

# INSPECTION REPORT

## **WHITSTABLE ENDOWED CE JUNIOR SCHOOL**

Whitstable

LEA area: Kent

Unique reference number: 118737

Headteacher: Mrs P Eccles

Reporting inspector: Mrs C Skinner  
23160

Dates of inspection: 17<sup>th</sup>-20<sup>th</sup> July 2000

Inspection number: 198329

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

## INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Type of school:	Junior
School category:	Voluntary Aided
Age range of pupils:	7 to 11
Gender of pupils:	Mixed
School address:	High Street Whitstable Kent
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Appropriate authority:	The governing body
Name of chair of governors:	Mrs D R Clements
Date of previous inspection:	4 <sup>th</sup> November 1997

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## INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Team members		Subject responsibilities	Aspect responsibilities
Carole Skinner	Registered inspector	Science Information technology Design and technology	How high are standards? How well are pupils taught? How well is the school led and managed?
Tony West	Lay inspector		The 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?
Alan Britton	Team inspector	Mathematics Geography History Physical Education Special educational needs	
Audrey Quinnell	Team inspector	English Art Music Equal opportunities	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**

Whitstable Endowed Junior School educates boys and girls between the ages of seven and 11. It is a Church of England Voluntary Aided school. The school has 190 pupils on roll. This is smaller than other schools of the same type and is broadly the same as at the time of the school's previous OFSTED inspection. The school has 26 more girls than boys on roll. Only one pupil speaks English as an additional language and does so fluently. Less than one per cent of the pupils are from ethnic minority backgrounds. Approximately 14 per cent of the pupils have free school meals, which is below average. The school has 85 pupils on its register of special educational needs, which is well above average. There are no pupils who have a statement of special educational need. Only a small percentage of pupils enter or leave the school at times other than those of the normal entry or transfer to secondary schools. The attainment of pupils on entry to the school in Year 3 varies from year to year, but is broadly average overall.

### **HOW GOOD THE SCHOOL IS**

Whitstable Endowed School is a very good school which offers its pupils a high standard of education. The combination of very good leadership and management and good teaching results in pupils making good progress in their learning and achieving high standards in their work. The school gives good value for money.

#### **What the school does well**

- Pupils achieve standards that are well above average in English and science and above average in mathematics and information technology. Standards are also high in history and music, and very high in art.
- The quality of teaching is good throughout the school, and this leads to good progress in learning for all pupils.
- The very good leadership and management of the headteacher, key staff and governors provide clear direction for the school and promote high standards in all aspects of school life.
- The pupils' behaviour and their attitudes to work are very good and greatly assist their learning.
- The provision for the pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is very good overall and pupils make good progress in these areas of their education.
- There are very good procedures for assessing and monitoring pupils' academic performance which help teachers to plan appropriately challenging work for all pupils.

#### **What could be improved**

- The extent to which the higher standards found by this inspection are reflected in the school's end of key stage national test results.
- The involvement of parents whose children are on Stage 3 of the school's register for special educational needs. They are currently not involved sufficiently in discussing and reviewing their children's progress and the targets that are set for them.

*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 November 1997, when it was found to have serious weaknesses in a number of aspects of its work. At that time, the present headteacher had recently taken up her post and had already begun to address many of the identified weaknesses. Together with staff and governors, she has continued to implement strategies and initiatives which have brought about very good improvement in the school's performance in a relatively short time. The main reason for this is the very good improvement in school development planning. The school has a very good capacity to continue to improve in the future. The pupils' average scores in national tests have fallen over three years,

although the proportion of pupils reaching average standards has risen. This is because fewer pupils have reached the higher levels. The findings of the inspection show that standards in the current Year 6 are very high and the school is on course to meet the challenging targets that were set for 2000. The quality of the leadership and management of the school has improved significantly and there are now excellent systems and procedures for monitoring and evaluating the quality of teaching and the curriculum, the assessment and progress of the pupils and the school's performance when compared to other schools. The management roles of co-ordinators have been developed very well and these teachers now play an important part in improving the curriculum and monitoring teaching and learning in their subjects. A comprehensive programme of in-service training has helped teachers to improve their practice to its current good quality. The curriculum has been greatly improved by the successful implementation of new schemes of work and the allocation of appropriate time to teach each subject. The range of resources to support teaching and learning has been improved to a satisfactory level. The provision for pupils with special educational needs has also improved.

## 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	
	1997	1998	1999	1999	
English	A	C	C	C	well above average A above average B average C below average D well below average E
mathematics	B	B	C	D	
science	C	D	D	E	

The information shows that the pupils' results in the national tests for 11 year olds have fallen since 1997 in all three subjects, and that standards in science have been consistently lower than in English and mathematics. The findings of the inspection differ significantly from the pupils' 1999 test results and show that attainment in English, including literacy, and science is well above average, whilst in mathematics, including numeracy, it is above average. This is partly because of variations between the two groups of pupils. In 1999, there was a very high proportion of pupils with special educational needs in the year group. In the current Year 6, there are very few pupils with special educational needs and a very high proportion of higher achieving pupils. However, the higher standards can also be attributed to improvements in the quality of teaching and the very successful implementation of the national strategies for literacy and numeracy. In science, an increased focus on analysing the results of assessments has led to the careful identification of areas of weakness. In all three subjects, the meticulous tracking of pupils' progress and setting individual targets to raise their attainment have contributed very well to helping them achieve the highest possible standards. The school set challenging targets for the pupils' performance in the national tests in 2000, which it is on course to achieve.

Pupils achieve above average standards in information technology. In art, standards are very high, particularly in painting and drawing. Standards in music and history are also good. All pupils, including those with special educational needs, make good progress in their learning and achieve standards which reflect their potential.

## PUPILS' ATTITUDES AND VALUES

Aspect	Comment
Attitudes to the school	Very good. Pupils show great interest in and enthusiasm for their work and are keen to do their best. They take a pride in their work, which is reflected in the high standards of presentation.
Behaviour, in and out of classrooms	Very good. Pupils behave very well in lessons, around the school and in the playground. They are courteous and friendly to adults and most show concern and respect for each other.
Personal development and relationships	Good. Pupils co-operate well in group activities and enjoy taking responsibility for various jobs around the school. The relationships between pupils, and between pupils and adults, are very good.
Attendance	Attendance is broadly in line with the national average and unauthorised absence is below average. Most pupils arrive punctually for school.

## TEACHING AND LEARNING

<b>Teaching of pupils:</b>	<b>Aged 7-11 years</b>
Lessons seen overall	Good

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

Of the 40 lessons observed during the inspection, 39 per cent were very good and 51 per cent were good. All of the teaching was at least satisfactory. The teaching of English, including literacy, is very good. In mathematics, including numeracy, the quality of teaching is good. Particular strengths are the teaching of both basic and more advanced skills in literacy and numeracy, the management of the pupils, and the relationships between teachers and pupils, which are consistently very good. Teachers have high expectations of the standards that pupils can achieve and provide appropriately challenging work for all pupils. Throughout the school, pupils of all ages and levels of attainment work hard and make good progress in their learning. They apply considerable creative and intellectual effort to their work and concentrate well. Pupils sustain a good pace of working and produce a good amount of work in the given time. They enjoy challenges and respond to them positively.

## OTHER ASPECTS OF THE SCHOOL

Aspect	Comment
The quality and range of the curriculum	Curricular provision is very good and assists the pupils to make good progress in their learning. There is a good range of extracurricular activities, which include visits to a number of events and places of interest and visitors to the school, all of which enrich the pupils' experience.

Provision for pupils with special educational needs	The school has good procedures for identifying and supporting pupils with special educational needs. They are assessed and monitored carefully to ensure that they are given appropriate work and that their needs are met. The parents of pupils who are at Stage 3 on the school's register of special educational needs are not sufficiently involved in reviewing their children's progress. Pupils who are withdrawn from lessons for extra help with reading sometimes miss the introduction to the lesson.
Provision for pupils' personal, including spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	Very good overall. Spiritual development is promoted well through opportunities for reflection in collective worship and some lessons. Moral and social development are very good and underpin all aspects of school life. The school provides a very good range of opportunities to develop the pupils' awareness of the richness and diversity of different cultures.
How well the school cares for its pupils	The school cares for pupils well, although some administrative aspects of health and safety are not fully complied with. Procedures for assessing pupils' attainment and progress are very good and assessment information is analysed rigorously and used very well to influence curricular planning. Procedures for monitoring and promoting good behaviour are very good and result in high standards in this area.

The school's partnership with parents makes a satisfactory contribution to pupils' achievements.

#### **HOW WELL THE SCHOOL IS LED AND MANAGED**

<b>Aspect</b>	<b>Comment</b>
Leadership and management by the headteacher and other key staff	The headteacher provides excellent, purposeful leadership for the school which has led to significant improvements in many areas of its work in a short time. She has created a very effective management team who have been instrumental in bringing about improvements in their subject and areas of responsibility. The headteacher has been particularly successful in recognising and developing the management skills of other teachers and enabling them to use these to the full.
How well the governors fulfil their responsibilities	The governing body fulfils its responsibilities very well. Governors are very well informed, are very well aware of the school's strengths and weaknesses, and are actively involved in shaping the direction of the school. They have taken a number of initiatives that have resulted in significant improvements. They provide very good support for the headteacher and staff and work closely with them to achieve the highest possible standards in all areas of the school's work. There are some minor omissions from the school prospectus and the governors' annual Report to Parents.



The school's evaluation of its performance	The headteacher has a thorough knowledge of the school's performance and takes very effective steps to address any weaknesses. There is rigorous monitoring and evaluation of the pupils' performance in national and internal tests, of the quality of teaching and of the curriculum and its implementation. All staff and governors are fully involved in this process. Challenging targets are set for individuals and year groups, and careful tracking of pupils' progress helps staff and governors to monitor how well the school is achieving in relation to its targets.
The strategic use of resources	The school's resources are used very well to promote the pupils' learning. All expenditure is closely linked to the priorities in the school improvement plan, which is carefully costed. Staff make very good use of the accommodation, and ensure that its limitations do not prevent them from giving pupils access to the full curriculum. Resources in information technology are used very well to support learning across the curriculum and to analyse the school's performance in a number of areas. The school works well to achieve the best value possible in its use of resources.

The school has a good number of teaching and support staff whose qualifications and experience are well matched to the demands of the curriculum. The accommodation is satisfactory, although classrooms are small and cramped. Resources have been improved since the school's last inspection and are now satisfactory.

#### **PARENTS' AND CARERS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL**

<b>What pleases parents most</b>	<b>What parents would like to see improved</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The school has high expectations of their children.</li> <li>• The quality of teaching is good.</li> <li>• Their children like school.</li> <li>• The behaviour in school is good.</li> <li>• Their children make good progress</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The homework their children receive.</li> <li>• The information they receive about their children's progress and the work they are doing in school.</li> <li>• How closely the school works with parents.</li> <li>• The leadership and management of the school.</li> <li>• The range of activities outside lessons.</li> </ul>

The inspection team agrees with the positive views expressed by the majority of parents. In addition, the findings of the inspection are that pupils are given homework that is appropriate to the pupils' ages and stage of development. The leadership and management of the school are very good and an interesting range of activities is offered to pupils outside lessons. The school works with parents in a satisfactory manner. Pupils' end-of-year reports are informative and provide a clear picture of each pupil's attainment and progress. The information that is provided for parents about what their children are to learn each term is not adequate.

