

INSPECTION REPORT

HALFWAY HOUSES PRIMARY SCHOOL

Sheerness, Kent

LEA area: Kent

Unique reference number: 118866

Headteacher: Mr G Wetherell

Reporting inspector: Lyn Bettaney
OIN - 15345

Dates of inspection: 15 – 18 October 2001

Inspection number: 198677

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

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INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Type of school:	First school
School category:	Foundation
Age range of pupils:	4 – 9 years
Gender of pupils:	Mixed
School address:	Southdown Road Sheerness Kent
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Appropriate authority:	The governing body
Name of chair of governors:	Mrs V Everingham
Date of previous inspection:	17 November 1997

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9569	Jan Leaning	Lay inspector		How high are standards? – 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?
16396	Colin Parker	Team inspector	Information and Communications Technology Art	Foundation Stage How high are standards? – The school's results and pupils' achievements
27544	Sandra Herbert	Team inspector	Mathematics Geography History	How good are the curricular and other opportunities offered to pupils?
2913	Sue Airey	Team Inspector	English Religious Education	Equal Opportunities Special Educational Needs English as an Additional Language
10979	Peter Hooker	Team Inspector	Science Design and Technology	How well are pupils taught?

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PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Halfway Houses Primary School is a larger than average first school catering for pupils aged 4 to 9 years. It is located on the Isle of Sheppey, a recognised depressed area, with low achievement, high unemployment and pockets of deprivation. There are 478 pupils on roll, taught in 17 classes, with a balance between boys and girls. On entry to the school, pupils represent a range of ability, but overall are below average. There are 87 pupils in the reception year. Over eight percent of pupils are eligible for free school meals, which is broadly in line with the national average. One quarter of pupils are identified as having special educational needs. Nearly two percent of pupils have a statement of special educational needs; this is above the national average. The school is housed in a variety of permanent and temporary buildings, resulting in teaching areas being varied in nature.

HOW GOOD THE SCHOOL IS

Halfway Houses is an effective school. Pupils enjoy school; they work hard, concentrate well and are polite, courteous and respectful to each other and to adults. By the age of 7, pupils have made good progress in mathematics and reading but standards in writing are not always high enough. The headteacher, governors, staff and parents work well together to meet the aims of the school. The quality of teaching is good. The budget is well managed and the school provides sound value for money.

What the school does well

- Pupils' attitudes, values and behaviour are good
- Pupils' with special educational needs make good progress
- Overall teaching across both key stages, the Foundation Stage and in most subjects, is good
- The school provides a very good range of extra-curricular activities which contributes to and enriches learning
- Makes good provision for pupils' moral, social and cultural development
- The partnership with parents is good

What could be improved

- The monitoring of teaching and learning
- Monitoring curriculum delivery across both Key Stages 1 and 2
- Assessment of foundation subjects
- The attainment of more able pupils

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

HOW THE SCHOOL HAS IMPROVED SINCE ITS LAST INSPECTION

The school has made satisfactory progress since the last inspection in November 1997. There has been a review in the teaching of English in Key Stage 1 and results have risen. The creation of the ICT suite has improved the access to the National Curriculum statutory requirements, staff have received training in the subject and planning is regularly monitored. Whole school policies have been developed and there is a programme of monitoring and reviewing their implementation. The introduction of the National Literacy and Numeracy Strategies and schemes of work based upon the national QCA documents has addressed some of the issues in curriculum planning. The role of the year group leaders has been developed, but the monitoring and evaluation of teaching needs to be strengthened.

STANDARDS

The table shows the standards achieved by pupils at the end of Year 2 based on National Curriculum test results.

Performance in:	Compared with			
	all schools			Similar schools
	1999	2000	2001	2001
Reading	E	E	D	C
Writing	E	E	E	D
Mathematics	E	E	C	B

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

When children start school they have wide ranging abilities, but are below average overall. By the beginning of Key Stage 1, the children achieve just below the expected standard. In the end of Key Stage 1 national tests for 2001, attainment improved in reading from well below average to below average, writing remained well below average and mathematics improved from well below average to average. When compared to similar schools the tests show standards in mathematics were above average, reading was average and writing was below the average. Teacher assessment for science show the percentage of pupils reaching level 2 or above to be well below the national average and below the average for similar schools. The school is making satisfactory progress towards its targets, which are sufficiently challenging. Work seen during the inspection indicates standards in English and mathematics to be average but below average in science. Standards are in line with national expectations, by the end of Key Stage 1 in design and technology, history, geography, music, physical education and religious education, but below in art and design, and information and communications technology by the time pupils are nine. Pupils make satisfactory progress.

PUPILS' ATTITUDES AND VALUES

Aspect	Comment
Attitudes to the school	Good; pupils are interested and motivated in their lessons
Behaviour, in and out of classrooms	Good and at times very good; pupils are well behaved.
Personal development and relationships	Good; polite, courteous and respectful to each other and to adults
Attendance	Good; punctuality is generally good

Throughout the school, pupils' attitudes, values and relationships are good. The school aims to provide a firm and secure foundation in basic skills in a welcoming atmosphere and to develop independence in learning. The school is a happy place where children's individual progress and development is recognised and valued. Pupils enjoy school; they work hard, concentrate well and are polite, courteous and respectful to each other and to the adults. There is a positive feel to the school and it is well respected in the wider community. Attendance is good and has a positive effect upon pupils' learning.

TEACHING AND LEARNING

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

Overall teaching across the Foundation Stage, both key stages and in most subjects is good. Only three unsatisfactory lessons were observed. The school has adopted the National Literacy and Numeracy Strategies. The teaching of literacy throughout the school is good and that of numeracy is satisfactory and often good. Teachers' knowledge and understanding of the subjects they teach are satisfactory. The teaching of basic skills such as phonics is good. Teachers know their pupils and plan activities that help them to learn effectively. However from the scrutiny of pupils' work often pupils are all set the same basic activities and merely do them to the best of their ability. Teachers effectively monitor pupils' progress in Literacy and Numeracy but not in science and the foundation subjects. Ongoing assessment is not being used effectively to help pupils to overcome their difficulties.

OTHER ASPECTS OF THE SCHOOL

Aspect	Comment
The quality and range of the curriculum	Satisfactory; the school plans for a broad and balanced curriculum in the Foundation Stage and at Key Stages 1 and 2. The statutory requirements for all the subjects in the National Curriculum are met. There is a good range of extra-curricular activities.
Provision for pupils with special educational needs	Good. Pupils with special educational needs make good progress. They have individual education plans that contain appropriate targets. The support they receive is well managed and work is appropriate.
Provision for pupils' personal, including spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	Good overall; provision for moral, social and cultural development is good while spiritual development is satisfactory.
How well the school cares for its pupils	Good; the school provides a caring, stimulating and supportive environment, where pupils can achieve their full potential.

The school's links with parents are good overall. Parents are actively encouraged to support their children's learning. The quality and provision in the foundation stage is good. The requirements of the National Curriculum are met but some subjects do not have sufficient time allocated to them. Assessment in the foundation subjects is inconsistent and needs to be reviewed. The provision for pupils' personal, social and health education is good. Special needs pupils are supported well.

HOW WELL THE SCHOOL IS LED AND MANAGED

Aspect	Comment
Leadership and management by the headteacher and other key staff	Satisfactory overall; there is effective pastoral leadership and there is a strong ethos in the school; the monitoring of teaching and learning need further development

How well the governors fulfil their responsibilities	The governors work hard to support the school and meet statutory requirements.
The school's evaluation of its performance	There are clear evaluations of where the school is in relation to other schools and the targets set for literacy and numeracy.
The strategic use of resources	Satisfactory; day to day finances are administered carefully and the principals of best value are applied appropriately

The headteacher and governors work well together to promote the aims and values of the school. The monitoring of teaching and the curriculum delivery needs further development. Members of staff are deployed appropriately; their qualifications match the needs of the school and its pupils. However the school lacks a music specialist at present. The accommodation is varied and comprises of temporary and permanent classrooms, all of which are in good condition. Learning resources across the curriculum are adequate and of reasonable quality and number. The principals of best value are applied appropriately and the school provides sound value for money.

