school has made some significant improvements since the last inspection. Pupils are developing their initiative and becoming independent learners due in part to the implementation of the National Numeracy Strategy but also because there is no longer an over-reliance on commercial schemes. In turn, the framework for numeracy lessons has provided the school with an effective planning tool where previously they were without a scheme of work. Strengths include the range and use of the assessment procedures and the individual targets set for pupils. A considerable amount of help has been given by one of the governors analysing national and optional test results question by question. Information has been well used in Year 6 to inform planning and has also led to booster classes and a breakfast club for Year 6 pupils to raise standards. The headteacher is very focused on raising standards and is involved in withdrawal of Year 5 pupils for a catch-up programme. In addition, mathematical skills are used well in practical work, for example constructing three-dimensional models, and also across the curriculum. Graphs and measurement are used in science, geography and design and technology. Older pupils use information and communication technology when handling data and a computer program "Logo" helps them control movement in specific directions. The mathematics co-ordinator has good subject knowledge and provides satisfactory leadership of the subject. There has been some very useful monitoring of teaching and learning but there was a limited focus on the standards which pupils were achieving. Advice, support and training are provided as appropriate. However, leadership is insufficiently proactive, for example with the analysis of data relating to boys and girls and evaluation of the curricular provision when test results show some weaknesses.

SCIENCE

100. In Year 2, standards are below average. The previous inspection reported that pupils' attainment in science was above the national average. In the 2000 end of key stage assessments, teachers recorded

below average attainment overall, but about a third of pupils had above average attainment at the next higher level. The long-term absence of the class teacher, and difficulties associated with this, are the main reasons for the lack of improvement since the assessments of year 2000 and the reason why these pupils are under achieving. Pupils with special educational needs and those with English as an additional language achieve appropriately for their abilities at this key stage. No significant differences in the attainment of boys and girls or those from minority ethnic groups were observed.

101. In Year 6, pupils achieve average standards. In the previous inspection, standards were reported to be above the national average. However, the 2000, test results indicated national average standards compared with all schools and with similar schools. This difference is due to differences in the way in which the data are now interpreted. Over time, there is a trend of rising standards. Pupils with special educational needs make satisfactory progress. This inspection finds no significant difference in the performance of boys and girls. Pupils from minority ethnic groups achieve as well as all other groups of pupils.

102. The overall quality of teaching and learning is satisfactory at Key Stage 1. The previous report described teaching as satisfactory. No unsatisfactory teaching was seen, but the quality of pupils' recorded work in Year 2 was not high. This reflects the lower standards and attainment caused by the long-term absence of the class teacher. In a Year 2 lesson, the temporary teacher presented the material clearly. She gave pupils helpful prompts to enable them to gain some understanding of healthy living and safety in the use of medicines. Pupils were well managed, but the activity was not sufficiently demanding and not well matched to the range of abilities in the class. Analysis of pupils' work in Year 2 indicates that they have acquired some knowledge and skills. Pupils have covered most of the curriculum requirements for science, but not in sufficient breadth or depth. Therefore, their attainment and progress have not been steady or consistent. The marking of work has not helped pupils to improve what they do. In Year 1, teaching is carefully planned and well presented. Pupils generally listen well, for example, in a lesson that demanded their full attention so that they could classify sounds around them. They are eager to contribute to discussion, but a few become restless when the session is too long. There is good verbal interaction between the teacher and the pupils and this leads most of them to develop a good understanding of what they hear and see.

103. The quality of teaching in Key Stage 2 is satisfactory overall and good in Year 4 and Year 6 where the rate of pupils' progress is also good. The previous report described teaching as 'good on the whole'. In Year 6, the teacher has good subject knowledge and this is well presented to pupils. The presentation of their work reflects a demand for quality by the teacher and a concern that pupils learn to think logically and record their findings in a scientific manner. However, marking does not sufficiently indicate to pupils how they can improve their work. In a revision lesson on physical processes that demanded they use investigative skills, the teacher set pupils the task of making circuits and discovering which materials were or were not insulators. This was well planned so that pupils knew what to do and as they worked in small groups, the teacher assessed what they knew and guided them to determine if their predictions about insulators had been correct. In their work on life processes and living things, pupils have carefully investigated life cycles and have used appropriate vocabulary and investigative techniques. In a Year 5 lesson, the teacher carefully used the pupils' lack of scientific method in an investigation into the viscosity of liquids to reinforce the need and principle of 'fair-testing'. In Year 4, there is a good emphasis upon investigation. The teacher's expectations are high and pupils' work is carefully set out and recorded. A strength of this approach is that pupils record their findings in their own words. There is evidence that this encourages good progress over time. Overall, in science lessons, there is too little attention given to ensure that all pupils have work matched to their needs. This is particularly so for those who are higher attaining. Evaluative marking, seen noticeably in Year 4, encourages pupils to strive for good results and standards. Pupils are well managed in science lessons and good use is made of learning support assistants to encourage effective learning for pupils with special educational needs. Other weaknesses in teaching occur when teachers do not insist pupils listen carefully in lessons or when they do not notice pupils who are not fully attentive to the tasks set.