## **PART B: COMMENTARY**

### **HOW HIGH ARE STANDARDS?**

#### **The school's results and achievements**

1. When the pupils' results in the 1999 national tests for 11 year olds are compared with those of all schools, they are broadly in line with the national average in English and mathematics and below average in science. When compared with schools that have a similar proportion of pupils who are eligible for free school meals, the pupils' results are average in English, below average in mathematics and well below average in science. There has been a downward trend in the pupils' average scores since 1996. Although there has been an increase in the proportion of pupils who attain expected standards (Level 4) over this time, fewer pupils have reached above average standards (Level 5). This has had the effect of lowering the school's overall results. However, the findings of the inspection differ significantly from the pupils' results in the 1999 tests. They show that standards are well above those found in most schools in English, including literacy, and science, and above those found in most schools in mathematics, including numeracy. This is because nearly all pupils are achieving Level 4, and a high proportion have reached Level 5. Although the improved results can be attributed partly to the variations between year groups, there has also been a significant improvement in the quality of teaching, including the successful implementation of the national strategies for literacy and numeracy, and in the assessment and tracking of individual pupils' attainment and progress. These factors are having a significant impact on pupils' attainment and progress throughout the school. The school set challenging targets for 85 per cent of the pupils to achieve expected standards in English and for 75 per cent to do so in mathematics in the national tests for Year 6 in 2000. The provisional results of the Year 6 tests for 2000 show that the school is on course to exceed these targets in both subjects.

2. The pupils also achieve standards in information technology, history and music which are above those found in most schools. In art, standards are very good for the pupils' ages, especially in drawing and painting. In design and technology, geography and physical education, standards are similar to those found in most schools. Compared with the findings of the school's previous OFSTED inspection, standards have improved in English, mathematics, science, information technology, art and history. In music, design and technology and physical education, similar standards have been maintained, whilst in geography, standards are now average compared with above average at the time of the last inspection. The improvement in standards is closely related to improvements in the quality of teaching and the planning of the curriculum since the previous inspection.

3. In English, in Year 6, standards are well above average in speaking and listening, reading and writing. Pupils have very good literacy skills and they use these very well in other subjects, such as science and history. Pupils speak confidently in small groups and to a wider audience. They use a wide range of vocabulary to express their thoughts and listen attentively and courteously when others are speaking. Most pupils are very fluent readers who are able to read a variety of challenging material. They use highly developed skills when analysing different texts, and use research skills effectively to support their learning across the curriculum. Pupils' writing is well organised and shows a very good grasp of spelling, punctuation and grammar. Pupils often write thoughtfully and imaginatively and take a pride in the presentation of their work.

4. In mathematics, pupils have well developed numeracy skills. They have a good knowledge and understanding of place value and use this well to multiply and divide whole numbers by ten and 100 mentally. They use their good knowledge of multiplication tables to identify factors, multiples and square numbers. Pupils convert metric to imperial measures and calculate the area of a rectangle and a triangle. They collect data and convert it into different types of graph. Pupils are able to apply their mathematical skills and knowledge in a variety of contexts to solve problems.

5. Pupils attain very good standards in investigative and experimental science and in their scientific knowledge and understanding. They formulate hypotheses, such as ‘the higher the ramp, the further the ball will travel’ when carrying out investigations. Pupils make observations, take accurate measurements and record their findings clearly in various formats, including tables, bar charts and line graphs. They draw conclusions from their findings and apply the knowledge gained to practical everyday situations. Pupils demonstrate a very good range of knowledge across all aspects of science. They understand how the organs of the human body and the different parts of a flowering plant work. They explain the feeding relationships between animals and plants in a food chain. Pupils know why some materials make better thermal insulators than others and know which materials could be used in an electrical circuit as conductors.

6. In art, pupils handle tools confidently and skilfully and use a wide variety of media imaginatively and creatively to express their ideas. In music, they sing a range of songs with a good awareness of melody, rhythm and pitch. They accompany their singing well using tuned and untuned percussion instruments. In design and technology, pupils incorporate their knowledge of electricity into designing and making a ‘steady hand’ game that involves wiring up a buzzer. In information technology, pupils use a digital camera to take photographs, which they then import into a piece of text. They control a sequence of ‘traffic lights’ by entering commands into a computer program. In geography, pupils identify climatic zones around the world and explain how people have to adapt to different weather conditions. In history, pupils demonstrate a good factual knowledge of the main changes, people and events in Britain since 1930. They use a variety of sources to acquire information and produce extensive written accounts to a very high standard. In physical education, pupils practise and improve their own performance when participating in ‘kwik-cricket’ and rounders activities. They attain good standards in dance as they control and co-ordinate rhythmic patterns of movement in response to mood and music. Most pupils achieve expected standards in swimming.

7. The attainment of pupils on entry to the school varies considerably from year to year. The current group of Year 3 pupils entered the school with below average attainment, whereas the current Year 6 class had above average attainment at the age of seven. Overall, pupils make good progress and achieve well, reaching standards that reflect their potential. The pupils are given demanding work, which requires them to apply themselves and work hard in order to succeed. Pupils with special educational needs, who represent a significant proportion of the school’s population, also make good progress towards the targets that are set for them. They are supported well in lessons and are given work that is appropriate to their level of need. The school’s very good procedures for assessing and tracking individual pupils’ attainment and progress, and setting challenging but achievable targets, are a significant contribution to the good progress made by the pupils.

### **Pupils’ attitudes, values and personal development**

8. Throughout the school, pupils are keen, enthusiastic and eager to come to school. They listen attentively, follow instructions well and settle quickly to the tasks given. Overall, pupils’ attitudes to school are very good and the great majority of pupils concentrate well. Pupils work well independently and in groups. They are interested in the life of the school, behave very well, and comply with the school rules. They are polite and courteous to teachers, to each other and to visitors. During the inspection, all pupils moved about the school sensibly and no examples of rough or inappropriate behaviour were seen in the playground. Pupils who have special educational needs respond very well to lessons. They are fully integrated into all classes, behave very well and work hard.

9. Pupils form constructive relationships with each other and with adults. They are caring in their support for those with special educational needs and pupils who are new to the school. Pupils know that bullying is unacceptable and will be firmly dealt with and there are very few instances of it. No bullying was seen during the inspection. No pupils have been excluded. There is good racial equality

amongst the pupils, who show respect for other faiths, traditions and cultures. Pupils handle resources with great care and respect the school premises. No examples of damage or graffiti were seen during the inspection.

10. There are opportunities for pupils to reflect on what they do and its impact on others. The pupils discuss various topics and accept that others may have a different view or belief from their own. They have opportunities to take responsibility and willingly take up any opportunities they are given to use their initiative. For example in the school's summer fete, pupils devised and organised games to raise funds. Since the last inspection, the pupils' attitudes, values and personal development have continued to improve.

11. Attendance is satisfactory and is at the level of the national average whilst unauthorised absence is below the national average. Few pupils are late for school and lessons start promptly. This is an improvement since the last inspection.

### **HOW WELL ARE PUPILS TAUGHT?**

12. Overall, the quality of teaching and the quality of learning are good and have a significant impact on the standards pupils achieve and the progress they make. During the inspection, 40 lessons or parts of lessons were observed. The quality of teaching was very good in 39 per cent of these and good in 51 per cent. In the remaining ten per cent, teaching was satisfactory. The quality of learning reflected these figures exactly. This represents an improvement on the findings of the school's last inspection, when approximately six per cent of the teaching was unsatisfactory and only three per cent was very good. The quality of teaching is very good in English and art, good in mathematics, science, information technology, history and music. It is satisfactory in design and technology, geography and physical education. Evidence from the lessons observed and the analysis of pupils' work that has been completed throughout the year shows that there are no significant variations in the quality of teaching and learning between different classes or year groups.

13. Very strong features of the teaching are the relationships that exist between teachers and pupils and the teachers' very good management of pupils in lessons, which lead to very good behaviour and pupils applying themselves very well to their work. This enables pupils to make good progress in their learning. The teaching of literacy and numeracy skills in the literacy hour and the daily mathematics lesson is particularly strong. In both English and mathematics, teachers place very good emphasis on teaching pupils basic and more advanced skills. In English, they develop pupils' reading skills to a high level, and, in mathematics, they encourage pupils to devise and explain different mental strategies to solve problems. Teachers plan their lessons carefully, taking into account the range of ability levels within the class and devising appropriately matched activities. In mathematics, pupils are taught in groups formed on the basis of their previous attainment, which allows teachers to pitch the work at an appropriate level for all pupils. Teachers have very high expectations of what their pupils are able to achieve and they provide demanding work that challenges and extends pupils' thinking. Parents appreciate this and pupils respond very positively to the challenge.

14. Teachers use a good range of methods and teaching strategies, which are effective in providing a good quality of learning for the pupils. For example, there is a very good emphasis on investigative and experimental work in science, which is balanced effectively with imparting scientific knowledge. As a result, pupils are actively engaged in learning and are able to apply their knowledge to everyday situations, which makes the learning relevant to their own lives. A good example was in a Year 4 lesson, where pupils investigated the effect of friction on moving objects and how this is affected by different materials. The teacher led pupils successfully to apply this knowledge to their own experience, discussing why car tyres have to have a certain tread and why smooth soled shoes would not be worn in icy weather. In history and geography, pupils are given the opportunity to use local sources of information to develop their knowledge and understanding, and to carry out independent

research and fieldwork. Another good feature of the teaching is the way teachers make connections between different subjects, which enables them to cover the breadth of the curriculum very effectively and also enhances the pupils' learning by making it more relevant and meaningful. A very good example of this was the 'Greek Day' in Years 3 and 4, on the final day of the inspection, which brought together history, geography, art and craft, athletics, storytelling, writing and mathematics as a final celebration of what pupils had learned throughout the term. As pupils wore Greek dress, tasted olives, houmous, Greek yogurt and honey, learned about the Greek alphabet and number system, and made wreaths and masks, their learning came to life. The final 'mini-Olympics' rounded the day off with a flourish, as pupils took part in mock chariot races, ran a marathon and threw foam javelins.

15. Teachers make good use of information technology to support teaching and learning in other subjects. For example, pupils use CD-ROMs to find out information about history, geography and science topics and use a computer program to record and analyse measurements taken in science experiments. Teachers respond to pupils' work positively, offering both encouraging comments and constructive suggestions on how to improve it. This helps to build pupils' self-esteem and enables them to learn from their mistakes.

16. In the responses to the parents' questionnaire, 41 per cent of the parents expressed dissatisfaction with the work that their children are given to do at home. The school has a clearly stated homework policy which is implemented consistently by teachers. The findings of the inspection are that homework is used effectively to reinforce and extend pupils' learning. It includes reading, spelling and learning multiplication tables on a regular basis, as well as other activities, such as individual research, which are linked closely to pupils' work in class. Some parents' criticisms that insufficient explanation was given and that homework was not marked or valued were judged to be unfounded. For example, pupils in Year 6 were given a clear explanation sheet about the work that they were expected to do connected with their topic on Britain since 1930. The teacher wrote appreciative comments about pupils' efforts, as well as further guidance, many of which were still evident in the pupils' folders. This particular homework project provided pupils with a high level of challenge that not only extended their knowledge and understanding of a period in recent history, but also developed their independent research and personal organisation skills. This is very good preparation for what these pupils will be expected to do in secondary school.