PARENTS' AND CARERS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

What pleases parents most	What parents would like to see improved
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Pupils like the school • Children make good progress • The good behaviour • Good teaching • The approachability of the staff • Children are expected to work hard • The quality of information 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Consistency in homework • Annual reports are too detailed • Working closely with parents

Parents are positive about the school and support it well. The inspectors agree that pupils do enjoy school. The headteacher and staff are approachable and work hard for their pupils. Pupils are very well behaved and this has a positive effect upon the progress they make. Teaching is good. Pupils are expected to work hard. Parents receive information from the school regularly during the school year. However, there is inconsistency in the information parents receive concerning their children's progress. Some reports are too general and lack precise details about what the child can actually do and areas that need attention. The setting of homework was found also found to be inconsistent.

PART B: COMMENTARY

HOW HIGH ARE STANDARDS?

The school's results and pupils' achievements

1. When children start school in the reception classes their skills, knowledge and understanding are wide ranging, but below average overall. The initial assessments for the current reception year show a similar pattern to previous years with areas for development in reading, writing, mathematics and personal and social development. By the time they enter Key Stage 1, the children achieve at just below the expected standards against the early learning goals in the six areas of learning - personal, social and emotional development; communication, language and literacy; mathematical development; knowledge and understanding of the world; physical development; and creative development.
2. In 1999 and 2000 attainment at the end of Key Stage 1 in national tests of reading, writing and mathematics was well below the national average. In 2001, the tests showed standards in reading had improved to below average and to average in mathematics. Writing has improved but remains well below average. The percentage of pupils achieving level 2 and above in reading increased significantly from 66 percent in 2000 to 78 percent in 2001. In mathematics the percentage of level 2 and above was sustained at 93 percent and the improvement was relative to a reduction in the national percentages. The proportion of pupils achieving above level 2 in mathematics increased from well below average to average. Comparisons with similar schools showed reading to be average and mathematics above average with writing below average. The school has identified reading as a priority area for improvement in the school development plan. The percentage of pupils achieving level 2 and above in science teacher assessment dropped significantly from 92 percent in 2000 to 84 percent in 2001. This placed the school science results for 2001 well below the national average and below the average for similar schools. The percentage of pupils who performed at a higher level in science was average and above the average for similar schools.
3. The local education authority provides the school with data to review progress between baseline assessment, at the start of reception, and Year 2 in Key Stage 1. The analysis for 2001 shows overall average progress for boys and girls across reading, writing and mathematics. Boys make slightly more progress than girls do in mathematics. The school is on track to achieve the targets set for pupils when they reach the end of Key Stage 1 in 2002. The targets set for attainment in 2001 were met. The school also sets targets for Years 3 and 4 in reading, writing and mathematics, but not for Year 1 and not for science. The school does not use the analysis of results of individual pupils to identify opportunities for improvement or effectively include teachers' knowledge of the pupils in target setting.
4. Work seen during the inspection indicates standards of attainment were largely in line with national expectations in most subjects at the end of the key stage and at the end of the school in Year 4, after which pupils leave the school to transfer to middle schools. No significant differences in attainment between boys and girls were noted. Standards are average in mathematics, design and technology, history, geography, music, physical education and religious education. Standards are below average in science, art and design, and information and communications technology by Year 4.

Standards in English are average by Year 4 although below average in Key Stage 1. Pupils attain good standards in personal, social and health education.

5. Pupils with special educational needs achieve well in relation to their previous attainment through a detailed programme of support; good teaching and individual help with literacy and reading skills where appropriate. Pupils with statements of special educational needs also make good progress and work is well matched to their needs. Pupils' needs are identified at an early stage by the class teacher and special educational needs co-ordinator (SENCO) and targets on individual education plans (IEPs) are clear and specific and are reviewed and modified as necessary every term. Although some pupils have specific numeracy targets in their IEPs not all that need them do. However overall pupils with special educational needs make good overall progress due to the school's strong commitment towards them.
6. The school is beginning to identify those pupils who are more able and gifted and talented and in some lessons such as geography, work is planned to meet their needs. However analysis of work indicates that some more able pupils could make better progress if the work was planned to extend their learning.

Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development

7. Throughout the school, pupils' attitudes, values and relationships are good. The school aims are appropriate; they are to provide a secure foundation in basic skills in a welcoming atmosphere and to develop independence in learning. The school is a happy place where children's individual progress and development is recognised and valued.
8. Pupils enjoy school, they work hard, concentrate well and are polite, courteous and respectful to each other and to the adults. There is a positive feel to the school and it is well respected in the wider community. Pupils with special educational needs show interest and sustain concentration. Their attitude to learning is often very good and they are seen to persevere and make learning gains, when encouraged and supported by teachers and support assistants. Achievable targets and learning objectives within the IEPs also support pupils with learning, behaviour and specific learning difficulties. These are specific targets, which help pupils to organise their learning, and raise self-esteem and consequently encourages positive behaviour. Pupils with physical and sensory needs take a full and active part in learning and are very positive about the school. All groups of pupils within the school relate well to each other and behaviour is good within lessons and in the playground, good relationships are fostered and pupils feel secure and safe from harassment and bullying.
9. No equipment is in use at play and lunchtimes, but the playground has been marked out with games such as snakes and ladders and pupils, although sometimes boisterous, play well together and show concern for each other. In the dining room, efforts are made to ensure that there is a social atmosphere. Pupils understand the rules and know right from wrong. Good work and best efforts are celebrated with an entry in the Gold Book.
10. Behaviour in the school is good, sometimes very good, and with a few minor exceptions, expectations are high and overall, pupils respond well. The behaviour policy is used effectively and there are clear strategies for dealing with bullying which is not an issue in the school. No bullying was seen during the inspection, and pupils

know that it is unacceptable. They do not think that it takes place. In lessons where teaching is challenging, pupils listen carefully, settle quickly to their work and concentrate well on their tasks. Where teaching is less stimulating, behaviour deteriorates. Pupils move about the school sensibly and handle resources with respect. Rewards and sanctions are fairly and consistently applied and parents are involved at an early stage if there are problems. There is on-site support for parents having difficulty managing their children's behaviour. The large site is well kept, there is no litter or graffiti. Two boys have been excluded, after persistent violence, initially for fixed periods and then permanently for the safety of staff and the other children.

11. Relationships in the school are good, teachers know the children and their families well. There are opportunities for pupils to think about their actions and the effect these have on others. The aims are to achieve social development for all children. They are given some responsibilities, such as taking registers and helping to get out and put away equipment and the older children are encouraged to look after the younger ones at playtimes. Pupils in Year 4 make sure registers are in class for registration, ring the school bell and keep the books tidy. Pupils have raised substantial funds for those less fortunate, for charities including Neuroblastoma, Barnardos, Jeans for Genes and National Children's Homes. However, they have only limited opportunities to develop their skills as independent learners.
12. These good standards ensure positive opportunities for pupils to achieve their best.
13. Attendance is good and ensures that pupils make the best use of their time in school. Authorised absence at 5.1 percent is above the national average, unauthorised absence at 0.2 percent is in line with the national average. Parents are given suitable information to encourage them to send their children to school regularly and most do. Seventeen pupils received awards for 100 percent attendance during the last school year in an initiative across the island. Punctuality is generally good, but lessons do not always start promptly.
14. In the previous inspection report pupils' attitudes to learning were good, they were keen to learn responded positively and took pride in their work. There has been little change to this. Parents were, and remain, happy with the quality of behaviour. Attendance was good; it was in line with national averages - punctuality was also good. This remains the same as before.
15. Parents at the meeting, in questionnaires and in discussion said that pupils are taught respect for each other. They commented on the change of intake making a difference to the behaviour and felt that children enjoyed coming to school. Good attendance is celebrated - procedures are in place and understood. The team agrees with these comments but think that preparation for the next stage is adequate.

HOW WELL ARE PUPILS OR STUDENTS TAUGHT?