104. A scheme of work for science in Key Stage 2 is established and that for Key Stage 1 is to be completed in the summer term. Time allocated to science in Key Stage 2 is slightly lower than that commonly found. The school has begun to collect and evaluate samples of pupils' work and analyse results from science tests and assessments to determine where weaknesses are and what can be done to remedy them. It does not, however, analyse results with respect to gender or ethnicity. The leadership provided by the co-ordinator is good. Clear priorities are identified for the development of the subject and some monitoring of pupils' work has helped this. However, there is insufficient monitoring of teachers' planning and of their teaching to inform the co-ordinator about the ways in which standards in the subject could be improved. There are some links with numeracy, but these are not well developed and insufficient use is made of information and communication technology in the teaching of science.

ART AND DESIGN

105. The attainment of pupils in art and design is of average standard in Year 2 and above average in Year 6. Pupils in Key Stage 1 make satisfactory progress and in Key Stage 2, progress is good. This judgement includes those pupils with special educational needs and those that have English as an additional language. There are no differences in the attainment of boys and girls. Standards at both key stages are the same as reported in the previous inspection.

106. The quality of teaching and learning is satisfactory at Key Stage 1. This judgement is based upon a lesson observed and a scrutiny of work previously produced by pupils. Because of the long-term absence of the teacher in Year 2, pupils have not produced a great amount of work. However, in a lesson seen, pupils worked well and benefited from its careful organisation. They worked capably on drawing from close observation, on collage and clay plate making. The temporary teacher worked with them to help develop their skills in order to select appropriate colours and textures and to cut and paste so they could produce effective collage pictures in shades and textures of blue but there was little evaluation of their work. Other pupils were taught how to examine closely 'Willow Pattern' plates. This enabled them to produce work of pleasing quality in pencil. The pupils were competently managed and the lesson proceeded well with good concentration by the pupils very evident. The learning support assistant worked with a group of pupils to encourage and advise them as they developed their ideas in plate making. The display of work in Year 1 indicates that pupils have been taught a good range of appropriate skills and that they use a variety of media to communicate their ideas.

107. The quality of teaching and learning is good in Key Stage 2. In a Year 6 lesson, the teacher used a picture by Monet to demonstrate how particular effects could be achieved. She used her subject knowledge well and in doing so challenged the pupils to refine their composition and brushwork skills to develop a landscape. Good instruction by the teacher ensured that pupils knew how to do what was expected. For example, that they should 'lay down a background wash' and plan their painting to achieve the necessary depth to suggest appropriate perspective. The teacher's high expectations ensured that the pupils applied themselves and they worked with good concentration and care. In a Year 4 lesson where pupils made artefacts connected with their geographical work on Rainforests, the teacher had carefully prepared the lesson so that the pupils were fully engaged from the start. They explored design ideas to produce the type of armbands worn by South American Indians, wove mats, or made 'dug-out' canoes from modelling material. The teacher and the learning support assistant worked to support pupils and give appropriate help as needed. Work produced was generally of good quality because the teacher ensured that pupils concentrated and had the necessary skills. Displays of pupils' work in both two and three dimensions and in a range of media in Key Stage 2 are attractive and reflect the good quality of teaching seen in lessons.

108. The scheme of work for art and design is based upon that produced by the Qualifications and Curriculum Authority. It is, however, being modified to incorporate art and design more effectively other subjects. The co-ordinator has recognised the need to expand pupils' awareness of art and design in non-European cultures and a start has been made on this. Although there is no formal assessment of pupils' work, the co-ordinator has started to collect samples from each class to determine levels of attainment and

progress made. The co-ordinator is enthusiastic and has identified what needs to be done to continue the improvement of art and design in the school. There is however, no action plan to do this and no monitoring of teaching or curriculum planning for the subject.