17. Some very good teaching was observed in all year groups, but the highest proportion seen was in Year 6. In a very good science lesson in Year 6, which exemplified many of the strengths of teaching throughout the school, the teacher's very high expectations of the pupils were evident from the outset, as he questioned them to reinforce what they had learned previously about the lungs, how they work and how they are affected by smoking. The teacher's extensive knowledge and expertise in the subject and his easy rapport with the pupils enabled him to communicate essential information effectively and in a way that inspired and motivated pupils to learn. He created an ethos of serious scientific enquiry that was tempered with humour and a sense of enjoyment. The objective of the lesson was made clear to the pupils, and resources, including chest X-rays of patients with lung disease, were well prepared in advance and used effectively to extend pupils' understanding of the topic. As a result of the teacher's very good planning, preparation and explanations, pupils successfully measured the capacity of their lungs by the displacement of water from an upturned bottle that they had previously calibrated. They investigated whether lung capacity was related to chest circumference by comparing the measurements recorded on a computer spreadsheet. In this way, the teacher successfully incorporated the development of pupils' numeracy and information technology skills into the lesson, and also developed their literacy skills by asking them to write a factual report of the experiment.

18. Teachers work closely with support assistants to help pupils who have special educational needs. They plan work that is appropriate for these pupils and ensure that they are fully integrated into the work of the class. For example, in a literacy lesson in the Year 5 class, which has a particularly high

proportion of pupils with special educational needs, the support assistant worked well with a group of pupils to guide them in comparing two poems and identifying similarities and differences between them. Some pupils are withdrawn from classes on occasions for additional help and support with literacy. This has a positive influence on their rate of learning and helps them to make good progress. In one very good session that was observed during the inspection, the support assistant developed very well the pupils' ability to use adjectives and to make their writing more interesting by using descriptive sentences, such as "The fierce and scary, ginger and white tiger was creeping through the jungle". Pupils were also given spellings for homework and tested on their previous learning. All teachers show a good awareness of issues involving special educational needs and individual pupils' specific difficulties and needs. Lesson observations and an analysis of teachers' planning show that teachers provide different work for pupils which is still challenging and demanding. Teachers are fully involved in preparing and administering pupils' individual plans and in setting targets for individual pupils.

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

19. The school provides a very good curriculum for its pupils. It includes all subjects of the National Curriculum, together with oral French, religious education and personal and social education. The curriculum meets all statutory requirements and offers pupils a very good range of opportunities. The time allocated to each area of the curriculum is appropriate and weekly teaching time is satisfactory. This is an improvement since the last inspection. The school is implementing the national strategies for literacy and numeracy very well. The National Literacy Strategy has already been very effective in raising standards, and the National Numeracy Strategy, which has been introduced this year, is working well. In addition to the literacy hour, the school provides extra time each day for reading and writing, which is enabling all pupils to achieve very well in these areas. The curriculum effectively promotes the aims of the school and supports all pupils' intellectual, physical and personal development well. Pupils who have special educational needs are integrated into the life of the school very well.

20. The school's previous inspection report identified as a key issue the need to implement fully the National Curriculum requirements for information technology and physical education, and to produce schemes of work for all subjects, which met the requirements of the National Curriculum. The school has addressed these issues very well, as these requirements are now fully met. Literacy and numeracy are taught daily. Other subjects are taught as separate subjects or as part of a broader topic. Teachers plan well together to ensure that there is clear progression in learning for all pupils from year to year, especially for those in the mixed-age classes. All lessons are evaluated well and are used effectively to influence future planning. The curricular provision for, and the teaching of, pupils' personal development are good and are supported well by good monitoring. There is an appropriate sex education policy in place. At present, the school nurse comes into the school to speak to all pupils about personal, social and health education. Next year, sex education will be taught within the science curriculum. Literacy and numeracy skills are used very well across the curriculum. Pupils are given many good opportunities to use their literacy skills, such as writing a list of ingredients to make a honey sandwich, labelling diagrams in scientific experiments and the Year 6 research work for their history projects on Britain since the 1930s. In art, pupils are able to use their good understanding of two and three-dimensional shapes to create intricate Islamic patterns, and to use different sizes of translucent paper squares to form abstract designs and 'an insect'. Information technology is used very well across the curriculum and pupils enjoy sending E-mail messages to pupils in other classes and other schools.

21. Pupils who have special educational needs are grouped for most work in the classroom to ensure that they receive appropriate support, either one-to-one or as part of a group. Some pupils with special educational needs are withdrawn from the classroom for additional support with literacy and this generally coincides with the literacy hour or guided reading sessions. However, there are occasions when pupils are withdrawn during the introduction to lessons, such as history and geography, for extra

reading or literacy work. This limits their entitlement and opportunity to all aspects of the National Curriculum. The fact that pupils with special educational needs work mostly with support in the classroom enhances their social skills and is part of the reason for complete acceptance by their peers. It also ensures that the school's provision meets pupils' individual requirements as set out in their individual education plans. Teachers, together with the co-ordinator for special educational needs, review pupils' progress regularly and set new targets for them. However, the parents of pupils who are on Stage 3 of the school's register of special educational needs are not sufficiently involved in these reviews.

22. The policy and provision for equal opportunities are satisfactory. There is good provision for an appropriate curriculum for pupils in the mixed-age classes. Sports activities are open to boys and girls and pupils in Years 5 and 6 are grouped on the basis of their previous attainment for teaching in mathematics. The school is reconsidering the withdrawal of pupils for additional literacy support and some individual reading, and has plans to ensure that pupils receive this additional help within their classes next term.

23. A sound range of extracurricular activities was reported at the time of the previous inspection. Although some parents believe that there are limitations in the number of extracurricular activities, the findings of this inspection are that the present range across the school year is good. The school has managed to maintain a wide range of extracurricular activities, even though the recent emphasis has been on implementing the National Literacy and Numeracy Strategies well. Although there are not many lunchtime and after school clubs, the curriculum is enhanced by the considerable range of other activities, including visits the pupils make and visitors to the school. There are visits to local churches, and a weekly visit to the school by a member of the clergy to take an assembly. The school's provision for pupils' personal development is enhanced by visits from groups such as the Channel Theatre Company who help to develop pupils' awareness of the safe use of medicines. Pupils are able to play netball, rugby and rounders, and play competitive football matches against pupils from other schools. All pupils learn oral French within the school day. They can belong to the Christian fellowship and learn to play a range of musical instruments, such as violin, flute, trombone and saxophone. More than 30 pupils play guitars. During this year, pupils have taken part in the Whitstable Community College 'twinning' ceremony with a German town and visited the Millennium Dome and the White Cliffs Experience. They also participated in the Leeds Castle Children's Promenade Concert. During the inspection, pupils in Years 3 and 4 wore Greek dress to experience a 'Greek Day' which culminated in a 'mini-Olympics'. There is a good range of visitors to the school, including the community policeman, the school nurse, firemen, touring theatre companies and a local artist. Parents and relatives are regular visitors to special events.

24. There are very good links with partner institutions and regular visits are made by both pupils and teachers to and from the nearby infant and secondary schools. The headteacher visits pupils in their infant schools, where she takes an assembly. Pupils undertake some information technology and science work in the secondary schools before transfer. The very good links with the secondary schools help to prepare pupils well for their transfer to a new school. The headteacher maintains close links with pupils when they have transferred to their new schools by attending prize giving ceremonies.

25. Overall, the school makes very good provision for pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development and this permeates the whole curriculum and culture of the school. The school's previous inspection report indicated good provision, except for cultural development, which was satisfactory. The school's provision for pupils' spiritual development has been maintained, whilst the school's provision for moral, social and cultural development is now very good. This represents good improvement.

26. Pupils' spiritual development is promoted through well-planned daily acts of collective worship. Both pupils and staff are proud of belonging to a church school. The focus of assemblies is mainly Christian, whilst some have a multicultural theme. Pupils sing hymns and pray together and, with staff, gain a sense of shared values and being members of a large family. They visit different places of

worship, including the local church, and a member of the clergy comes into school on a regular weekly basis to take an assembly. Pupils visit Canterbury Cathedral and actively participated in the Cathedral's 'JC 2000' millennium celebrations. They are encouraged to develop their appreciation of the natural world through science and in art lessons, when they study parts of plants and create their own clay flowers. They are encouraged to reflect on 'What makes a good person?' and to realise that 'every person is special'.

27. The provision for pupils' moral development is very good and the school's high expectations of their good behaviour provide a very solid foundation for this aspect. The school has very few rules and all are positive. All adults within the school are very good role models, and the manner in which they encourage the pupils helps them to deal with routines. The positive approach to the management of behaviour and rewards such as chance cards, praise from the headteacher and house points, make pupils aware of what is acceptable and help them to develop an idea of what is right and wrong. Pupils understand that there is a need to respect the rights and property of others. Moral issues are taught and discussed well, as when Year 6 pupils explore how people can improve the environment and the need to sustain the rainforests. During an assembly, pupils were asked to think about the use of cheap child labour and to pray for these children. Three Year 5 pupils have written a simple song about keeping the environment clean. A visitor from a raptor centre enabled pupils to see birds close at hand and to be aware of the need to take care of the environment in order to preserve wild life. Pupils are encouraged to take responsibility for their classrooms and the resources in them, as well as duties such as preparing the hall and operating the compact disc player in assemblies and taking the registers to the school office.

28. Very good social provision is a strong feature of the school. Pupils are given good opportunities to work together in class in pairs and groups and to take responsibility for tasks appropriate to their age and development, both within the classroom and the wider school community. Lunch times are very good social occasions when pupils converse well together in a quiet, orderly manner in the canteen and play together very well in the playground. Further emphasis on social development is included in the programme for pupils' personal and social education through work on relationships and the impact of their actions by thought, word and deed. Pupils organise the Summer and Christmas Fairs in conjunction with the Friends of the School. A good range of extracurricular activities supports pupils' social development. Pupils are involved in fund raising for local and national causes during the year, which encourages them to gain an understanding of selflessness. The house points system is helping pupils to develop a healthy sense of competition and pride in group achievements. In 'circle time' discussions, pupils think about feelings and how their actions affect others. They are given good opportunities to be aware of the wider community. At harvest time, pupils are invited to bring a token gift of a piece of fruit or a vegetable, which are given to Age Concern, and also to donate money for a collection for a charity. Older pupils take part in the Junior Citizenship competition organised by the police, which enhances their social development well.