16. During the inspection 82 lessons were observed. Timetable constraints however meant that the observation of some subjects, for example design and technology and music, were very limited. In these cases, judgements were based on the scrutiny of pupil's work, schemes of work and discussions with teachers.
17. Overall teaching across both key stages, the Foundation Stage and in most subjects is good. Only three unsatisfactory lessons were observed. In all subjects there is a

very close link between the quality of teaching and the learning and progress of pupils. Where teaching is good, quality learning takes place.

18. At the foundation stage teaching is good. Teachers plan effectively and work closely, often teaching well as a group. They relate effectively the content of their lessons to the day-to-day experiences of their pupils. In over a quarter of lessons teaching is very good. At Key Stage 1 teaching is good or very good in 60% of lessons. Teaching in Year 1 is satisfactory overall, and it is good in Year 2. These judgements show a marked improvement on the last inspection when a third of lessons at Key Stage 1 were unsatisfactory. There is some very good teaching in both year groups. At Key Stage 2 teaching is good in both years. There is some very good teaching in both years.
19. The school has adopted the National Literacy and Numeracy Strategies and the teaching of literacy throughout the school is good and that of numeracy at least satisfactory and often good. The new approach has given structure and purpose and improved the pace of lessons. At both key stages the teaching in science is good, as is English at Key Stage 2. Teaching is mainly good in geography and physical education in both key stages and at Key Stage 2 in religious education.
20. Teachers' knowledge and understanding of the subjects they teach is satisfactory and sufficient to allow them to plan lessons effectively. The teaching of basic skills such as phonics is good.
21. Teachers plan their lessons in year groups led by a year co-ordinator. The curriculum is almost exclusively based on the national QCA Model Schemes of Work, however there are variations, for example, in physical education. Top Sport material has been planned into the scheme. In general, long-term plans are discussed in year groups and units of work allocated to years and terms. The role of the subject co-ordinators in this planning process needs reviewing as currently it is unclear exactly how pupils' progress and their coverage of the National Curriculum is monitored across the school.
22. New schemes are currently being developed, for example, in geography, art and history and more detailed plans are being produced which make it clearer what is to be learnt. These new schemes include, for example, in history a week by week account of what should be covered and what work the pupils will do related to the Tudors. Year 1 has already produced a more detailed plan for science.
23. Teachers' daily lesson plans are developed from the QCA framework. In the better lessons teachers have teased out what is to be learnt and have shared these with their pupils. At the start of the lesson they question pupils closely to find out what they can remember from previous lessons and outline with the pupils what they will be doing next. In these better lessons teachers target their questions well so as to include all pupils. Their lessons have activities which build on pupils' previous knowledge and skills. However in some subjects such as science, insufficient attention is paid to exactly what pupils should learn and what is important. There is no agreed format for planning sheets and they widely vary in the level of detail which they contain. No one currently monitors teachers' lesson plans.
24. In most lessons teachers support pupils with special educational needs, either by organising extra help from a learning support assistant or by modifying the work programme or worksheet to match their particular needs. The support for SEN pupils

is good. Few teachers, however, build in extension work for the gifted and talented pupils in their class. Teachers know their pupils and can plan activities, which help them to learn effectively. They use group work well and make sure that pupils have a suitable range of things to do. However, from the scrutiny of pupils' work often pupils are all set the same basic activities and merely do them to the best of their ability.

25. The use of ICT within lessons is in need of further development. This should now be possible with the new ICT suite. Currently pupils are not using computers as an integral part of their work though some examples were seen in history in which Year 3 pupils in a previous lesson had searched the Internet and downloaded information on Ancient Egypt.
26. Teachers manage their pupils well and expect high standards of work and behaviour. The pace of lessons is satisfactory though time is not always used effectively, with some lessons starting late, particularly in the afternoon sessions.
27. Whilst teachers assess pupils' progress verbally at the start and end of most lessons the use of more formal assessment at both key stages is only satisfactory. A good example was seen in which the teacher individually assessed pupils completing work on electrical circuits and recorded the results on a simple grid. Teachers effectively monitor pupils' progress in literacy and numeracy but not in science and the foundation subjects. On-going assessment is not being used effectively to help pupils to overcome their difficulties.
28. Pupils show interest and pride in their work and are able to sustain concentration for reasonable lengths of time. They enjoy their work and get on with their tasks independently when required. When asked they show a clear understanding of what they are doing but are less clear about how they can improve their work.
29. The use of homework is satisfactory but could be made more effective if its purpose were further discussed with staff and parents.
30. Since the last inspection teaching has improved but a number of the original weaknesses remain. There is now less unsatisfactory teaching but the use of regular assessment and the inconsistency in overall planning remain issues which are only now being addressed by the school.
31. Overall the quality of teaching and learning for pupils with special educational needs is good. They receive good support from the class teacher, particularly during the literacy hour in both key stages and in the foundation stage. The work of learning support staff is directed by the class teacher and efficiently managed by the co-ordinator for special educational needs. Planning generally ensures that pupils with special educational needs have appropriate work, which is challenging but achievable. Class teachers and learning support assistants plan lessons together and afterwards review the lesson together. A good example of this was seen in a Year 4 lesson when pupils were working on descriptive words to help extend vocabulary. As a result of help from the learning support assistant and good teaching, pupils with special educational needs were able to participate in the whole lesson and felt a sense of achievement. In a geography lesson the teacher had planned appropriate activities to ensure that pupils with special educational needs could fully understand similarities and differences between life in Sheppey and life in Benin.

32. The English co-ordinator has raised staff awareness as to the possible learning styles of boys and girls and how they might plan activities that allow boys' preferred learning styles to be practised. An example of this was seen in a Year 2 literacy lesson when the independent learning task was very practical, using a robot made from Lego and was about planning instructions to switch on the robot. The boys were really absorbed by the activity and could describe and eventually write what would need to happen and in what order. Pupils with physical and sensory disabilities also receive appropriate aids to support learning such as books and worksheets with larger print and appropriate working positions. However, there are instances when groups of pupils are withdrawn from the main class activity and often the more interesting activities such as a television programme on phonics or withdrawn from a lively class session on making cubes from nets for withdrawal work in basic maths. In both these examples pupils would have been better supported in the lesson and this would have promoted an inclusive environment for learning.

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

33. The school has a broad and balanced curriculum in the Foundation Stage and at Key Stages 1 and 2. The statutory requirements for all the subjects in the National Curriculum are met.
34. Since the last inspection, the school has adopted the National Literacy and Numeracy Strategies and this has improved the teaching and learning in both subjects. The school has also developed schemes of work based on national documents for science, history and geography and has recently opened an ICT suite to enhance the teaching of ICT. This term teachers are receiving training in ICT to develop their own subject knowledge. However, the amount of time that is allocated to science is well below average. There is also an issue relating to slippage of time due to lessons often being late to start after the lunch break. This means that, in reality, science and humanities subjects are taught for less than the allocated time. Added to this, some cross-curricular activities make the monitoring of the time allocation for many foundation subjects very difficult. Limited hall facilities mean that not all pupils receive two PE lessons a week or when it is too wet or cold for outdoor PE.
35. Most lessons include all pupils in the core subjects; pupils' tasks are often planned to meet the varying needs of different groups of pupils. However, across the curriculum there are concerns that expectations for the more able are not always appropriately challenging and in some cases, tasks in mathematics are over-simplified for less able pupils who have not been identified as having special education needs in mathematics. There are no gender issues relating to the treatment of boys and girls. They have equal access to the curriculum and work and play well together.
36. The Governors of the school have agreed that formal sex education is not appropriate for pupils below the age of nine. However, it is agreed that teaching staff will respond appropriately when questions arise in lessons.
37. The provision for extra-curricular activities is good and is a strength of the school. A recent " Out of Hours Learning Grant" will enable the school to develop after school provision still further. Currently there is a range of clubs including choir, recorders, art, ICT and PE. These clubs are open to all within a given age range. Before pupils start school in the Reception classes, they are encouraged to attend an afternoon 'Fun to Read' club with their parents. This club has proved very successful.