DESIGN AND TECHNOLOGY

109. Standards are average in both Year 2 and Year 6 and most pupils, including pupils with special educational needs and with English as an additional language, make satisfactory progress through the school. This judgement is an improvement on the findings of the previous inspection when attainment was below expectations. Only three lessons were observed but, in addition, discussions took place with pupils and work on display was scrutinised.

110. Overall, the quality of teaching and learning is satisfactory at both key stages. Too few lessons were observed in the previous inspection to make a secure judgement about teaching but it was apparent that there were weaknesses in teachers' subject knowledge and in their understanding of the designing and making processes. This has improved but weaknesses still exist. For example, although teaching and learning are satisfactory at Key Stage 1, there are differences in the quality between classes. Thus not all pupils have an equal opportunity to learn and make progress and this, in turn, affects the progress they make. The teachers' knowledge of the subject, the pace of the lesson, effective questioning and lesson plans, which clearly identify opportunities for assessment mean that most pupils are on course to reach average standards. They are developing their knowledge of different tools and techniques and can join materials in different ways. For example, by sewing fabrics and by using paper fasteners to join card in a way that also allows movement. The learning support assistants provide very good explanations about health and safety and very good supervision ensures that pupils use tools properly but also extend their skills when using them. Pupils display very good attitudes and behaviour and wait patiently when taking turns. They have a clear understanding of what they are trying to achieve, are learning to follow instructions and are able to use tools appropriately. Scrutiny of past work across the key stage shows that approximately half the pupils do insufficient recording and evaluation of their designs, which is a reflection on the quality of teaching. Pupils who record effectively are able to explain their designs through simple drawings and most can label the main features. They are beginning to list the materials they will need and higher achieving pupils are able to show where they will need to join materials together.

111. During the inspection there was no evidence on which to form judgements for pupils in Year 6. However, from scrutiny of past work in other year groups and evidence in lessons, the indications are that standards are average. The quality of teaching and learning is satisfactory in Key Stage 2. Progress is satisfactory over time but is not always even from one year to the next. Scrutiny of work provides evidence that in Year 3 most pupils, when making cereal boxes, are labelling their drawings and average and higher achieving pupils attempt simple written evaluations. They also construct circus carousels from a hexagonal template. Skills of cutting, sticking and decoration are appropriate for their age. In Year 4, good progress is made. Good organisation, management and control exemplify the good quality of the teaching in this year group. Probing questioning, so pupils will consider the strength of the finished product, makes effective links with science and fair testing procedures. In addition, some questions are aimed at specific pupils to ensure that they understand. Teaching points are very well demonstrated, for example, pupils fully understand that paper patterns must take account of a three-dimensional shape and seam allowances. Pace sometimes slows when too many questions are allowed but good intervention for the whole class ensures that all pupils, including those who have overlooked some of the essential requirements, are put back on track. Pupils listen attentively and work well together. They share resources and help each other when drawing pattern templates. They make good progress during the lesson and sensitive guidance enables them to reflect on and record in their books where they wish to improve. Pupils make books with moving parts and they demonstrate good planning and designing skills. They evaluate their products well and teacher's comments, when marking work, help pupils to understand how to improve. In Year 5, satisfactory teaching is demonstrated by good use of vocabulary, suitable incentives (such as merit points) to maintain attention, judicious intervention when pupils require help and appropriate use of the learning support assistant to support

pupils with special educational needs. Design and make tasks build effectively on earlier practical work, for example, pupils were taught how to strengthen the corners on a cuboid before embarking on making a model shelter. Pupils have designed and made shadufs (simple structures to raise water from a river). Their books contain labelled sketches, photographs of finished products and helpful comments from their teacher. The finished models are simple and show limited progress on building structures and joining techniques but do show good application of scientific knowledge about forces – pupils have to use counterweights to balance the lifting lever. In this key stage, weaknesses in teaching are linked to confidence and expertise, too many interruptions, for example, unnecessary repetition of teaching points which slows the pace of learning and progress in the practical application of skills.

112. The co-ordinator is recently in post. She shows good leadership qualities and clear direction for the subject. The action plan is comprehensive and well focused in the light of the school's previous report. She has a pragmatic approach with speedy timescales and much work has been completed. The Qualifications and Curriculum Authority scheme has been adopted and a review set for summer, alongside identified training needs. There has been an improvement in investigative work, complemented by a visit to a building site by Year 1, and an enhancement of resources since the last inspection. They are well organised and accessible. Subject expertise is variable with weaknesses in evaluating designs and products and lack of confidence in using some of the school's tools and resources. There are plans in place to rectify this weakness. Also teachers often miss opportunities for pupils to disassemble products and see how they are made. This is mainly because teachers stick closely to scheme ideas. There is limited use of assessment and progress records. Although pupils' books have been monitored by the co-ordinator, no formal monitoring of the subject has taken place.