29. The very good provision for pupils' cultural development, particularly their awareness of the richness and diversity of different cultures, is a very good improvement since the last inspection, when it was deemed to be satisfactory. The new curriculum for religious education is broadly Christian, and includes other faiths, such as Hinduism, Sikhism and Islam. A good range of high quality books on different religions is in the school library and in classrooms, which are used well to extend pupils' knowledge of other cultures, their traditions and festivals. Older pupils create intricate geometric patterns based on Islamic designs in art lessons. Pupils are also made aware of other cultures in geography and history lessons. Visiting theatre companies, and visits to the theatre to see *Romeo and Juliet* and a pantomime, enhance pupils' cultural development. Other pupils have enjoyed a visit to the local museum, where they studied a display of 'Stuff Art' by a local artist, before using reclaimed materials for their own artwork. In English lessons, pupils study excerpts from Shakespeare and poems by T.S. Eliot. Pupils' written work shows that they have appreciated them and that their vocabulary is extended. In art lessons, pupils study great works of art by internationally famous artists, such as William Hogarth, Picasso and Joan Miro, as well as artwork from Aboriginal and other cultures. In



physical education lessons, they enjoy country dancing, which extends their understanding of their own cultural inheritance well. A highlight for many pupils was their recent visit to Leeds Castle to see the performance of 'The Children's Prom in the Park', whilst younger pupils enjoyed a 'Greek Day'.

## **HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL CARE FOR ITS PUPILS?**

30. As in the previous inspection, the school continues to provide a safe, secure and caring environment for its pupils. Members of staff, including the headteacher, know the pupils very well. Staff are very caring and support all pupils well. The quality of information made available to staff about all pupils is detailed and comprehensive and includes specific medical information on each child. External agencies, including health professionals and the education welfare service, give valuable support to the school.

31. Security provision at the school has been improved since the last inspection and further improvements are under way. The school identifies and deals effectively with any hazards found on site. For example, the gas heaters in corridors that were noted as hazardous in the previous inspection have been replaced. Health and safety checks, fire drills and inspections are regularly undertaken. The school's health and safety policy is detailed, and risk assessments are undertaken by the governors. However there was no evidence of assessments of the school's provisions against fire or for first aid. The school is aware of these requirements. Members of staff are qualified for administering first aid; however, there is not always a trained first aider on duty during the afternoon session. The school attends to the welfare of pupils well, although there is no welfare room available. Pupils are well supervised at break and lunch times with sufficient numbers of well trained ancillary staff. As noted in the previous inspection, the pupils receive good personal, social and health education, and the governors have a sex education policy in place. The school's policy and procedures follow the guidelines of the local committee for the protection of children. The acting deputy headteacher is the designated person. The headteacher attends case conferences and meetings with the social services department.

32. The school monitors attendance well, and has procedures in place to follow up any absences or lateness. It complies fully with the statutory requirements for registration and the coding and recording of attendance. The behaviour policy, references to behaviour in the home-school agreement, and the school rules provide pupils and parents with a clear understanding of the school's expectations. The staff and parents confirm that there are few cases of poor behaviour or bullying in the school.

33. A minority of parents expressed concern about pupils' end-of-year reports. Although these are generated by computer and use some prepared statements on curriculum subjects, the inspectors found these documents to be detailed and of good quality. They comply with legal requirements for assessment and provide good information on how pupils can improve.

34. The school's procedures for monitoring pupils' personal development are good. Members of the staff know pupils well and discuss at staff meetings any significant changes in behaviour or performance, which are then investigated and appropriate strategies developed to address them. The school operates a system of rewards, based on house points, which reflects the pupils' growing maturity. At the end of term, a highly prized cup is awarded to the house gaining the highest tally of points. Pupils are involved in setting their own targets for improvement each term. These targets are shared with parents in the pupils' end-of-year reports and give pupils the opportunity to identify the areas they have found difficult and those in which they have made good progress.

35. Pupils with special educational needs are supported well by learning support assistants for part of the day. The school plans to employ further support assistants by the beginning of next term. The results of the standardised assessments for seven year olds are taken into consideration when pupils are placed on the special educational needs register. The school also has good liaison and relationships

with infant and secondary schools through mutual visits to school by co-ordinators and support assistants. Outside agencies are also used well to enhance the learning of pupils with special educational needs. The special educational needs co-ordinator makes direct referrals to several outside agencies, including the educational psychologist, speech and language therapists and the school nurse. Individual education plans are comprehensive and pupils' tasks are formulated in small steps to develop their confidence and enable them to feel a sense of achievement. Pupils' progress, including in behavioural and social issues, is monitored and recorded during lessons by support assistants. The key issue from the previous OFSTED inspection concerning the withdrawal of pupils with special educational needs from the classrooms has been largely resolved.

36. The monitoring and support of pupils' academic performance and personal development are very good overall. The school has very effective systems for assessing pupils' attainment and progress in English, mathematics and science, including continuous assessment by teachers, standardised tests and comprehensive tracking documents for individual pupils. Thorough analysis of internal and national tests in English, mathematics and science has led the school to identify aspects that require further emphasis. The results of the national tests taken in Year 2 are used to start tracking the attainment and progress of all pupils in English, mathematics and science. These assessments and close liaison with infant school teachers are used very well to identify children who are likely to need additional support and those who are capable of achieving high standards. Pupils' progress and attainment are assessed as they move through the year groups and this information is passed on to the next teacher to ensure continuity. In other subjects, assessments are made by individual teachers, usually at the end of each topic. Test results are analysed very carefully to identify any variations in attainment between boys and girls and to address these issues. Subject co-ordinators work together with class teachers to produce consistent tracking records, especially in English and mathematics. All assessment information is used very effectively to influence teachers' planning and to set targets for year groups and individual pupils. The key issues in the previous OFSTED inspection relating to assessment have been fully covered and resolved.

### **HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL WORK IN PARTNERSHIP WITH PARENTS?**

37. The school's links with parents and the parents' views of the school are satisfactory. The quality of the information provided for parents is satisfactory, as is the contribution of parents to children's learning at school and at home.

38. In their responses to the questionnaire, significant numbers of parents did not agree that pupils had the right amount of homework; that they were well informed about progress or that the school worked closely with parents. The evidence of the inspection indicates that pupils are given appropriate amounts of homework and that homework is used well to reinforce pupils' learning. Parents are provided with an opportunity each term to discuss pupils' progress with their class teachers. The school welcomes parents to discuss issues, including pupils' progress, with teaching staff at times other than the scheduled evenings. Since the previous inspection, pupils' end-of-year reports have been improved. They now provide detailed information on what the pupils have achieved and understand. Reports also include information on areas that pupils need to improve.

39. Parents are provided with plenty of information on what is required from day-to-day and details of forthcoming visits or events. The school has developed a good home-school agreement, which shows clearly how parents, pupils and the school should work together to achieve high standards of work and behaviour. Parents confirmed that they have been kept well-informed about the changes in the curriculum brought about by the recent introduction of the national strategies for literacy and numeracy. They are not, however, provided with sufficient information on what is to be taught as part of the curriculum each term. There are a small number of omissions from the statutory information provided for parents in the school prospectus and in the governors' Annual Report to parents. From the

comments made at the parents' meeting before the inspection and the questionnaire responses, it is clear that most parents are supportive of the school and appreciate the good teaching and the school's high expectations of their children.

40. Parents are encouraged to help in school and, during the inspection, several were seen helping with reading and working with staff on the 'Greek Day' in Years 3 and 4. They entered fully into the spirit of the occasion, dressed in Greek costumes and greatly enjoyed being involved with the activity. The school makes good use of parents' expertise, for example, in running a netball club. Parents are welcomed to see the school in action, and are invited to attend information evenings and celebratory events and performances. Those parents who took the opportunity to visit the school on its recent Open Day felt that it was a very worthwhile experience. They were able to experience at first hand the school at work, at play and at worship. The comments written by parents at the time show that it was greatly appreciated. Parents have also expressed their gratitude for the efforts made by staff in helping to support their children through a variety of difficult times. The Friends' Association supports the school well and has enriched the pupils' experiences and the social life associated with the school by organising popular fund raising and social events.

41. The school supplies satisfactory information to the parents of pupils with special educational needs through regular meetings with class teachers. The special educational needs co-ordinator is available to speak to parents on these occasions and is also available on two days a week to meet with parents or speak to them on the telephone. However, parents of pupils on Stage 3 of the school's register of special educational needs are not sufficiently involved in reviewing their children's progress or the targets that are set for them in their individual education plans.

## **HOW WELL IS THE SCHOOL LED AND MANAGED?**

42. The leadership and management of the school are very good. The headteacher's clear vision for the school and her excellent leadership qualities have enabled her to build an effective staff team, whose shared commitment to achieving high standards in all aspects of the school's work has brought about very good improvement since the school's previous inspection in 1997. At that time, there were serious weaknesses in the leadership and management of the school. The headteacher had only been in post for a short time, but had already begun to address a number of these shortcomings. The most significant of these was the absence of an effective strategy for improving the school. The headteacher, governors and staff addressed this very effectively by drawing up and carrying out a comprehensive action plan and, in subsequent years, detailed school improvement plans. These have created and maintained very good momentum and a well-paced programme of development over the past three years. As a result of well planned and implemented strategies, the standards achieved by the pupils have risen in a number of subjects, the quality of teaching has improved, the curriculum is now very good and meets all statutory requirements, and the management roles of teachers who are responsible for subjects are much more clearly defined and well developed. The headteacher has been particularly successful in recognising and developing the management skills of other teachers and enabling them to use these to the full. By fostering the involvement of all teachers in the leadership and management of the school, the headteacher has successfully created a shared vision for the school and has enabled staff to contribute fully to decision making and to identifying priorities for development. As a result, the school's capacity to continue to improve is very good.

43. At the time of the last inspection, the roles of the deputy headteacher and subject co-ordinators were underdeveloped. When the current inspection took place, an acting deputy headteacher was in post, pending the arrival of the new deputy headteacher in September 2000. The new deputy headteacher's role is to be more far-reaching than was previously the case, giving greater involvement in whole-school issues at a strategic level. Teachers who manage subjects are very effective in leading

development, monitoring and evaluating progress and providing guidance for colleagues. Several teachers have observed their subject being taught in different classes, and have used the information gained from doing this to identify priorities for improvement and as a means of sharing good practice. The teachers who are responsible for English, mathematics and science have analysed the pupils' performance in both internal and national tests to identify gaps in pupils' knowledge and aspects of their subjects that need improving. All these initiatives have contributed significantly to raising standards and improving the quality of teaching throughout the school.

44. The previous inspection found that there was insufficient monitoring, evaluation and development of the quality of teaching. There has been very good improvement in this aspect of the leadership and management of the school. The findings of this inspection are that the monitoring, evaluation and development of teaching are excellent. They are carried out rigorously by the headteacher, who observes all teachers in the classroom and provides both verbal and written feedback on their performance. Teachers are open to the process and are constantly looking at ways to improve their practice. The headteacher provides a very good role model in the classroom, as she teaches different classes from time to time. This both enhances her own knowledge of the pupils and their work, and enables teachers to fulfil their management roles by releasing them from the classroom. The headteacher also offers colleagues a professional development interview each year to review their performance and agree targets for future development.

45. The leadership and management of the school's provision for pupils with special educational needs are good. A member of the governing body is delegated to oversee special educational needs provision throughout the school, and a special educational needs co-ordinator works for two days per week to ensure that all administrative procedures run smoothly. She is well qualified and provides good direction for teachers and learning support assistants. The co-ordinator and support staff have a very useful meeting each week when information from outside agencies and reports on individual pupils' progress are discussed. Most of the required information concerning special educational needs is contained in the governors' Annual Report to parents but there is insufficient detail about the use of funding. Support from outside agencies is well managed within the school. The co-ordinator liaises effectively with class teachers who have the responsibility for implementing pupils' individual education programmes in the classroom.