38. The school has good links with the local community. Staff liaise well with middle and other schools to ensure progression and continuity for pupils. The local minister is involved in school assemblies and a representative of the local business community is a member of the governing body. Pupils use the local surroundings to study history and geography and links with the wider community are made through school visits such as the trip to Dover Museum. The school maintains a good link with Canterbury Christ Church University College which regularly places students at the school for teaching practice.
39. The provision for pupils' spiritual development is satisfactory. All pupils, except for those whose parents choose to withdraw them, attend a daily act of worship. Christian festivals such as Harvest and Christmas are celebrated with the whole school and every year each class takes a turn in performing a class assembly to the school and parents. At other times stories are well used to help pupils reflect on their feelings and actions and pupils are invited to join in a prayer at the end of assemblies. Visitors, such as local ministers, are invited to contribute to assemblies and pupils are encouraged to be involved by writing prayers or poems. Over a week there is a mixture of whole school, year group and class assemblies. Religious education lessons also make a contribution to pupils' spiritual development through use of stories and discussion and helping pupils to understand symbols such as light, which are common to all major faiths. More effective use of this time would further enhance pupils' spiritual development. The school has a Christian ethos, a strength of the school is the concern that it shows for its pupils and how well they are cared for. Adults in the school are good role models for pupils.
40. The provision for moral and social development is good. Staff have high expectations of pupils' behaviour and pupils respond well. In class there are plenty of opportunities for pupils to work in groups and take responsibility for their own learning. Pupils often work in mixed ability groups and are supportive of pupils with special needs. Stories are used to help pupils consider moral issues and understand right from wrong. Circle time is used to help pupils share their feelings and encourage them to be supportive of each other. At playtime and lunchtime behaviour around the school is good. Pupils are well supervised and pupils who have a problem are confident about approaching adults to help them. No aggressive behaviour was observed during the inspection. The school has a successful system for rewarding good or improved behaviour through entry in the Golden Book at weekly assemblies.
41. Undoubtedly, the very good provision of after school clubs enhances pupils' social development and adds to their enjoyment of school. For example, the choir offers good opportunities for pupils from different classes and year groups to work together in readiness for the Christmas Concert.
42. Provision for pupils' cultural development is good. The school works hard to provide a good range of experiences to make pupils aware of their own cultural heritage. As well as learning about the Christian faith in RE lessons and assembly, they learn about famous figures in history such as Guy Fawkes and Florence Nightingale. They study famous artists and their work in art lessons and recently, the art club made a visit to the Tate Gallery. In geography they study the local area and learn about the effects man can have on the environment. Visits to Dover Museum and the pantomime also add to pupils' experiences of their own culture. The school is helping pupils to prepare for life in a multicultural environment through many areas of the curriculum. For example, Year 3 pupils learn about Benin in geography and are

encouraged to compare and contrast this with their own lives. In RE pupils learn about Diwali in Year 2 as an introduction to the Hindu faith and study Jewish traditions in Year 3.

43. Assemblies celebrating festivals from other major faiths help to foster a respect for other beliefs and culture. Public areas have good displays about other cultures and ways of life and parents are involved in helping pupils to cook and taste food from other cultures. This includes traditional Indian, Chinese, Jamaican and Jewish food. The school has made good progress in the provision for pupils' cultural development since the last inspection.
44. Pupils with special educational needs receive their full entitlement to the National Curriculum. The needs of pupils with statements of special educational needs are well met apart from support for speech and language needs. When pupils are withdrawn for a programme of specific skills teaching or work on behaviour improvement the work is well planned and assessed and care is taken to ensure that pupils are given extra support on return to lessons in order to participate in the work fully.
45. The timetable for withdrawing pupils is carefully planned to ensure that pupils do not miss the same lesson every week. There is also additional support for pupils with learning difficulties from the learning service. Spelling programmes and reading groups are in place, which help to enrich the curriculum for pupils with special educational needs. Pupils with physical disabilities receive extra help in PE and are able to use specialist equipment. All pupils with special educational needs have equal access to extra curricular activities. Special needs pupils play a part in all school activities that are intended to promote spiritual, moral, social and cultural education. However, the school needs to ensure that pupils who are more able or talented receive an appropriate curriculum in all subjects.
46. Through lessons such as RE and geography the school promotes respect and understanding of diverse cultures, languages and faith groups and the school works hard to provide extra-curricular activities and trips and visits for all pupils to enrich their experiences.

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL CARE FOR ITS PUPILS?

47. The school provides good care for its pupils within a caring, stimulating and supportive environment, where pupils can achieve their full potential. Staff know children and their families well. Pupils are supervised by a sufficient number of adults during break and lunchtimes. Outside agencies, for example, the educational welfare officer and school nurse give good support to the school. There are many visits and visitors including a residential weekend in Year 4 and these enhance pupils' learning opportunities.
48. The Child Protection Policy is good, clearly laid out and with guidelines on what to look out for. The deputy headteacher is the responsible officer but liaises with the headteacher and the area child protection team. She is also in charge of "looked after" children and is developing links with the Family Welfare Committee. Staff are aware of the need for vigilance and there is good information for new staff. Information in the staff handbook is currently under review.

49. The policy for health and safety is good, the information is clearly laid out and comprehensive. The headteacher is the responsible officer. There is a health and safety governor and a sub committee, which carries out a risk audit. The site manager has day to day responsibility and is very pro-active. The school deals effectively with any hazards found on site.
50. It is a large open site with no evidence of litter or graffiti and there is constant attention to pupils' security. No health and safety problems were seen during the inspection.
51. Behaviour is managed well, with few sanctions but many rewards. The behaviour policy contains a set of aims, which clearly support good behaviour. Rewards and sanctions are outlined and applied consistently. They include praise, a 'gold' certificate and mention in the 'gold' assembly. Procedures to prevent bullying are in place, the school is pro-active and parents involved at an early stage. Pupils play and work well together and are sensitive to any pupils having difficulty; they do not leave anyone out.
52. Three members of staff are qualified in first aid and there is first aid equipment around the school. An accident book is kept and parents are notified in cases of head injury. The school has no medical room. Fire drills take place each half term, fire, electrical and physical education equipment is checked regularly and records kept of these checks.
53. The school has a policy for personal, social and health education, which takes place through assemblies and across the curriculum. Although some teachers use 'circle time' there has been no specific training. Sex education is not taught but questions are answered as they arise. The many visits and visitors are linked to curriculum topics and for enjoyment, they include visits by the fire brigade and a theatre group as well as a residential weekend for pupils in Year 4. Financial support for these activities comes from the school fund and funds that the 'Friends' raise.
54. There is no formal policy for monitoring pupils' personal development. Tracking and recording are variable leading to inconsistent recognition of pupils' achievement.
55. Procedures for monitoring and improving attendance are good. Registers are maintained according to statutory requirements and lateness and absence are followed up. Parents understand the need to notify the school. The secretary checks the registers regularly; telephones home to check reasons for absence and alerts the headteacher. The educational welfare officer calls occasionally and follows up any problems. Parents are reminded of the need to send their children to school regularly. The standards of care are good and have a positive influence on pupils' attainment.
56. Parents comment that this is a caring happy school with supportive staff and pupils who respect each other. They are appreciative of the time taken to organise the residential visit which they say is a positive experience for their children. The team agrees with these comments. There were no negative comments made about the care the school gives its pupils.
57. The previous report said that support was very good but with no ongoing system for recording children's work and that teachers did not have sufficient guidance to make

sound judgements about pupils' attainment and progress. The inspection team finds that there has been little change in this area.