GEOGRAPHY

113. The attainment of pupils in geography is below average in Year 2 and average in Year 6. Pupils in Key Stage 1 make unsatisfactory progress, but it is satisfactory in Key Stage 2. This judgement includes those pupils with special educational needs and those that have English as an additional language. There are no differences in the attainment of boys and girls. The previous inspection reported that attainment was sound at the end of Key Stage 1 and good at the end of Key Stage 2. Because the school has concentrated on the implementation of literacy and numeracy initiatives, attention has been diverted from the full coverage and teaching of the subject. In addition, the long-term absence of the Year 2 teacher has meant that pupils have not had the benefit of consistent teaching.

114. Overall, the quality of teaching and learning is unsatisfactory at Key Stage 1. The previous inspection made no judgement about the quality of teaching and learning at either key stage. In Year 2, only a very limited amount of work has been produced. This is on Islands and Journeys. Some of the work does not follow the school's scheme of work. The quality is generally satisfactory, but acquisition of knowledge by pupils is limited as there is too little written or recorded work. There is insufficient challenge for pupils to explore geographical skills and knowledge and some work is simply the completion of a picture, map or diagram with labels and colouring. Marking does not help pupils improve their work; in fact, little marking is evident. Independent research is absent and all pupils do the same work. In a satisfactory Year 1 lesson about where pupils lived, there was purposeful activity well supported by the teacher and the learning support assistant. Good use was made of praise to encourage pupils and highlight their good quality work. Although some pupils began to lose concentration as the lesson progressed, most were attentive and discussed what they did in a mature manner.

115. At Key Stage 2, the quality of teaching and learning is satisfactory. In a Year 6 lesson, the teacher's good subject knowledge was well presented and held the pupils' attention. By the skilful use of questioning, the teacher led pupils to understand and learn the use of symbols to construct a map that could be interpreted. There was good challenge for pupils to use their acquired skills and the maps, of an imaginary place, were clear and carefully drawn. The lesson was well organised with good support from an assistant who helped pupils who had difficulties. The lesson proceeded at a good pace and many pupils began to recognise the interrelation of the physical environment with patterns of human settlement. Although all pupils

did the same task, the outcomes differed in detail and quality. Analysis of pupils' work indicates that the teacher has high expectations that generally result in work of good quality. In a Year 5 lesson, pupils made satisfactory progress as they interpreted data about differences in rainfall levels in the Caribbean and in London. Although the teacher gave clear instructions and there was obvious progression in pupils' learning, the pace was slow and higher achieving pupils were not sufficiently challenged to extend their understanding of the principles involved. Overall, in the key stage, the quantity of work produced is low and most pupils do the same work regardless of their capabilities. Marking does not give sufficient help to pupils so that they can improve their work. Pupils have insufficient opportunities to carry out independent work.

116. The school uses its own scheme of work with some elements of that produced by the Qualifications and Curriculum Authority. The co-ordinator has begun to examine the work that pupils do, but there is no whole school system of assessment. Therefore, the aim to improve assessment, noted in the previous inspection report, has not been realised. The co-ordinator is keen to develop the subject and has some clear ideas about what needs to be done. However, this is not systematically managed so that attainment, planning and teaching are monitored to ensure effective development of the subject.

HISTORY

117. Only one lesson of history was observed during the inspection. However, pupils' work was analysed, teachers' records and planning were examined and discussions were held with teachers and pupils. The evidence indicates that pupils reach average standards in Years 2 and 6. This judgement is similar to that made by the school's 1997 inspection. Progress and attainment, including that made by pupils with special educational needs, are satisfactory in Year 6. However, in Year 2, the pupils do not reach high enough standards relative to their standards on entry to the school. There are no differences in the attainment of boys and girls. Throughout the school, pupils' factual knowledge and understanding of varied periods of history are suitably developed. However, other aspects of the subject, such as the use and understanding of historical sources and the interpretation of history are not sufficiently taught. Additionally, although there are some examples of the application of literacy and numeracy skills in the subject too much of the work consists of tasks which limit the pupils' opportunities of developing these skills sufficiently. For example, significant amounts of work consist of worksheets requiring limited answers. Information and communication technology is not used sufficiently to support the teaching of this subject.