46. The governors make a very good contribution to the management of the school. They are very effective in helping to shape the direction of the school and have generated a number of initiatives to improve aspects of the school's provision, such as purchasing new reading books and redeveloping the library. They are currently pursuing the possibility of redeveloping the former caretaker's house to provide a computer room and a room for food technology. Governors have a wide range of expertise and a very good understanding of the school's strengths and weaknesses. They maintain a very good overview of the standards achieved by the pupils and the quality of education provided by the school. Meetings are very well attended and governors take an active interest in the school. They are involved in planning for school improvement and in reviewing the progress that has been made throughout the year. They are very supportive of the headteacher and staff, who value their contributions.

47. The headteacher, staff and governors analyse the school's performance with the utmost rigour. For example, the pupils' results in national and internal tests are carefully analysed to see whether boys or girls perform more strongly. Individual responses to test questions are thoroughly scrutinised to identify gaps in pupils' knowledge and to target specific areas for focused teaching. Challenging but achievable targets are set for year groups and individual pupils, and these are checked against the pupils' actual performance to see if they have been met. This rigorous monitoring of the school's performance ensures that appropriate priorities for development are included in the school improvement plan. The action taken to meet the school's targets has been highly effective, resulting in very high standards of achievement in the current Year 6.

48. The school improvement plan is carefully costed, and meticulous financial planning and administration ensure that educational priorities are supported effectively. The school's resources are used very well to promote the pupils' learning. The headteacher, administrative officer and governors work together closely to oversee the spending of the budget and to ensure that the school achieves the best value for money possible. There has been no financial audit since the last inspection. The experienced administrative officer monitors expenditure very efficiently and provides governors with regular updates. Information technology is used very well for administrative purposes and to enhance the pupils' education. Money that is allocated specifically for pupils with special educational needs is used very well to provide good levels of support from adults.

49. The school provides excellent support for staff who are new to the school and very effective provision for training new teachers. Some parents expressed concerns that their children had been taught by newly qualified, temporary or trainee teachers. As a result of the school's high expectations of all staff and the excellent support it provides for them, there is no evidence to suggest that this has had an adverse effect on the standards pupils achieve or the quality of their education. On the contrary, a thorough analysis of the work of pupils in every class shows that high standards of teaching have been maintained throughout the year.

50. The match of number and qualifications of staff to the demands of the curriculum is good. Teachers are knowledgeable and confident in the subjects they manage and support staff are equally competent and efficient in carrying out their role. A strong feature of the school is its family atmosphere in which staff are good role models for pupils in developing relationships and learning how to work together as a team. All staff work very hard to achieve the highest possible standards in all aspects of school life.

51. The lack of classroom space was noted in the previous inspection and remains a drawback. Classrooms are small and cramped for pupils of this age. Teachers make very good use of the space at their disposal and do not allow the shortcomings of the accommodation to have an adverse effect on the quality of education provided for the pupils. A library has been built by the premises manager since the last inspection, and it is a well constructed, bright and pleasant area. In the previous inspection, the hall was noted as inadequate for physical education. The hall remains as it was and does not provide space for equipment storage. As noted elsewhere, the school does not have a welfare room. The school has made strenuous efforts to limit the effect of the lack of a playing field. The accommodation in the school as a whole is satisfactory. Despite the lack of space, it allows the curriculum to be taught effectively, and provides a bright and stimulating learning environment. Pupils' work is attractively displayed to enhance the classrooms and shared areas which are in good decorative order. Everywhere is neat and tidy and has a well-kept air, which is welcoming and bright. The school has plans to develop the old caretaker's house as an information technology suite.

52. The outside fabric of the school is in need of repair, the school is to be equipped with new windows and the brickwork requires repointing. The playground has been brightened up recently with markings designed by the pupils. However, there are no shaded areas and the perimeter includes redundant World War 2 shelters that the school wishes to have redeveloped. The school makes good use of recreational areas outside school, a local swimming pool and a variety of visits to places of interest.

53. In the previous inspection, the school's provision of learning resources was a key issue. Since then, the resources available to staff and pupils have improved markedly. The only curriculum area where resources are unsatisfactory is design and technology. The resources for information technology were unsatisfactory in the last inspection and are now good. The school's new library is an attractive area that has appropriate books for the ages of the pupils. The books are in good condition and attractively displayed; some of these books have been purchased as a result of fund raising by the school's Friends' Association.

## **WHAT SHOULD THE SCHOOL DO TO IMPROVE FURTHER?**

In order to improve the quality of education it offers its pupils, the school should:

1. **Ensure that the standards in English, mathematics and science identified by this inspection are reflected in its end of key stage national test results.**

(Paragraphs 55, 64 and 68)

2. **ensure that the parents of pupils who are on Stage 3 of the school's register of special educational needs are fully involved in reviewing their children's progress.**

(Paragraphs 21 and 41)

## **OTHER ISSUES WHICH SHOULD BE CONSIDERED BY THE SCHOOL**

Ensuring that all statutory requirements relating to the administration of health and safety procedures and the information for parents in the school prospectus and the governors' Annual Report to parents are fully met.

(Paragraphs 31 and 39)

Ensuring that the withdrawal of pupils for additional help with reading and literacy does not compromise their access to the full range of the curriculum.

(Paragraph 21 and 22)

Improving the information that is given to parents about what their children are to learn each term.

(Paragraph 39)

Improving resources in design and technology.

(Paragraph 79)

## PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS

### *Summary of the sources of evidence for the inspection*

Number of lessons observed	40
Number of discussions with staff, governors, other adults and pupils	21

### *Summary of teaching observed during the inspection*

Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
0	39	51	10	0	0	0

*The table gives the percentage 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**

	Y3 – Y6
Number of pupils on the school's roll (FTE for part-time pupils)	190
Number of full-time pupils eligible for free school meals	26

*FTE means full-time equivalent.*

#### **Special educational needs**

	Y3 – Y6
Number of pupils with statements of special educational needs	0
Number of pupils on the school's special educational needs register	85

#### **English as an additional language**

	No of pupils
Number of pupils with English as an additional language	1

#### **Pupil mobility in the last school year**

	No of pupils
Pupils who joined the school other than at the usual time of first admission	7
Pupils who left the school other than at the usual time of leaving	3

## Attendance

### Authorised absence

	%
School data	5.3
National comparative data	5.4

### Unauthorised absence

	%
School data	0.1
National comparative data	0.5

*Both tables give the percentage of half days (sessions) missed through absence for the latest complete reporting year.*

### Attainment at the end of Key Stage 2

	Year	Boys	Girls	Total
Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 2 for the latest reporting year	1999	22	26	48

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys	14	14	17
	Girls	20	18	21
	Total	34	32	38
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	71 (67)	67 (63)	79 (58)
	National	70 [65]	69 [59]	78 [69]

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys	12	14	17
	Girls	19	18	19
	Total	31	32	36
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	65 (58)	67 (73)	75 (58)
	National	68 [65]	69 [65]	75 [72]

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



***Ethnic background of pupils***

	No of pupils
Black – Caribbean heritage	0
Black – African heritage	0
Black – other	0
Indian	0
Pakistani	0
Bangladeshi	0
Chinese	1
White	189
Any other minority ethnic group	0

*This table refers to pupils of compulsory school age only.*

***Teachers and classes*****Qualified teachers and classes: Y3 – Y6**

Total number of qualified teachers (FTE)	7.4
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	26
Average class size	32

**Education support staff: Y3 – Y6**

Total number of education support staff	5
Total aggregate hours worked per week	87

***Exclusions in the last school year***

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

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

***Financial information***

Financial year	1999/00
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	£
Total income	339797
Total expenditure	328433
Expenditure per pupil	1729
Balance brought forward from previous year	14484
Balance carried forward to next year	25848

## ***Results of the survey of parents and carers***

### **Questionnaire return rate**

Number of questionnaires sent out	192
Number of questionnaires returned	90

### **Percentage of responses in each category**

	Strongly agree	Tend to agree	Tend to disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know
My child likes school.	44	47	8	1	0
My child is making good progress in school.	35	51	11	1	2
Behaviour in the school is good.	30	62	6	0	2
My child gets the right amount of work to do at home.	13	44	35	6	2
The teaching is good.	44	44	8	1	3
I am kept well informed about how my child is getting on.	32	32	24	9	3
I would feel comfortable about approaching the school with questions or a problem.	51	33	13	3	0
The school expects my child to work hard and achieve his or her best.	48	45	5	0	2
The school works closely with parents.	21	40	30	8	1
The school is well led and managed.	29	40	13	9	9
The school is helping my child become mature and responsible.	28	57	7	3	5
The school provides an interesting range of activities outside lessons.	17	31	26	21	5

### **Other issues raised by parents**

Some parents expressed concern about their children being taught by supply teachers, newly qualified and trainee teachers. Some parents of pupils who are on Stage 3 of the school's register of special educational needs were dissatisfied with the school's arrangements for involving them in reviewing their children's progress.

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

### **ENGLISH**

54. The averages of the school's 1999 test results show that, compared with all schools and with similar schools, standards in English were average. Over the past four years, standards have been consistently higher than those found nationally, although there was a slight drop in standards in 1998. Over the past four years, boys have consistently achieved slightly higher standards than the girls. The school has set formal targets for 85 per cent of its pupils to attain Level 4 and above in the national end of Year 6 tests and teacher assessments for the year 2000. This represents a good degree of challenge and has helped to raise standards.

55. The findings of this inspection are that, by the end of Year 6, pupils achieve standards in English that are well above those found in most other schools and exceed the formal targets set by the school. Almost all of the pupils have reached Level 4 and nearly half are attaining Level 5. No significant differences were observed between the attainment of boys and girls. This judgement represents a very good improvement on the school's national test results and assessments in 1999. This is partly due to differences between groups of pupils but also reflects the successful implementation of the National Literacy Strategy. There has been a good improvement since the last inspection when standards in English were found to be above average. Overall, pupils make very good progress and achieve very well in English, including those who have special educational needs.

56. By the age of 11, pupils attain well above average standards in speaking and listening. Pupils readily engage in discussions, speak confidently, and offer ideas and relevant information, both in small groups and to a wider audience. Most pupils use a wide range of vocabulary to express their thoughts. They express their ideas sensitively, for example, when comparing the 'elusive, swaggering' *Macavity the Mystery Cat* by T.S.Eliot with the 'more domesticated', 'lazy' cat in a poem by Gareth Owen. Pupils listen attentively and courteously when others are speaking. This was illustrated well when younger pupils sat spellbound while listening to a Greek storyteller retelling the story of *Theseus and the Minotaur* during their 'Greek Day'.

57. Overall, in Year 6, most pupils attain well above average standards in reading. Most pupils read accurately, fluently and with relevant expression. The majority of pupils read challenging material and use higher order reading skills of prediction, deduction and inference. Higher achieving pupils identify features of style and compare characters from different books, using relevant information to explain their views. They show good understanding of the plot and different characters in *Macbeth* and *Romeo and Juliet*. Throughout the school, research skills are developed well.