58. Procedures for monitoring and assessing pupils' academic attainment and progress in the core subjects of English and mathematics are in place. However, there are not effective procedures in place to assess and monitor all other subjects. The school meets all the statutory requirements of baseline assessment on entry to the reception year and the National Curriculum assessments. The end of Key Stage 1 test results are analysed and compared to targets set. Subject areas highlighted as needing greater attention are shared with staff. End of year assessment for Years 3 and 4 is based on the use of National Curriculum non-statutory test for the core subjects. There is a lack of consistency in the way staff use the assessment information to inform the next stages of learning. The school has recently introduced a marking policy but again it is inconsistently applied. Not all staff make constructive comments about the work that they mark leading to pupils being unaware of how they can improve. Annual reports to parents are consistent in format but not all reports provide a clear picture of what pupils can do and what they need to do to improve.
59. The school has well-established links with outside agencies. This ensure that pupils with special educational needs receive any additional help required supported by a whole school policy which permeates all aspects of school life. There is an inclusive ethos for pupils with special educational needs. There are good arrangements for diagnosing, assessing and re-assessing the work of pupils with special educational needs, which are in line with the requirements of the Code of Practice. The special needs register is fully up to date, and is checked and monitored regularly. The special needs co-ordinator administers a range of diagnostic tests, which help to pinpoint particular areas of difficulty identified by class teachers. Individual Education Plans (IEPs) have intended learning outcomes that are clear and precise and easy to measure. This means that teaching is clearly focused. The requirements of statements are implemented well and annual reviews are fully in line with statutory requirements. Care and support for pupils with special educational needs are good.
60. The school has a good programme of induction for new pupils and their families to ensure they settle well and feel supported. The school also supports children looked after by the local authority and takes care to ensure that staff know how to act in the best interests of these children. Pupils with sensory needs also have their needs met and the school is establishing "care" routines for a recently disabled pupil which are effective. The ethos of the school is supportive of inclusion and pupil's attitudes and behaviour are improved by the positive nature of the school's links with parents and the community.

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL WORK IN PARTNERSHIP WITH PARENTS?

61. The effectiveness of the school's link with parents is good overall. Parents are actively encouraged to support their children's learning. Some parents help in school, with reading, cookery and other activities; their help is valued. Many say that their children are happy and enjoy school. They are welcome to attend class assemblies and value the 'open door' policy and the approachability of staff. There is a home school agreement and reading diaries, which are beginning to be used effectively as contact books.
62. The quality of information provided is good. Members of staff are available before and after school to discuss problems. There are two consultation evenings each year

and newsletters at least once each half term. Some of the annual reports are too general. Parents feel they lack guidance on how children could improve. Inspectors agree with these concerns. There is a meeting for parents who wish to discuss the reports with the teacher. The reports meet statutory requirements. The school prospectus and the governors' annual report to parents are clear and informative. Good links support and encourage pupils' learning.

63. There is a very active 'Friends' Association which holds regular and successful events, these are both social occasions and for fund raising. The large sums of money raised provide a valuable extra source of income. Money has been used to improve the playground area, to provide cookery facilities and cooled water access for pupils as well as fans for use during the summer months. Parents give very good support to the 'Friends' activities.
64. Children coming into school are given good support, they and their parents can attend a reading afternoon the term before they start. Ninety per cent of pupils transfer to the nearby middle school, the links with which are good. They include visits and the passing on of curricular information, links are also maintained with the two other middle schools. There is little difference from the previous inspection findings when links with parents were also felt to be positive.
65. Some parents have concerns about the consistency of homework. The inspection team felt that in some but not all cases homework was used to support children's learning. The inspectors agree with these concerns. Parents are appreciative of the amount of work, which the 'Friends' committee does for the children. These areas were found to be positive by the inspection team.
66. Parents of pupils with special educational needs are involved in annual reviews and are kept well informed about progress generally, as part of the reporting to parents system. Information regarding individual education plans is sent home regularly. The school welcomes parents at all times and when planning targets for pupils with special educational needs.
67. The SENCO has good working links with the early years and pre school activities in the school and locality in order to assess and support pupils as early as possible. The SEN support section of the school links closely with all staff and is a vibrant part of the school. Many pupils benefit from the very good working relationships developed between the teachers, the learning support assistants working in the school and links with outside agencies.
68. The school works hard to include parents and to encourage them to support their children's learning. High priority is given to the involvement of parents particularly in the foundation stage when children and their parents are encouraged to come into school and learn together about school. The school also works hard to ensure there is good attendance and is very careful about excluding pupils from school, recognising the importance of the impact on learning if a child is out of school.

HOW WELL IS THE SCHOOL LED AND MANAGED?

69. The leadership and management of the school has strengths. However, there are areas which require further development. The headteacher is very committed and provides good pastoral leadership that has a positive impact on the ethos of the school. The school's aims are reflected appropriately in the daily work of the school.

The commitment to creating good relationships and the equality of opportunities for all pupils originates from the headteacher. The governing body is very supportive of the headteacher and the school and works hard to support them. It meets all its statutory requirements. Members of the governing body attend training to ensure they are up to date with national and school developments. Governors are attached to classes and regularly visit the school. During visits they monitor the classroom environment, children's attitudes and work and certain elements of teaching related to classroom organisation. The outcomes of these visits are shared with staff and headteacher.

70. There is a clear management structure in the school, but its effectiveness needs to be strengthened. The headteacher does not focus effectively upon the quality of teaching. The lack of a systematic programme of monitoring of teaching beyond that carried out by subject co-ordinators means that a clear whole school picture of teaching is not being established. Support for new members of staff needs to be more proactive to address individual needs. Within the school there are staff with very good standards of teaching. Their skills and knowledge should be used to support less confident or experienced members of staff. Some subject co-ordinators have received training in their role. This included monitoring of planning and teaching. Additional training is needed for year group leaders and all co-ordinators to ensure they are making consistent judgements about the quality of teaching. These findings are similar to those in the previous report. There is an effective appraisal and performance management process in place.
71. The school identifies curriculum, teaching and site targets within its development plan. However the plan lacks precise detail in how the targets are to be achieved and how the outcomes will be evaluated against the effect upon pupils' learning. The governors and headteacher need to review the development plan to address these issues. Year group targets for English and mathematics are set, a programme of support is planned to raise standards in reading, this includes the Reading At Home Project. Expectations and targets should be identified for all subjects and placed within the school development plan. This would ensure the plan is based more directly on the monitoring of teaching and curricular planning, providing a more effective tool for raising standards to which all staff and governors are committed.
72. The finance officer carefully monitors the day-to-day expenditure and the principles of best value are applied consistently. Governors and the headteacher monitor the whole budget but there is little evidence of monitoring its effect on learning. They are aware of expenditure during the last two years exceeding income, an overspend has been avoided by the use of moneys rolled over from the previous years. The size of the roll over is being reduced. Plans have been prepared for reducing expenditure to avoid an overspend situation occurring.
73. Communication in the school is good and the school day runs smoothly. The office staff provides good support to staff and pupils. The effective use of new technology supports their work. Teaching staff, learning support assistants and midday supervisors liaise well in the support of pupils.
74. Staff are deployed appropriately, their qualifications matching the needs of the school and its pupils. However, the school at present lacks a music specialist but is hoping to recruit one before the beginning of the new term. The school works in partnership with the local initial teacher training institute and regularly has students placed within the school.

75. The accommodation is varied. The school has permanent and temporary buildings, all of which are in good condition. However, the hall is small and there are access problems especially for physical education as it is used for lunches and assemblies. Learning resources across the curriculum are adequate and of reasonable quality and number.
76. The quality of management of SEN is good. The policies and other documentation are detailed and staff employed to support pupils with special educational needs are given clear direction. The SENCO is aware of the probable changes to the revised Code of Practice for SEN and is planning appropriate training for staff and information for parents. The record keeping and management by the co-ordinator is effective and informative both for members of the team and for teaching staff. The procedures for auditing and distributing key information about pupils on the special needs register is good and statutory provision identified in statements is correctly managed. The SENCO regularly monitors the work of the LSAs and talks with teachers about the provision and the use of resources. More monitoring of teaching and learning for pupils with SEN could ensure that pupils who may have less significant SEN are not withdrawn from the class lesson. There is a designated governor for special educational needs who is actively involved with the school. He visits the school regularly and discusses issues with the SENCO about SEN issues and pupils with special educational needs.
77. The qualifications and expertise of the SENCO, and her team are good and help to improve pupils' progress. Learning support assistants also take part in appropriate training and their personal commitment and involvement is of benefit to the pupils. The SENCO also promotes new ideas such as behaviour management strategies and is involved in the local SEN developments. There are good resources including extra provision for information technology in the form of lap top computers which pupils can use in lessons. The library also includes resources for pupils with lower reading ages.
78. The school is committed to inclusion and has high expectations and a willingness to work consistently and co-operatively towards equal opportunities. It is developing as an educationally inclusive school to the advantage of physically disabled pupils and others with significant special educational needs and allows teachers such as the SENCO and co-ordinators to have a direct influence on developing the school.