118. The evidence available indicates that the quality of teaching and learning is satisfactory at both key stages. No judgement about the quality of teaching in history was made by the school's last inspection. At Key Stage 1, the Year 1 analysis of work shows that teachers provide the pupils with appropriate work and expect it to be presented neatly. The pupils produce a suitable amount of work which is appropriately marked. The work set develops suitably from the pupils' own understanding and, for example, extends their knowledge of how they have grown to an awareness of their family tree which is set in an appropriate timeline. A weakness in the teaching is that much of the work set is identical for pupils of all abilities. In Year 2, the pupils know how aspects of present day life, such as kitchens and aspects of communication, differ from the past. The marking of their work in this year group is less thorough which reflects the changes of teacher experienced by the class.

119. At Key Stage 2 in a well-managed Year 3 lesson, the teacher's discussion with the pupils extended their understanding of life in Roman Britain. Good humour was well used to build positive relationships with the pupils and to maintain their interest and desire to do well. Ample books were provided for the pupils to use in order to find information but no use of information and communication technology or the school library to develop pupils' research skills further occurred. The pupils showed a secure understanding of slavery, costumes and Roman soldiers. The analysis of work in Year 4 shows a good coverage of aspects of Ancient Greece, for example, city states such as Sparta and Athens, the Olympic Games and Greek Gods. Most of the work is identical for pupils of all abilities and some pupils with special educational needs have not been able to complete it. In Year 5, pupils are, for example, aware of embalming and the power of the Pharaoh through their work on Ancient Egypt. The tasks set are similar for all pupils but provide greater opportunities

for them to produce work at their own level. In Year 6, the teacher's appropriate expectations of the pupils are shown by the neat presentation of their work on Britain in the 1930's and in World War II. In this class, the work showed appropriate application of the pupils' literacy skills. In both Year 5 and Year 6, marking consisted largely of ticks and did not help the pupils' to improve their work sufficiently.

120. The management of the subject and its improvement since the school's last inspection are satisfactory. There is a suitable action plan for the subject, which is part of the school development plan, that includes revising the scheme of work, improving resources and analysing teachers' planning. However, the co-ordinator is currently on long-term sick leave which has impeded the implementation of this plan. The curriculum is appropriately enhanced by educational visits, for example, to a toy museum. In addition, visitors to the school such as that by a representative of the Royal British Legion to talk about the significance of Poppy Day, also broaden the pupils' experience significantly. These factors help the subject to make a good contribution to the pupils' moral and cultural development. Learning resources for the subject are adequate but assessment and monitoring procedures are unsatisfactory.

INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY

121. Standards are below average at both key stages for all pupils. This judgement is the same as the last inspection.

122. No direct evidence of teaching and learning was available at Key Stage 1 but from scrutiny of pupils' work on display it is clear that they are unsatisfactory. There are weaknesses in the breadth of the curricular provision and pupils have insufficient time working with computers to make adequate progress. In both year groups, evidence shows that they can word process work in English and science lessons. In Year 1, they can change between different styles of lettering and know how to use the shift key for capital letters. In Year 2, they progress to being able to alter the size and colour of the words they produce.

123. Only three observations took place in Key Stage 2 and although the quality of teaching and learning was satisfactory, sometimes good, overall it is unsatisfactory for the same reasons given at Key Stage 1. In addition, the school does not have some of the resources required to teach aspects of the compulsory curriculum for this key stage. In a good lesson seen during the inspection, the teacher was confident and remained calm when the printer did not work. Pupils' concentration levels were high but control and discipline were also high. Noise from the adjacent classroom made it difficult for pupils to hear what was being said at times but pupils still remained well behaved, as they were interested in learning new things. In another lesson an overhead projector was used effectively. This enabled pupils to see clearly each teaching point that was being discussed. The teacher's friendly approach helped pupils to feel confident and they were willing to pose ideas when they were learning new things. Teachers showed good awareness of pupils who did not have access to a computer at home and they were carefully taken through the process of opening the spreadsheet program and sensitivity was shown to help overcome difficulties when 'double-clicking' with the computer mouse. Questions were carefully rephrased to help those who did not understand. Pupils showed good levels of interest, sustained concentration and began to think for themselves during a challenging task. They used the filter function for sorting data, to interpret findings and realised the need to frame questions carefully. Pupils' work on display from Year 4 and Year 6 demonstrate that they can word process work. For example, pupils had changed the colour of the different parts of the text to reflect the feelings in their poems. However, although most pupils are attentive and consolidate learning when working together, the quality of learning over time is unsatisfactory. The time available for teaching information and communication technology skills is too little. However well a roster is organised pupils have to wait too long before they have access to a computer to consolidate learning and they have insufficient time using them to make satisfactory progress.