58. Pupils attain well above average standards in writing. Most pupils spell commonly used words accurately, and show good skills in writing for a variety of purposes. Year 6 pupils write imaginative Haiku poems about a fish and a cat, with good use of metaphors, whilst their very good history projects on Britain since the 1930s show very good depth of understanding and how very well they are able to use a wide range of research material. Reflections on 'What makes a good person' are written with great sensitivity, whilst the lists and instructions for making a honey sandwich and the impact of concise headlines show the very good range of writing undertaken by pupils in the school. Pupils' writing is well organised, and often thoughtful and imaginative, and creative ideas are sustained well. Handwriting is invariably joined, neat and legible, and presentation is very good. Pupils make very good progress in spelling, punctuation and grammar as they move through the school.

59. Throughout the school, standards in literacy reflect those found in English. The development of literacy skills across the curriculum is very good. Pupils are provided with a broad range of appropriate opportunities to use their literacy skills, such as writing words for a melody composed by a group of pupils, writing up a scientific experiment on the effects of smoking, or describing the necessity for abbreviations in advertising.

60. Overall, the quality of teaching and the quality of learning in English are very good and promote very good progress for all pupils, including those with special educational needs. This represents a very good improvement since the last inspection, when teaching was judged to be 'sound'. All teaching of English is at least satisfactory, with a high proportion of very good teaching and no significant weaknesses. The real strength of the teaching is the staff's shared commitment to help every pupil succeed, by providing them with a rich, wide-ranging, stimulating curriculum for all aspects of the subject. A significant feature of all teaching in the school is the very good relationships between teachers and pupils, which enable pupils to feel confident and valued, and provide them with very good motivation.

61. Strengths of teaching and learning across the school were well illustrated in a literacy lesson for pupils in Years 5 and 6. The teacher clearly explained the objectives for the lesson 'to produce an end-of-year magazine reporting on extracurricular activities at school this year'. She immediately gained the pupils' interest by her enthusiasm, high expectations and effective open-ended questioning, which triggered a quick exchange of ideas between pupils. Pupils worked very well together in small groups of two or three, while the teacher moved amongst them, helping to extend their thinking. She asked thought-provoking questions and praised them, with comments such as 'You've made fantastic progress this year with your punctuation', and 'I'm very pleased with you, you're well on target'. Throughout the lesson, the pace was brisk and pupils sustained their concentration very well. By the end of the lesson, pupils made very good gains in their understanding of how to write a concise report for a magazine. This was the result of very good teaching within a warm, caring working atmosphere with very good relationships and high expectations. In most literacy lessons, throughout the school, similar high qualities of teaching and learning were observed.

62. The curriculum in English is varied and interesting, and meets the requirements of the National Curriculum. The school has a comprehensive policy and scheme of work, which cover all areas of English and the National Literacy Strategy. These provide a clear structure for literacy, which enables staff to teach confidently. The school provides additional time each day to teach the guided reading and writing aspects of the literacy hour, which is enabling pupils to achieve very high standards. Assessment procedures are very good and appropriately identify each pupil's stage of attainment. These are linked well to teachers' planning to help pupils improve further. Good use is made of targets in literacy to support teachers' planning. There is good liaison between teachers to ensure that planning is appropriate and that there is a consistent approach, especially for pupils in the mixed-age classes. Homework is used effectively in developing pupils' knowledge and skills in reading and spelling and supports the work undertaken in class well.

63. The co-ordinator is enthusiastic about her role, has good knowledge of the subject and manages it very efficiently. She provides clear direction for the subject and monitors the quality of teaching and standards across the school through observation of class teaching, informal discussions with staff, and examining pupils' work. Targets are set for every pupil and the co-ordinator monitors their progress. Resources for English are good, with a good range of high quality books. The school library is well organised and easily accessible for all pupils to use for research purposes, although this was not seen during the inspection. The library provides a good resource area for the school and is stocked with a satisfactory range of interesting, high quality books. It is a light, airy room, which is suitable for pupils to browse and enjoy books. It is often used for teaching small groups of pupil, including pupils who have special educational needs. English makes a very good contribution to the pupils' moral, social and cultural development.

## MATHEMATICS

64. The 1999 test results for 11 year olds in mathematics were average compared with all schools, but below the average for similar schools. The trend in improvement of pupils' performance in tests in mathematics over the last four years has been above the national average and boys have performed better than girls. The findings of the inspection show an improvement on the results of the 1999 tests. Standards in Year 6, including those in numeracy, are above those found in most schools. This indicates a good level of improvement since the last OFSTED inspection, when they were reported to be generally in line with the national average. This is due to the improvement in the quality of teaching and the successful implementation of the National Numeracy Strategy, which has enhanced teachers' knowledge and understanding of the subject. The school sets challenging targets in order to raise standards in mathematics and is well placed to achieve or surpass them. Pupils with special educational needs receive good provision in the subject and are making good progress. All pupils make good progress in their learning and achieve well. No significant differences between the attainment of boys and girls were evident.

65. By the age of 11, pupils demonstrate a good knowledge and understanding of place value and use this knowledge well to multiply and divide whole numbers by ten or 100 mentally. They have a good knowledge of multiplication tables and use this to identify factors, multiples and square numbers. Pupils convert fractions to decimals and the other way round and apply these skills to everyday situations concerned with sales and discounts. Although nearly all pupils are able to explain their methods of mental calculation, their understanding and use of approximation strategies are relatively under developed. Some pupils are able to calculate fractional and percentage parts of quantities and measures, for example, 30 per cent of 200 sweets and 0.4 of 1 hour and 15 minutes. These pupils are also able to use non-calculator methods for solving problems that involve multiplying or dividing any three digit number by a two digit number, like  $\pounds 2.53 \times 18$  and  $\pounds 875$  divided by 25. In their work on shape and space, most pupils have a sound knowledge of metric and imperial measures and can convert from one to the other. They calculate the area of rectangles, triangles and circles and some construct equilateral and right-angled triangles and recognise obtuse and acute angles. Data handling is used well, not only in mathematics but also in other areas of the curriculum, like science and geography. Pupils collect data and convert it into block or line graphs and pie charts. Information technology is used well in this context.

66. The quality of teaching and learning is good, with several examples of very good teaching. Teachers plan their lessons well in line with the National Numeracy Strategy, and their knowledge and understanding of the subject are good. This is illustrated in the challenging introductions to lessons and lively questioning. The objectives of each lesson are shared with pupils to make them aware of the teacher's expectations for high standards of work and behaviour. The very neat presentation of pupils' work also reflects the high expectations that teachers have of their pupils. All pupils are encouraged to explain how they work out their answers, both written and mental, and to use the correct vocabulary when explaining them. Lessons move at a good pace and, as a result, pupils make good progress in their learning. Initial mental activities are well paced, and in some cases timed, and teachers ensure that all pupils are involved, including those with special educational needs, by aiming different questions at particular pupils within the group. Pupils are taught in groups formed on the basis of their previous attainment, which assists teachers in ensuring that the work is appropriately matched to pupils' needs. The final session of each lesson, as a whole class, is used well to ensure that the original objectives have been reached and that all pupils understand and can use the skills they have been learning.

67. The mathematics curriculum is broad and covers all the requirements of the National Curriculum for pupils of all ages and abilities. All pupils have equality of access to the curriculum

throughout the school. The subject planning is based on the National Numeracy Strategy and is backed up by a commercial scheme. The subject co-ordinator is a member of the senior management team and provides good direction for the subject. She has attended courses for the National Numeracy Strategy, accompanied by the special educational needs co-ordinator, and provided in-service training for members of staff, including learning support assistants. All classes have been monitored in the teaching of the strategy and sets of pupils' workbooks are collected regularly for monitoring. The top two year groups are organised into three ability groups for mathematics. Resources for the subject are satisfactory. This is an improvement on the findings of the last OFSTED inspection when many of the books were found to be old and unattractive and unrelated to the National Curriculum programmes of study. Information technology is used well for mathematics, especially in handling data. Procedures for tracking and assessing pupils' attainment and progress are very good and assessment information is used very well. Mathematics is used well in other subjects, including science, geography and art. The keen interest of pupils of all abilities in the subject undoubtedly leads to high standards and good progress in learning.

## **SCIENCE**

68. In the national tests for 11 year olds in 1999, the pupils' results were below the national average and well below the average for similar schools. Although the proportion of pupils who achieved expected standards (Level 4) was close to the national average, the percentage who reached the higher Level 5 was below the national average. The lower than average proportion of high achievers had the effect of depressing the school's overall performance in the tests. Between 1996 and 1998, although the percentage of pupils reaching Level 4 increased, the average scores declined sharply because fewer pupils attained high standards. The findings of this inspection differ significantly from the 1999 test results and show that standards are well above average. Almost all of the pupils in Year 6 have achieved Level 4 and almost half have reached Level 5. This represents a significant improvement over the previous year and on the findings of the last inspection, when standards were judged to average. Clearly, one of the reasons for the variations from year to year is that different groups of pupils are involved. However, the school's analysis of national and internal assessments has improved. This highlights weak areas which teachers then address. The school also predicts pupils' performance based on their attainment at the age of seven and sets targets for improvement for individual pupils, which clearly help them to strive for higher standards. All pupils, including those with special educational needs, make good progress in their learning and achieve well in relation to their earlier attainment.

69. By the age of 11, pupils have a very good understanding of life and living processes. For example, they explain how the lungs work and understand the effects of smoking on them. They understand and explain the feeding relationships that exist between plants and animals, using terms such as 'predator', 'consumer' and 'producer' correctly. Pupils have a good understanding of the properties of different materials and how these are suited to various purposes. They know how solids and liquids can be separated by evaporation and know that some materials make better thermal insulators than others. Pupils construct parallel and series electrical circuits, incorporate switches and know which materials conduct electricity. They explain how friction affects a moving object and how shadows are created. Pupils carry out a wide range of investigations and experiments to develop their scientific knowledge, skills and understanding. For example, they devise an investigation to test a hypothesis that 'the higher a ramp, the further a ball will travel'. They make careful observations, measure distances and record their findings in a line graph.

70. The quality of teaching, including that for pupils with special educational needs, is good, as at the time of the previous inspection. Teachers provide a good range of opportunities for pupils to acquire scientific knowledge through well planned investigations and experiments. For example, in Year 4, pupils set out to test the hypothesis that, where there is less friction, there is less grip, and

things slide more easily. They tested how many grams of mass were needed to move a block of wood over different surfaces, including carpet, silver foil and wood. They took measurements and recorded these in a table. As a result of trying things out for themselves, pupils learned how different surfaces affect the amount of friction. Through careful explanation and questioning, the teacher led them to understand the relevance of what they had learned in everyday situations. Teachers explain clearly to pupils what they are expected to learn and ask well chosen questions to extend pupils' thinking and reinforce what they have already learned. In the Year 4 lesson, the teacher began by consolidating pupils' previous learning about forces, including gravity and air resistance, and asked challenging questions to check how well pupils had understood. Lessons move at a brisk pace, which enables pupils to make good progress in their learning. Their learning is effective because they are actively involved in lessons and because teachers constantly challenge them with new ideas and concepts.