WHAT SHOULD THE SCHOOL DO TO IMPROVE FURTHER?

79. In order to raise standards further, the governors, headteacher and staff should:
- (1) Improve the monitoring of teaching and learning by:
 - providing opportunities for year group leaders and subject co-ordinators to observe both teaching and its outcomes;
 - providing a more rigorous support for newly qualified teachers;
 - the headteacher playing a leading role in monitoring teaching and learning;
 - using the expertise within the school to support less confident members of staff.
 (Paragraphs 70, 123, 151, 165, 172 and 198.)
 - (2) Improve curriculum planning across both key stages by:

- reviewing the actual time spent on each subject;
 - reviewing the year group planning to ensure all staff understand the aims of the tasks organised;
 - review the organisation of the timetables to ensure the time spent on each subject can be monitored;
 - ensuring that the organisation of the curriculum reflects the need to raise standards in English (writing), science, art and design and ICT.
(Paragraphs 34, 130, 165, 172 and 179.)
- (3) Improve the assessment of foundation subjects by:
- identifying key learning objectives for each year group and appropriate assessments;
 - ensuring that the school's assessment policy is consistently implemented.
(Paragraphs 58, 136, 150, 180 and 190.)
- (4) Improve the attainment of more able pupils by:
- ensuring that lesson plans identify extended working outcomes;
 - subject co-ordinators supporting staff in identifying pupils who require more challenging work;
 - supporting staff in the identification of tasks suitable for the more able pupils.
(Paragraphs 35, 46 and 134.)

PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS

Summary of the sources of evidence for the inspection

Number of lessons observed	82
Number of discussions with staff, governors, other adults and pupils	20

Summary of teaching observed during the inspection

	Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
Number	0	12	41	26	3	0	0
Percentage	0	15	50	32	4	0	0

The table gives the number and percentage of lessons observed in each of the seven categories used to make judgements about teaching

Information about the school's pupils

Pupils on the school's roll	YR – Y4
Number of pupils on the school's roll (FTE for part-time pupils)	478
Number of full-time pupils known to be eligible for free school meals	21

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Special educational needs	YR – Y4
Number of pupils with statements of special educational needs	10
Number of pupils on the school's special educational needs register	138

English as an additional language	No of pupils
Number of pupils with English as an additional language	0

Pupil mobility in the last school year	No of pupils
Pupils who joined the school other than at the usual time of first admission	21
Pupils who left the school other than at the usual time of leaving	15

Attendance

Authorised absence

	%
School data	5.1
National comparative data	5.2

Unauthorised absence

	%
School data	0.2
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 1 (Year 2)

Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 1 for the latest reporting year	Year	Boys	Girls	Total
	2001	47	51	98

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		Reading	Writing	Mathematics
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	30	36	44
	Girls	35	42	47
	Total	65	78	91
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	66 (66)	80 (76)	93 (93)
	National	N/a (83)	N/a (84)	n/a (90)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	34	35	39
	Girls	40	43	43
	Total	74	78	82
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	75 (71)	80 (91)	83 (92)
	National	N/a] (84)	N/a (88)	N/a (88)

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

Ethnic background of pupils

	No of pupils
Black – Caribbean heritage	0
Black – African heritage	0
Black – other	0
Indian	0
Pakistani	0
Bangladeshi	0
Chinese	0
White	383
Any other minority ethnic group	1

This table refers to pupils of compulsory school age only.

Exclusions in the last school year

	Fixed period	Permanent
Black – Caribbean heritage	0	0
Black – African heritage	0	0
Black – other	0	0
Indian	0	0
Pakistani	0	0
Bangladeshi	0	0
Chinese	0	0
White	0	2
Other minority ethnic groups	0	0

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

Teachers and classes

Qualified teachers and classes: YR – Y4

Total number of qualified teachers (FTE)	20
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	22
Average class size	26

Education support staff: YR – Y4

Total number of education support staff	17
Total aggregate hours worked per week	433

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Financial information

Financial year	2001
	£
Total income	927,230
Total expenditure	948,385
Expenditure per pupil	1,984
Balance brought forward from previous year	30,853
Balance carried forward to next year	9,698

Recruitment of teachers

Number of teachers who left the school during the last two years	5.5
Number of teachers appointed to the school during the last two years	7.0
Total number of vacant teaching posts (FTE)	0
Number of vacancies filled by teachers on temporary contract of a term or more (FTE)	0
Number of unfilled vacancies or vacancies filled by teachers on temporary contract of less than one term (FTE)	0

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Results of the survey of parents and carers

Questionnaire return rate

Number of questionnaires sent out	478
Number of questionnaires returned	76

Percentage of responses in each category

	Strongly agree	Tend to agree	Tend to disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know
My child likes school.	62	30	5	1	1
My child is making good progress in school.	38	47	9	1	4
Behaviour in the school is good.	36	58	4	0	3
My child gets the right amount of work to do at home.	17	48	25	1	8
The teaching is good.	41	49	3	0	7
I am kept well informed about how my child is getting on.	26	45	22	5	1
I would feel comfortable about approaching the school with questions or a problem.	67	26	3	3	1
The school expects my child to work hard and achieve his or her best.	45	46	4	0	5
The school works closely with parents.	43	34	17	3	3
The school is well led and managed.	55	39	1	0	4
The school is helping my child become mature and responsible.	38	53	3	0	7
The school provides an interesting range of activities outside lessons.	33	47	12	1	7

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

AREAS OF LEARNING FOR CHILDREN IN THE FOUNDATION STAGE

80. The quality of provision in the foundation stage is good. There is a very good programme to introduce children and parents to the school. Children are well cared for by suitably qualified and experienced staff. The curriculum is broad and provides for activities that are suitable for young children. At the time of the last inspection (1997), children achieved average levels by the end of this stage. However, this was in the context of children entering school with average attainment. This is not the case now as children enter with below average attainment. Nevertheless, a wide range of ability is evident in the reception classes. Baseline assessments are made within the first seven weeks of school. This year it is evident that a significant proportion of children has lower than average attainment on entering the reception classes. Teachers, therefore, have to address lower levels of literacy and social development. The children make good progress in relation to the early learning goals. By the time they are ready to start in Year 1 they have made up ground and are only just below the national expectations.
81. Overall, the quality of teaching is good. No unsatisfactory teaching was observed during the inspection. Staff in the reception classes work hard to ensure children are happy, secure and make progress in their learning. Lesson plans are detailed, thorough and effective. They are clearly useful to the support staff and related to the six areas of learning. Planning takes into account the requirement to provide children at this stage with child-initiated learning activities and problem solving experiences, both indoors and out of doors. This is a strength and it makes significant contribution to the quality of provision.
82. Relationships within the classes are good. Adults relate well to each other and this provides children with good role models. Children develop social skills as a result of the good teaching that emphasises respect and care for others. Expectations of behaviour are appropriate and children respond well to this. All staff use praise and encouragement effectively and each child is valued. Consequently, children are involved and show they feel secure at school. Support staff contribute very well to children's learning, including those with additional educational needs. Staff are careful to include all of them in activities provided. Staff make good use of assessment, and especially observation, to assess the children's needs, plan for appropriate provision and to track learning. Classrooms are well organised into stimulating areas and resources are carefully prepared to support planned activities. The outdoor provision has been developed very well and staff make the most of it by organising and supervising group activities that involve all four classes. Parents are kept up-to-date with the termly topics and areas to be covered and are given useful information encouraging extension of experiences from home to school.

Personal, social and emotional development

83. A significant proportion of children enters the reception classes with immature skills in personal, social and emotional development. However, the majority will have achieved many of the aspects of the goals in this area by the time they enter Key Stage 1. This is because of the high priority given to children's personal, social and emotional development by staff throughout the Reception year and because of good teaching. Children play well together, can take turns and usually share resources

well. There is a good level of courtesy and respect shown by children to each other and to the adults who care for them so well. So long as they have the available support from an adult to start them off, they can work happily on their own and alongside others. They are interested and responsive and enjoy most of the activities provided for them. They understand the importance of class rules such as taking turns and not interrupting. Teachers take appropriate opportunities to talk about feelings and to help children consider the consequences of their words and actions on others. Much use is made of praise and positive reinforcement and this helps children to feel that they are valued as well as their efforts. There are good opportunities for role-play and the adults observe and intervene appropriately during these activities. The good outdoor provision also contributes to social development.