124. There has been a slight improvement in the staff's expertise in this subject since the last inspection. More interest is shown in the subject and its use for cross-curricular purposes, albeit within a narrow range of applications, has improved. However, most staff have insufficient expertise in all aspects of the

curriculum they are required to teach. There are, for example, specific weaknesses in using control technology and using computers to monitor changes in the environment and this is compounded by the lack of resources for these areas. A significant strength of the subject are the good attitudes and behaviour shown by the pupils. They form constructive relationships with one another, show initiative and take responsibility when they can, for example, a child was quick to try and help with an erratic printer. The subject does not have a policy but the school now uses the Qualifications and Curriculum Authority scheme. Teachers have adapted this informally but there is no whole school curricular map to define the breadth and balance of the different components. Guidance for teaching skills come from the scheme of work but this has not been formalised during this interim period to ensure skills are built up in appropriate steps from one year to the next. There is no assessment and recording system in place. The time which has been allocated to teaching this subject is not possible because of the lack of computers. Some are old and outdated and the ratio of 40 pupils to one computer is very poor. The subject does not meet the requirements of the National Curriculum. The co-ordinator has produced a good three-year action plan, which is well focused on the school's needs. An audit of the staff's expertise has been done and some informal monitoring. She remains undaunted by the many frustrations experienced when bidding for improved resources. She has a good understanding of what needs to be done and is well organised and proactive.

MUSIC

125. Due to timetabling arrangements, only one lesson was observed at Key Stage 1 during the inspection and one choral assembly at Key Stage 2. There was, therefore, insufficient evidence for judgements to be made on attainment and progress and the quality of teaching and learning in music. In the previous inspection, standards were in line with national expectations and no secure judgement could be made about the quality of teaching. The scrutiny of planning and discussions with teachers show that the school provides pupils with a sound range of musical experiences that cover all elements of the National Curriculum. There is no longer a music specialist and all teachers are responsible for the teaching of music to their class.

126. In a Year 2 lesson about percussion, the teacher worked hard to motivate pupils and promote confidence in their music making. They were able to echo the rhythmic patterns given by the teacher and showed good imagination in suggesting the mood of the music. Pupils knew the names of various percussion instruments and enjoyed accompanying the music with tambourines. They sang simple songs like 'twinkle, twinkle, little star' tunefully and with good control and enthusiastically carried out appropriate actions. However, the teacher did not direct them to evaluate their performance and discuss ways in which they could improve their work. The sense of fun and energy in the lesson promoted learning effectively. Pupils even maintained their interest and helpful behaviour when the teacher stopped the lesson to refocus the learning as the resources needed were not available.

127. In the Key Stage 2 choral assembly, pupils sang a range of songs with increasing confidence and awareness of pitch. Most pupils responded well but some were passive rather than enthusiastic. The teacher's positive management skills engaged the interest of most pupils although the session was over directed. They showed a keen sense of rhythm and melody when singing and maintaining a two part song 'From a tiny ant to an elephant' and responded appropriately to the teacher's emphasis on breathing, diction and posture when they held the long notes well in 'On a wagon bound for market'. At the end of the session, pupils sang with gusto 'What shall we do with the drunken sailor?' to the effective accompaniment of xylophones, tambourines and triangles. The teacher did not explore any of the key ideas in the songs to extend pupils' musical awareness or vocabulary and they were not given any opportunities to appraise or refine the quality of their own work.

128. In discussion, pupils find it difficult to express their own musical experiences or preferences and do not use appropriate language to evaluate music. They rarely record their work and only pupils who receive specialist tuition are confident in using musical notation.

129. The subject is satisfactorily led. At the previous inspection, there was no coordination, policy, or schemes of work and little written assessment although there was a strong focus on the subject because of the musical expertise of staff. There is now an up-to-date policy and the existing scheme 'Lively Music' provides teachers with support to develop pupils' musical skills in a structured way as they move through the school. An assessment record is in draft form. These represent sound improvements but there is still no classroom monitoring. There is an adequate supply of percussion instruments, ethnic instruments and listening music to enable pupils to broaden their skills in musical appreciation. Information and communication technology is used insufficiently in the subject to support teaching and learning. Pupils have opportunities to receive music tuition from peripatetic teachers and to take part in a recorder group but there is no permanent choir. Musical experiences such as workshops, Christmas and themed concerts, taking part in the Medway Music Festival and listening to the Kanko group from Ghana make a sound contribution to pupils' social and cultural development.