71. Teachers are successful because they make learning interesting for the pupils. In the lessons observed during the inspection, pupils in Year 6 were shown chest X-rays of patients with lung disease, which illustrated graphically the effects of smoking while pupils in Year 5 watched a demonstration in which the teacher used a syringe to 'smoke' a cigarette and then showed pupils the tar deposits on the cotton wool 'filter'. Pupils in Years 5 and 6 took part in 'Science Challenge 2000', their final lesson of the year, in which the teacher assessed what they had learned throughout the year in an imaginative and enjoyable way. The very high expectations, which all teachers have of their pupils, were evident in the content of the questions, such as "If a mass weighs 2kg, what force does it exert?" and "Explain floating and sinking in terms of the forces that are at work". The pupils were highly motivated by the quiz and were expected to collaborate as teams and share their knowledge. Teachers make good use of information technology to support pupils' learning in the subject and develop their literacy and numeracy skills well by providing opportunities for pupils to take measurements in grams, Newtons, litres and centimetres and to write factual accounts of their experiments.

72. The subject meets the requirements of the National Curriculum and is greatly improved since the last inspection, when it was not taught as a separate subject but as part of 'integrated studies'. The assessment of pupils' attainment and progress, which was unsatisfactory at the time of the last inspection, is now very good. The range of resources was also unsatisfactory. There is now a good range of resources to support teaching and learning, and these are used very well to make pupils' learning interesting and enjoyable. Outdated books have been thrown away and replaced by new and attractive books that relate closely to the needs of the curriculum. The headteacher continues to oversee the subject and has ensured that it has developed very well since the last inspection. The main drawback is the accommodation. Classrooms are small and cramped, which inhibits ease of movement during practical activities. Continuing problems with vandalism mean that the pond and environmental area are out of use, which limits pupils' experiences in investigating different habitats around the school. Nevertheless, teachers work hard to ensure that these shortcomings do not adversely affect the quality of the pupils' learning.

## **ART**

73. Pupils attain standards that are well above those found in most other schools. This judgement shows a very good improvement on the findings of the previous inspection, which judged standards to be 'in line with national expectations'. This is due to pupils having a wide range of art experiences and very good teaching. Most pupils achieve very well in a wide range of art activities. They handle tools confidently and skilfully, and use a wide variety of media, such as pencils, printing techniques, clay, painting, pastels and textiles to express their ideas. Pupils, including those with special educational needs, make very good progress in their learning and achieve very well.

74. The quality of teaching and the quality of learning are very good. Pupils show increasing confidence in using various media and techniques. They are encouraged to develop good skills in

observational drawing, both in pencil and pastel, and produce sketches with suitable attention to line, detail, proportion and expression. Pastel drawings of a deckchair by Year 3 pupils and the exceptional pencil sketches of local buildings and of the school by older pupils show their very good observational skills. The very mature pastel drawings of shoes by Year 5 pupils reflect high quality teaching of the skill of blending pastels to create a three-dimensional effect. In the best lessons, teachers inspire pupils by their enthusiasm and clear explanations. In one lesson, the teacher clearly explained the historical aspects of a Hogarth painting. Through effective questioning, she enabled pupils to use their good knowledge of works of art by other famous artists, such as Miro, Klee and Van Gogh to compare these with Hogarth's 'The Graham Children'. She helped pupils to understand that there is more than one way to respond to a painting, before they created their own 'family' portrait. She encouraged them to experiment with different techniques before creating a larger painting, pastel or pencil 'family portrait'. The teacher's high expectations, very good subject knowledge and management, whereby each pupil was able to experiment with different media for his or her own artwork, led to an excellent response and some very good work was produced. Some pupils expertly downloaded digital photographs from the computer, as a focus for their 'portrait'. As the teacher moved around the class, she praised pupils for their efforts, which helped all pupils to feel successful. The teacher's love of art was clearly conveyed to pupils and, combined with their positive attitudes to their work, inspired them to produce their best effort.

75. The range of work that pupils produce exemplifies the rich art curriculum within the school. A visit to the local museum to see a local artist's exhibition inspired pupils in the Year 5/6 class to create their own thought-provoking 'Stuff Art', using recycled materials. Some of the artwork around the school illustrates the very good links that are made with other subjects: this includes intricate Islamic patterns, clay flowers and geographical landmarks, such as the Arc de Triomphe, Sacre Coeur and the Eiffel Tower, all showing good attention to line, tone and perspective. Pupils produce very effective abstract patterns of an insect or an accordion using translucent coloured paper squares. Collage is used well to depict many aspects of the natural world and Shakespearean characters from *Romeo and Juliet*. The delicate water colour paintings of plants and flowers contrast well with the 'Nature Mosaics' where pupils use marbling for the background before adding an animal or insect mosaic. Imaginative use of clay to create models of favourite 'Precious Objects', such as a purse, a watch or a duck, is a good feature.

76. The co-ordinator for art is enthusiastic and has a fresh and imaginative approach to the subject. She has made a significant impact on the subject, which is helping pupils to attain very high standards in their artwork. She provides very good support for staff, which enables them to produce a wide range of art activities for pupils. Planning is appropriate and teachers create relevant links with other areas of the curriculum, for example the links with science for the clay flowers and in geography with sketches of local buildings. The co-ordinator gives informal advice to colleagues and monitors displays and classroom practice. Resources are good to support teaching and learning in the subject. Visits to see works of art and visits to the school by artists are a good use of other resources, which enhance pupils' understanding of art well. Throughout the school, colourful displays are used effectively to enliven classrooms and enhance communal areas. Some of the pupils' 'Stuff Art' is to be displayed in the local museum.

## **DESIGN AND TECHNOLOGY**

77. Pupils attain standards that are similar to those found in most other schools. This was the finding of the previous inspection. Judgements are based on a small sample of lessons, an analysis of the work displayed around the school and discussions with teachers and pupils. Pupils undertake a satisfactory range of designing and making activities during their time in school. Pupils in Year 3 design and construct a photograph frame that is suitable for a gift. They work as a team to design and make a monster with at least one moving part. Pupils in Year 4 design and make a model of a Sikh temple as part of their work in religious education. In Year 5, pupils disassemble different types of



muesli and analyse the contents of each one before designing their own. Pupils in Year 6 design and make a puppet theatre as part of a wider class project. They design and make the theatre, puppets and scenery and then use these to perform plays to other classes. The pupils' achievement in the subject is satisfactory, as is the progress they make in acquiring different skills and refining techniques. Pupils with special educational needs also achieve satisfactory standards.

78. The quality of teaching and the quality of learning are satisfactory overall, as at the time of the previous inspection. Teachers make effective links with other areas of the curriculum, which places pupils' learning in a meaningful context. For example, pupils in Year 6 construct puppet theatres to present plays they have written, and this helps to develop their literacy and speaking skills. Teachers provide opportunities for pupils to analyse different products and evaluate their suitability or examine how they are made. Pupils then use this information to help them when designing and making their own products. For example, pupils in Year 3 looked at examples of school coats and evaluated different features of them before designing one of their own. Teachers provide pupils with opportunities to work with a range of materials, including electrical and mechanical components. For example, pupils in Year 3 design and make a model which incorporates a pneumatic system to make it move. However, work with textiles and food is limited.

79. There is no co-ordinator for the subject at present, but the teacher who is to take over that responsibility in September 2000 is keen to develop it and raise its profile in the school. He has already attended training and is able to offer considerable expertise to colleagues. A policy and scheme of work have been produced since the previous inspection, and these are being modified appropriately to meet the requirements of the revised National Curriculum for the beginning of the new school year in September. Resources for the subject are still unsatisfactory. The co-ordinator has identified this as a priority for the next school year. One of the main drawbacks is the accommodation, for example, classrooms are very small and do not afford much flexibility for working with food. There is no separate room for food technology although the governors are actively pursuing the redevelopment of the disused house of a former caretaker so that part of it could provide space for food technology.

## **GEOGRAPHY**

80. Standards in geography are similar to those found in most other schools. All pupils, including those with special educational needs, make satisfactory progress in their learning. Their achievement is satisfactory. Judgements are based on a small sample of lessons in Years 3, 4 and 5, an analysis of pupils' work and discussions with teachers and pupils. Classroom displays are bright and colourful and illustrate well the current work in the school on comparisons between different towns and areas. This judgement is lower than the findings of the previous OFSTED inspection, when standards were found to be above average. However, the national recommendations for coverage of the subject have been narrowed since that time and it has not had such a high profile in the curriculum.

81. In Year 6, pupils use their comparative study of two areas, Whitstable and Llandudno, to demonstrate their understanding of the importance of location in understanding places. They also show a sound ability to recognise and describe human and physical processes which have led to settlement in different areas. They identify the world's rain forest areas and the way that different peoples have to adapt to the weather conditions in their countries, as well as identifying the various climates of the world. In their work on environmental issues such as acid rain, Chernobyl, chemical waste in the sea and ozone layer depletion, pupils reveal a good understanding and awareness of the need for people to try to manage and maintain the environment. Year 3 pupils are comparing their own town with Dover, and are able to understand the geographical features of their own town by walking around it and observing them.

82. The quality of teaching and learning is satisfactory, with some examples of good teaching. Lessons are planned well and introductions and questioning indicate a sound knowledge and understanding of the subject by all teachers. Pupils are encouraged to work from maps and plans to identify land use in their work on comparing localities. Classes are managed well and teachers use visiting speakers to enhance pupils' knowledge. The headteacher, who lives in Dover, provides opportunities for pupils to ask questions in relation to their work on comparing their town with Dover. Independent learning and good use of geographical vocabulary are encouraged, for instance, in a Year 4 lesson when pupils were invited to consider the positive and negative aspects of a changing rural area where a large housing estate is envisaged. There is little evidence of day-to-day assessment of individual pupils' progress taking place but most teachers make useful notes on their daily or weekly plans.

83. The co-ordinator for the subject has only recently been appointed and has had little time to manage or monitor the subject. The curriculum is varied and is well planned over a two year cycle. A school policy for geography is in place. Literacy and numeracy are used well in the subject for pupils to write or record geographical findings. Pupils' work is neat and well presented and their good attitudes to the subject, especially on outside visits, play a large part in achieving satisfactory standards and progress. Resources are adequate and the finding from the previous inspection concerning outdated and unsuitable maps and atlases has been rectified.

## **HISTORY**

84. Standards in history are above those found in most schools. Pupils with special educational needs also achieve good standards for their capabilities and receive good support. This judgement is an improvement on the previous OFSTED inspection when standards were found to be similar to most schools. Although only one lesson was observed during this inspection, the judgement is made on a thorough analysis of pupils' work, teachers' planning, classroom displays and discussions with pupils and teachers. In particular, the excellent work produced by Year 6 pupils on 'Britain since 1930' showed a good factual knowledge of this aspect of British history. In this topic, pupils showed that they could produce well structured work from selected and organised information using appropriate terms and dates. During their study of this same period, by examining artefacts from the Second World War like ration books and identity cards, pupils described the main changes, events and people of the period. They used their literacy skills well in this subject when they composed a letter from an evacuee in 1940 and described a day in the life of a child in the 1950s. Year 6 pupils show a good ability to examine and identify old appliances like a kitchen range, mangle and 'copper' and compare them with modern day appliances. In this area of history, they show a good knowledge and understanding of the changes in industry from 1930 to the present day and the influence of the war and modern times on this development, including the need for, and growth of, new towns after the war. Pupils make good progress and achieve well in this subject.