Communication, language and literacy

84. Children in reception classes are provided with a wide range of activities that support the development of language and literacy. By the time they are ready to start Key Stage 1 most can interact with others and take turns in conversations, almost meeting the early learning goals for this area. The many adults who work with the children, including parents and volunteers, provide good role models and encourage children to express themselves, talk about their work and describe events with increasing fluency. Children listen with enjoyment to the range of stories related to topics and, with the aid of toys or masks, re-enact the story. Teachers make effective use of big books to share stories with the class and encourage re-telling.
85. Some of the children are beginning to use talk to organise, sequence and clarify thinking and feelings about activities in class such as baking bread and what play dough feels like. Much of the work in speaking and listening goes on outside the literacy session. As part of this session the children are introduced to phonics and encouraged to identify toys and objects linked to the sounds. Some of the children can read a few familiar words including their names. Books are discussed and children are encouraged to describe events and characters. They are introduced to features of books such as title and author. Children take books home regularly and parents are given useful information about how to help them. The early stages of writing are introduced and encouraged through meaningful situations such as making party invitations. The implementation of the National Literacy Strategy has been effective and teaching is good.

Mathematical development

86. The children work well towards the early learning goals in mathematical development and by the end of the reception year most will have nearly achieved them in this area of learning. Teaching is good. Routines are established to help children realise the significance of numbers in their lives, such as counting and matching children present to number cards during registration. Songs and number rhymes feature regularly as part of the numeracy session and in other parts of the day. Children recite and sing these accompanied by various visual cues for numbers. They are beginning to recognise numbers 1 to 10; they are at various stages of counting forwards and backwards. They are encouraged, through games and activities, to use and think about mathematical language such as longer than and shorter than. In cooking they discuss heavier and lighter amounts of sugar and flour and they are learning to distinguish flat shapes such as circles and triangles. They can recognise some coins and enjoy role-play in their class shops.

87. Playing in the various role play areas, using wheeled toys out of doors and apparatus lessons in physical education all provide a range of situations in which the children can use their knowledge of positional language. They learn to move the wheeled toy forwards and backwards and change direction; they set up the role play area with suitable furniture and equipment and move over, under, around and through the apparatus following directions using vocabulary such as long, short, high and low.

Knowledge and understanding of the world

88. The children learn about the way the world varies through experiences in a range of activities. They walk around the school site to look at the various buildings and areas such as the hall, kitchens, field and fun trail. They observe and collect autumn leaves and fruits from the field. They are encouraged to explore colours, textures and other features of interest. They know about some of the jobs people do from the role-play in which they engage. The classrooms are arranged so that resources and equipment are accessible and the children choose appropriately and use them carefully to build using sand and recycled materials. They are introduced to basic joining and sticking techniques to help them begin to construct. They are taught to use glue without it dripping over their work and to handle scissors carefully. They are introduced to the computer and the tape cassette recorder. They have opportunities to use this equipment independently and use it sensibly and safely. They are able to use the mouse to operate the programme. The teaching of this area of development is good. Children have good opportunities to explore and investigate the world around them for themselves. The joint activity session on the theme of colour stimulated children in many ways. For instance, they saw the changes when looking through colour filters, took apart a kaleidoscope to discover what was inside and mixed and used colours with finger paints.

Physical development

89. Children are provided with a good range of activities that help them to explore and develop all aspects of this area of learning. They have well planned access to their own appropriate, secure, designated outdoor play area, a large playground space and the school hall. They move freely with pleasure and confidence. Most can reliably adjust speed or change direction to avoid obstacles or other children. They mount physical education apparatus using alternate feet and show respect for other children's personal space. Washing their hands after activities and before eating is an established routine. They are also able to help themselves to a drink from the water dispenser.
90. Good opportunities are provided for the children to develop the finer manipulative skills. They can use scissors with increasing success when they cut and stick paper and other materials to make pictures and decorate constructions such as pop up dolls. They mostly hold pencils and crayons properly and draw and paint pictures with increasing accuracy. They also enjoy frequent opportunities to work with a range of malleable materials such as play dough. Within classrooms, a wide range of construction sets, threading and posting toys and shaped materials are available for children to use. Teaching is good in this area of learning.

Creative development

91. There are good opportunities for children to become involved in role-play. The role-play areas have been introduced very thoroughly to encourage an inventive use of

language between children. The resources for these opportunities are readily available for much of the time. Children become engrossed in making sounds and rhythms on the unpitched instruments that are displayed for their use. They enjoy singing simple songs and nursery rhymes from memory and teachers and others help them to develop their confidence. Children learn to mix colours and create their own to use in painting and printing with fingers and hands. Earlier in the year they used paint successfully to make portraits of themselves. The resources for creative artwork are varied and adults assist the children to develop the necessary skills. The guidance given by adults is appropriate and helps the children explore and develop their own ideas. Children enjoy imaginative play using costumes related to role-play areas and themes such as nursery rhymes. They are given frequent opportunities to role-play and extend their imagination, whether they are in a space station or a greengrocer's shop. The home corner is regularly transformed and augmented to increase the children's experiences. Overall, teaching in this area is good.

ENGLISH

92. Many children enter the school with well below average levels in communication, language and literacy. The standard of speaking and listening on entry is also well below average. Results in the national tests in 2000 show that standards in reading and writing were well below average, but standards in 2001 have improved in reading and writing but are still below average. In the 2001 tests the school has made some reading gains compared to the national average. The percentage of pupils achieving level 2 and above in reading increased significantly from 66 percent in 2000 to 78 percent in 2001. The findings of this inspection in Key Stage 1 reflect the standards compared with similar schools, where there has been some improvement in pupils' results in the national tests in 2001.
93. The findings of this inspection also show some steady improvements in writing. This judgement recognises the school's commitment to develop pupils' reading and writing skills and that since 2000 it has made these areas main priorities for development and is making some progress. Trends in reading performance over the past three years have been varied, but writing has improved steadily by six percent. Unlike the national picture boys seem to improve at a faster rate.
94. By the time pupils leave the school at the age of nine they achieve results in reading and writing that are in line with expectations for their age.
95. The school has made the teaching of literacy a priority, using specific strategies to support reading such as parent reading schemes and reading support and are beginning to see signs of improvement.
96. There is evidence of underachievement in both boys' and girls' reading and writing and speaking and listening in some classes in Year 1 and in some classes in Years 3 and 4. At the beginning of Year 2 pupils' achievement in English is less than satisfactory but improves as they move through the school and standards rise as pupils move through Year 2 and the first stage of Key Stage 2. By the time pupils leave the school achievements in English are satisfactory and sometimes good
97. Pupils with special educational needs make good progress compared with their previous attainment. This is due to the support they receive, such as the Additional

Literacy programme and support from teachers and trained learning support assistants.