PHYSICAL EDUCATION

130. Standards of attainment are average in Year 2 and in Key Stage 2. This judgement is similar to that made by the school's last OFSTED inspection in 1997. At both Key Stage 1 and Key Stage 2, pupils, including those with special educational needs, make sound progress and achieve appropriate standards. There are no differences in the standards reached by boys and girls. During the inspection, observations were made of aspects of gymnastics and music and movement. Discussions about the content of the curriculum and swimming also took place.

131. At Key Stage 1 and Key Stage 2, the quality of teaching is good. This is an improvement on the findings of the school's last OFSTED inspection when the quality of teaching was judged to be satisfactory. The quality of learning is satisfactory. The difference is due to the restrictions imposed on the pupils' development of the skills that the teachers teach them because of the small size of the school's hall and the lack of large gymnastic equipment. At Key Stage 1, in a well-prepared Year 1 taped music and movement lesson, the teacher gave clear instructions which the pupils followed carefully. The tape was stopped at suitable intervals and the pupils were prepared for what was to come. For example, a discussion of how to move as rusty toys led to pupils working in pairs to oil their partners so that they could dance stiffly and strongly as toys such as robots. Good use was made of pupils to demonstrate their performance although these demonstrations were not evaluated. In Year 2, the teacher's quiet but effective control in a gymnastics lesson resulted in the pupils listening carefully and showing suitable dodging and agility skills in warm up activities. The pupils did not always make the best use of the restricted space available although the teacher gave them some reminders. They made satisfactory progress in this lesson and produced sequences in which they moved in varied shapes with suitable levels of co-ordination.

132. At Key Stage 2, in Year 3, the teacher imposed a very firm level of discipline. This took up a significant amount of the time available for the lesson as did the pupils' slowness in setting out the apparatus they needed which reduced the time available for physical education. However, their work indicated average levels of attainment as they travelled on the mats, benches and floor, for example, by hopping, twisting, pulling and jumping. In a good Year 4 lesson, the teacher showed confident and effortless control of the class, the subject and the content of the lesson. The pupils enjoyed a crisp warm-up involving them in stopping and starting movements. This was developed effectively to involve the pupils in creating sequences of movement involving sudden changes. The teacher's identification of points for improvement – "change height", "use the space", "change direction more quickly" – are good. The pupils' progress was also assisted by the evaluation of demonstrations of their work and the good pace of the lesson. The teacher's high expectations of the pupils resulted in their working hard and behaving well. A weakness in this lesson was the fact that two pupils who could not take part were not given an activity associated with it to carry out. In a good Year 5 lesson designed to improve the quality of the pupils' movements and to encourage collaborative working, good use was made of the playground to warm-up before moving into the restricted hall space. The teacher strongly emphasised the need to improve performance and gave advice such as, "Think about levels, speed and the quality of your movements". Effective evaluation of performance by the teacher and the pupils also

reinforced the idea of improvement. For example, it was suggested that pupils moving in a mirror image sequence could make their performance even better by simplifying it and moving together even more definitely. In this lesson, there was no discussion of how exercise affected the body which was unusual as this was well considered in most lessons.

133. Pupils in Years 4, 5 and 6 swim for one term each year. Although there were no formal records to examine – these are to be started this year – the co-ordinator indicates that most pupils are able to swim at least 25 metres safely and unaided by the time that they leave the school.

134. The subject is appropriately managed by an experienced and enthusiastic co-ordinator and there has been a satisfactory improvement since the inspection in 1997. In response to national priorities, physical education has been given a relatively low profile in the school recently. However, the policy for the subject has been reviewed and the Qualifications and Curriculum Authority's scheme of work is used to provide teachers with guidance in the teaching of the subject. An appropriate range of extracurricular sporting activities for Key Stage 2 is provided. The pupils benefit from an educational visit that enables them to undertake outdoor adventurous activities. The subject makes a good contribution to the pupils' social development, for example, as they learn sporting behaviour and to organise themselves into groups. There is no formal action plan for physical education but the co-ordinator has clear ideas for its development. These include monitoring the quality of the teaching, introducing assessment procedures and improving resources. At present, although the school has a good field and outside hard surfaced area, the small hall and the lack of large gymnastic equipment prevent it from fully meeting the requirements of the National Curriculum at Key Stage 2. There was no evidence of the application of literacy and numeracy skills, for example, measuring and recording personal performance.

RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

135. As reported in the previous inspection, by the ages of seven and 11, pupils attain standards in religious education that meet the expectations of the locally agreed syllabus. Throughout the school, there is a strong emphasis on how different religious beliefs are relevant to pupils' own lives and how they can learn from them. This, in turn, makes a good contribution to their personal development. All pupils make sound progress in the subject as they move through the school. Pupils with special educational needs are involved in all class activities and discussion and, with support and encouragement, achieve satisfactorily.

136. The quality of teaching and learning at Key Stage 1 is satisfactory. In the last inspection, teaching across the school was reported to be sound. Teachers create a calm, caring atmosphere in class where pupils can effectively explore their responses and new thoughts and ideas. In a Year 2 lesson, this supportive approach enabled pupils to identify with the sadness of the character in 'Karen's story' and to speak sensitively about how they could help others when their hopes had been dashed. However, there was insufficient religious content in the lesson to maximise pupils' learning. Pupils in this year group also have a sound understanding of biblical stories such as Moses and Noah's Ark, and of the purpose and use of Rangoli patterns. They also enjoyed making a diva to celebrate the Hindu festival of light. Pupils in Year 1 learn about traditions and beliefs important to Christians such as the events surrounding the birth of Jesus. There is little evidence in this key stage of teachers developing pupils' spiritual growth through observation and reflection on the beauty, order and mystery of the natural world.

137. The quality of teaching and learning at Key Stage 2 is satisfactory. Year 6 pupils have sound insight into the origins, meaning and importance of sacred writings like the Bible and the Torah. In a lesson about illuminated script in the Bible, the teacher emphasised to pupils the importance of incorporating relevant biblical images into their lettering. She provided themes such as 'Love your neighbour' and 'Remember the Sabbath day' but resources were unimaginative and the work did not present a challenge to more able pupils. As a result, pupils' work did not adequately convey the significance of these scriptures to believers. A strength of the teaching of religious education in the school is the emphasis on the universal values and messages of different faiths. 'Why do you wear a school uniform?' the Year 5 teacher asked his pupils - 'to show we

belong to 'Wainscott'. He thus effectively introduced a lesson on how symbolism expresses religious meaning and the significance of the five K's to Sikhs. By valuing their contributions, he built up pupils' self esteem well and by his respectful handling of artefacts enabled pupils to appreciate the significance of these objects to believers. The importance of religious rules and how they can affect their own lives is illustrated in Year 4's written work and, as a result of well structured, direct teaching, they are developing a sound understanding of the language associated with different faiths. Year 3 have studied aspects of Buddhism and Islam and have explored the meaning of the parable of the Good Samaritan and how it relates to their own lives.

138. A strength of teaching and learning in the subject in Key Stage 2 is the strong rapport between teachers and pupils which creates a climate of openness and respect for others' views and opinions. In Year 3, the teacher led the discussion thoughtfully and pupils talked about sharing and friendship with good maturity for their age. The Year 5 teacher stressed how pupils should take universal religious messages like sharing and helping into their daily lives. The school has a deliberate policy of focusing on drama and discussion in the subject. However, this limits the development of pupils' literacy skills across the curriculum and in Year 5, there is no recorded work, which is unsatisfactory for pupils of this age. This is compounded by an over-reliance on undemanding work sheets and by pupils being given the same work, regardless of their capabilities, which does not promote good progress for all pupils. In one lesson, the teacher included too many different elements such as parables, fables, Buddhism and Christianity, which pupils could not assimilate.

139. The subject is satisfactorily led and resourced although there are insufficient artefacts. Targets for development, such as assessment and evaluation, are appropriate. The coordinator monitors planning but does not undertake classroom observation. There was no coordination or monitoring at the previous inspection. Marking is generally helpful and constructive. Displays such as the collage of Noah's Ark and Sikh clothes and Islamic patterns are a good focus for learning. Information and communication technology is not used sufficiently to support teaching and learning in the subject. The subject makes a good contribution to pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. Pupils have worthwhile opportunities to reflect on religious stories and how they can mirror their own feelings and experiences. Visits to All Saints Church, a Sikh temple, a synagogue and Rochester Cathedral also provide pupils with a rich source of information about how others live and worship and enable them to understand and value religious and cultural differences.