85. The quality of teaching and the quality of pupils' learning are good. This judgement represents an improvement since the last inspection when teaching was found to be satisfactory. Pupils' work is neat and well presented, indicating high expectations from teachers for the pupils' performance. Lessons are planned carefully following the school's long and medium term planning, and teachers create interesting and varied opportunities for pupils to develop their research skills and record their work. A very good example of teachers' ability to create these opportunities is illustrated by the organisation of the 'Greek Day' for Year 3 and 4 pupils, when pupils and teachers dressed in appropriate Greek costume. Not only did pupils receive a good impression of life in Ancient Greece but they also covered most areas of the curriculum, including language and mathematics. This was followed by a mini-Olympics involving all pupils in the afternoon. Teachers achieve a good balance between giving pupils information and encouraging them to become active enquirers, which enhances the quality of learning.

86. There is a comprehensive policy for the subject and a scheme of work, which is organised on a two year cycle to ensure that pupils in mixed-age classes do not repeat topics. The headteacher has assumed responsibility for the co-ordination of the subject and gives good advice and guidance to teachers on an informal and formal basis. Resources for the subject are satisfactory, with a variety of books in the library and in classrooms, and a good range of artefacts is available. The school enhances its resources well by visits to historical places of interest like Canterbury and London, and by inviting visiting speakers like the ‘Greek’ storyteller. Information technology is used well to support pupils’ learning, including the use of CD-ROMs and the Internet for research. This is also an improvement since the last inspection when resources were found to be inadequate, with a lack of artefacts and information technology resources and outdated school books. Assessment of the pupils’ progress is usually carried out at the end of each topic for inclusion in end-of-year reports. Pupils of all age groups show a very active interest in history and most are willing and able to work independently on various research topics relevant to their area of study. This active interest, concentration and good behaviour have led to above average standards of attainment in the subject.

## **INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY**

87. In Year 6, pupils achieve standards in information technology that are above those found in most schools. This represents a very good improvement since the previous inspection when standards were below average. In Year 6, pupils produce a publication about a school event, combining text and graphics effectively to create a well laid out document. They use a digital camera to take photographs which they then transfer into the publication. They vary the style, size and colour of the font used to create different effects. Pupils also download pictures from the Internet to illustrate their writing about World War 2. They make posters for stalls at the school’s summer fair, combining text and graphics successfully to produce eye-catching designs. Pupils enter data about the school football team on to a spreadsheet and record measurements taken in scientific experiments, which they then convert into graphs. They program a computer to control a sequence of traffic lights by entering a series of commands, and devise a similar program to make a toy vehicle move backwards and forwards, and to switch its lights on and off. Pupils also use a CD-ROM encyclopaedia and the Internet to search for information. For example, pupils in the Year 5 and 6 class gained access to the Public Records Office site to search for information about a history topic. Pupils, including those with special educational needs, make good progress in their learning and achieve well.

88. The quality of teaching and the quality of learning are good throughout the school and are much improved since the last inspection, when they were unsatisfactory. At that time, most teachers were unsure of the requirements of the National Curriculum for information technology and few had sufficient knowledge of computers to teach the subject effectively. As a result, there was insufficient teaching of skills, and pupils did not spend enough time using computers to make satisfactory progress. These weaknesses have all been addressed successfully through a programme of in-service training which has equipped all teachers well to plan and teach the subject effectively. Teachers are now fully aware of the requirements of the National Curriculum and are able to teach all aspects of the subject competently. They plan an interesting range of activities for pupils which are often linked to their work in other subjects. For example, pupils in Year 5 use a computer program to compose a melody, whilst pupils in Years 3 and 4 find information from the Internet to support their work on Dover and Ancient Greece. Teachers give clear explanations to pupils and ensure that computers are used to the full to support pupils’ learning across the curriculum. They increase pupils’ understanding of the uses of information technology in everyday life and develop their awareness of its potential. For example, teachers provide opportunities for pupils to communicate with pupils in other schools, as when those in Year 3 send e-mails to younger pupils in the infant schools, who will be coming to the school next year.

89. A very good lesson in Year 4 illustrated many of the strengths of the teaching throughout the school. In the final lesson of the school year, the teacher drew together all that pupils had learned, reinforced their understanding of how to gain access to a website and assessed what they could remember about the topics covered during the year. Very skilful questioning teased out the depth of pupils' knowledge as the teacher took them, step by step, through each process. For example, when revising what pupils had learned about sending and receiving e-mails, the teacher asked, "How do you know if a message in the Inbox is a new message?" The pace and challenge of the lesson were very good, and the teacher's style of presentation and careful involvement of all the pupils ensured that they were interested and motivated to learn. Pupils were asked to give explanations clearly, using correct terminology, which also reinforced their knowledge and understanding.

90. There has been a considerable improvement in the leadership and management of the subject since the last inspection. The co-ordinator, who was appointed in September 1999, has been influential in sharing good practice and in giving clear direction for the subject's development. There has also been a significant improvement in resources, which are now good and are used to the full. The acquisition of a data projector for whole-class teaching and two multimedia computers for each class has enabled teachers to increase pupils' knowledge and skills at a much faster pace than was previously possible. The school has taken good advantage of funding supplied through the National Grid for Learning to improve its range of equipment and to increase the expertise of staff, which has resulted in very good improvement in the subject. The subject meets the requirements of the National Curriculum.

## **MUSIC**

91. In Year 6, pupils attain standards that are above those found in most schools. This finding is similar to the last inspection, when attainment was judged to be above average. The quality of singing continues to be good, and pupils sing with good rhythm, pitch and feeling. Pupils respond well to a conductor, while singing and playing a range of tuned and untuned percussion instruments. Pupils are encouraged to compose their own simple melodies and lyrics, such as their song about caring for the environment. Approximately 40 pupils, who have music lessons taught by specialist teachers, are sufficiently familiar with correct musical notation to play a musical instrument. Pupils who play guitars or violins, or are members of the brass ensemble, are attaining standards that are above average for their ages, and some demonstrate skills in musical knowledge and performance that are well above average. Overall, pupils, including those with special educational needs, make good progress and achieve well in music.

92. The quality of teaching and learning is good. Features of good teaching and learning were exemplified in a Year 6 lesson. The teacher explained the objectives for the lesson to them, which enabled pupils to know what was expected of them and to make good progress in their learning. The good use of time, confident subject knowledge and genuine enjoyment of music fully engaged the pupils' interest. The teacher maintained good class management, while sharing the enjoyment and amusement with pupils. Pupils played a good range of tuned and untuned percussion instruments rhythmically and co-operated well together, attentively watching the conductor. After recording their performance, pupils were able to suggest ways in which they could improve it. Under the teacher's good leadership, the pupils' own performance noticeably improved during the lesson and culminated in their performing well as a class, before performing before an audience in the church.

93. Assemblies provide good opportunities for pupils to experience the pleasure of singing together and the joint music co-ordinators provide a good lead in developing the pupils' performance. Pupils are encouraged to listen to a wide range of music from different cultures, both in assemblies and during their music lessons. They demonstrate positive attitudes and respond well to all aspects of the subject, which enhances their learning. They enjoy music lessons and show confidence when performing to an audience. They spontaneously applaud the skills of others, which was seen during a practice for the leavers' service, and during an assembly, when a teacher demonstrated his drumming skills playing a Djembe drum. All teachers are responsible for teaching music to their own classes and are well supported by the co-ordinators.

94. At present, there are two co-ordinators for music, who work very well together. They realise the need to review and revise the scheme of work in line with current curricular developments. A published scheme of work is used at present, which theoretically helps pupils to develop musical skills in a logical way as they move through the school. However, the co-ordinators realise that the current curriculum for music is insufficiently challenging, especially for younger pupils in the school. Visits to the school by visiting musicians and visits to musical productions, such as the performance of 'The Children's Prom in the Park' at Leeds Castle, enhance and extend pupils' appreciation and enjoyment of music. Pupils performed songs for a twinning concert at the Whitstable Community College and participated in the 'JC 2000' concert at Canterbury Cathedral. At the end of each term, pupils perform musical items in a concert in the local church. Music plays an important part in the celebration of various cultures and festivals during the school year. The subject makes an important contribution to the pupils' spiritual, social and cultural development.

## **PHYSICAL EDUCATION**

95. Standards in physical education are similar to those found in most schools. This judgement is the same as that of the school's previous OFSTED inspection, which stated that the pupils' attainment was 'in line with national expectations'. During the inspection, only dance and games were observed as no gymnastics activities were planned for this term. In games activities, Year 6 pupils of all abilities show a sound capability to practise and improve their own performance when participating in large and small group activities connected with 'kwik-cricket' and rounders. They show a good understanding of the need for rules in competitive team games. They perform their 'warm up' and 'cool down' sessions well and understand the effect of exercise on their bodies. In dance lessons, pupils respond well to mood and music and control and co-ordinate rhythmic patterns of movement in small or larger groups. In this aspect of physical education, they have performed very confidently before audiences.

96. The quality of teaching and learning, including that for pupils with special educational needs, is good overall and pupils make good progress in their learning. However, their learning is limited due to the absence of an adjoining playing field and a small hall. Teachers encourage pupils to observe and analyse their own movement and the movement of others, which contributes to the good progress made by pupils of all abilities. Teachers all emphasis safe practice with their insistence on good, quiet behaviour in all physical education sessions. All teachers start and finish lessons with 'warm up' and 'cool down' sessions, and show a good awareness of health aspects. Teachers' planning gives sufficient time for consolidation and refinement, both in dance and games activities, and this was especially noticeable in the Year 5 and 6 games session in which pupils played cricket and rounders. Teachers are actively involved in all physical education activities, demonstrate good practice well and are suitably clothed, acting as good role models for their pupils. The process of changing and moving to the hall, playground or playing field, involving a coach journey, is managed well.

97. The physical education curriculum is appropriately planned for pupils of all abilities and ages. All areas of the curriculum are included, with the exception of outdoor and adventurous activities, but it is planned for Year 6 pupils to attend a residential course covering this aspect next year. Statutory requirements for the teaching of swimming are satisfied and almost all Year 6 pupils are able to swim for 25 metres by the time they leave the school. A suitable subject policy and scheme of work are in place, and a rolling programme to cover dance, gymnastics and games over the school year has been produced. The subject co-ordinator is enthusiastic and is shadowed by a newly qualified teacher who has instigated planning for the residential visit. Resources are satisfactory and well used and, although the school does not have its own playing field, good use is made of the playground and small grass plot adjoining the school. The physical education curriculum is enhanced by the school's participation in competitive games, including soccer, netball and rugby. Equal opportunity is offered to both boys and girls, and pupils of all abilities, to participate in all team games. The 'mini-Olympics' performed by all Year 3 and 4 pupils as part of their Greek Day, gave all pupils of these age groups an opportunity to participate in running, jumping, throwing and 'chariot racing'.