98. In Key Stage 1, standards in speaking and listening are below average. Many pupils enter the school with low levels of spoken English. To compensate for this, teachers act as good speech models and they focus on developing pupils' oral and listening skills. This is beginning to have a positive impact on their progress. The English co-ordinator has also developed programmes for speaking and listening activities for each of the year groups in order for teachers to focus on improving these skills. Teachers read stories in literacy lessons and pupils listen well and try to join in the discussion. However, some of the responses are limited and pupils have difficulty in expressing themselves. Teachers take every opportunity to reinforce and extend pupils' language and to develop their confidence as speakers. This was evidenced in a poetry lesson when pupils were asked to read a poem out loud with the teacher. Initially they shouted parts of the poem but eventually due to good teaching some pupils developed emphasis and expression in the correct places.
99. In the lower years of Key Stage 2 pupils' speaking and listening skills are satisfactory. Individual pupils find it difficult to listen to the views of others without reminders about the importance of taking turns in discussion, but generally most pupils readily engage in discussions and offer ideas freely. This was observed during a literacy lesson when pupils listened really well to the teacher reading a travel book, which was illustrated through collage. The pupils were given opportunities to discuss the texture and content of the illustrations and to talk about their own travel experiences in a mature and reflective way. However, some pupils still have a limited vocabulary and need support to develop their ideas at length. This was observed in a Year 4 literacy lesson, when pupils were trying to understand the difference between nouns and adjectives and it was evident from discussion that their language skills were limited. As a result, pupils' contributions were not always relevant to the topic and often their comments lacked understanding. Throughout Key Stages 1 and 2 opportunities for drama are being developed. Pupils enjoy drama lessons and these serve to support speaking and listening. In one drama lesson pupils had to talk in groups about what to do in mime. In another lesson they had to discuss the type of action photograph they would act out on an imaginary beach. Teachers are also trying to provide opportunities for pupils to speak in more formal contexts, such as plays or short prepared presentations.
100. Standards in reading are below average in Key Stage 1 but improve as pupils progress through Years 3 and 4. At all ages, pupils obviously enjoy reading books and this supports their learning. In Key Stage 1, pupils generally read simple texts with accuracy and receive supported reading sessions with their teachers. Through their work in the literacy hour, they have a sound understanding of how books are organised and can give a simple summary of the contents of a book. A small number of higher achieving pupils confidently tackle relatively difficult words and use appropriate expression. Average and below average pupils draw on their knowledge of sounds to read simple, regular words but often need support. They have a satisfactory understanding of texts that matches their attainment. Only the more able express some preferences in their personal reading and know how to locate information from non-fiction books. A number of the pupils in Key Stage 1 use the public library and also change their books regularly in the school library.
101. Pupils' interest and enthusiasm for books develop through Year 3 and 4. However, again only the few more able pupils have the ability to read challenging and lengthy

texts. Pupils of average ability can accurately read an appropriate range of texts and have a broad understanding of the main points and can discuss some aspects of characters and plot. Lower achieving pupils respond well to various forms of reading and try to use their knowledge of sounds when reading unfamiliar words. Although they can briefly discuss the key events, they do not always understand the context. Pupils throughout the school enjoy reading and some take their books home regularly to practise their skills. The school has also prioritised the improvement of reading skills and has introduced a volunteer reading scheme for parents and others to listen to pupils read, as well as a peer reading scheme. The school has identified time in the curriculum for reading activities. During the inspection this time for reading was not always used well and was not of sufficient duration to allow pupils to really benefit from the opportunity to read.

102. Pupils' writing at Key Stage 1 is below average. In Year 2, a few more able pupils convey meaning in simple sentences and sequence them correctly to make stories of sufficient length that contain interesting vocabulary. In general, however, the range and forms of pupils' writing are limited although some examples of extended writing are seen in subjects such as history and RE. Accuracy in spelling and punctuation is variable and the presentation of work often requires support. Writing is now improving in Years 1 and 2 where the analysis of work shows pupils writing for an appropriate range of purposes such as simple instructions and developing a suitable sense of style. Handwriting practice seen in Years 2 and 3 is carried out carefully and size and shape are beginning to be consistent. Pupils' writing style is improving as pupils move through school. A number of pupils do not express their ideas in sufficient detail or have the skills and knowledge to tackle extended pieces. This is evident for some pupils with special educational needs who cannot work well if unsupported. The analysis of work showed the lack of emphasis placed on the importance of pupils planning, drafting, editing and refining their written work. This shortcoming in provision undermines achievement in writing in the school and would be supported by more time for extended writing. Most pupils make satisfactory progress in spelling and punctuation.
103. In some classes in Years 3 and 4 the standards in literacy reflect those found in English. The development of literacy skills across the curriculum is improving, particularly in subjects such as geography and RE.
104. The previous inspection reported teaching to be inconsistent in English particularly in Key Stage 1. The findings of this inspection report are that the quality of teaching is now good. There is also a distinct improvement in the quality of English teaching and a commitment to improve standards of teaching and learning. This is being supported by the Literacy Framework, which provides structure and clear guidance on the teaching of literacy.
105. In one very good lesson in Year 2, the success of the teaching was evident in the teacher's confident presentation, command of the subject and imaginative approach that quickly gained and kept the pupils' attention. Expectations of pupils' response and their use of words were challenging and promoted pupils' interest in words. The work was well planned with the teaching assistant and by the end of the lesson many pupils were able to write instructions to start up a computer and understood instructional language in addition to words related to computers such as "mouse" and "log on". The teacher established a warm supportive environment for learning in which pupils felt secure and confident to explore new ideas within clear guidelines for work and behaviour.

106. Most of the evidence in Key Stage 2 indicates that pupils learn well in Years 3 and 4 when the work is more demanding and planned for different groups of pupils and developed in depth. In most classes during the literacy hour teachers have high expectations of their pupils.
107. In one lesson seen in Year 4 the strengths in teaching included high expectations, strong management of pupils who were not allowed to dictate their own pace in learning and the posing of higher order questions which increased the demands of the lesson. In another handwriting lesson in Year 3 the teacher gave clear information about how to sit, how to hold the pen and why neat handwriting was important. She gave good examples, involved pupils who then practised the letters carefully using the correct posture and shape of letters. In this lesson pupils had personal targets to provide a goal to which to work and there was a sense of achievement when they were achieved. In other lessons pupils have group targets which help to motivate pupils and show them what they need to do to achieve the next National Curriculum level.
108. Pupils with special educational needs have detailed individual action plans and these contain specific literacy targets to support learning. The school's learning support assistants provide identified pupils with good support and the opportunity to succeed. This support is used well by the class teacher. In general, the management of pupils is good and most teachers use the end of literacy sessions appropriately to encourage pupils to identify what they have learned and also to begin to move on to the next learning objective.
109. Overall, the quality of teaching and learning in English is good at Key Stage 1. This shows a marked improvement since the last inspection. Teachers in Key Stage 1 are also well supported by the structure of the Literacy Framework and the planning for the delivery of literacy lessons helps them focus their work. The Year 2 teaching team is strong with good and very good teaching and is well placed to keep improving standards. However, there are still some variations in teachers' skills particularly in Year 1. Teachers are using the literacy framework and make good use of a variety of activities to extend learning during independent work but sometimes pupils are being withdrawn from whole class activities. This separates them from their peers and means they are not included or benefiting from focused teaching.
110. Overall at Key Stage 2, the quality of teaching and learning is also good with some very good teaching in certain classes. The analysis of pupils' work shows that pupils, including those with special educational needs or the gifted and talented, make good gains in their knowledge, skills and understanding of the subject. The quality of marking is satisfactory and good in certain classes. In these classes pupils know what they have to do next to improve. Statutory tests are used at the end of Key Stage 1 and non-statutory tests are used at the end of Year 4. This information is passed on to the middle schools. The school also uses the level descriptors to assess pupils' writing attainment and targets are set for individual pupils. The school also uses the assessments made of reading and writing to inform group targets. In the better lessons teachers use the assessments they make to plan for support or reinforcement of the objective. Learning support assistants are used well and they encourage pupils to do their best. In the past the co-ordinator's monitoring role both in classroom observations, planning and sampling pupils' work has been useful for her to have an appropriate overview of the subject. This needs to be re-introduced to ensure consistency of delivery and expectation throughout the school.

111. The English co-ordinator has supported the school well with the introduction of the literacy hour and the development of the policy and schemes of work. She provides training and disseminates information, which encourages and enables staff to improve their teaching. She has also encouraged parents to be involved with their children's learning at home.
112. Resources in English are satisfactory and the library and classrooms have an appropriate range of books to support research skills and to enable pupils of all ages to enjoy their reading. Information and communications technology is, in general, used appropriately to support pupils' learning but in some classes could be used more effectively during the literacy hour. In many classrooms the quality of display showing language structure and reference to literature also supports pupils' learning. The subject is enhanced by events such as visits by theatre groups and book weeks. Pupils use the library to change their books and for research, but better use could be made of the school library during lunchtimes.

MATHEMATICS

113. By the end of Key Stage 1, attainment in mathematics is in line with national averages. Results in the National Curriculum tests for seven-year-olds in 2001, showed that 93 percent of pupils achieve level 2C or above. This figure is the same as for the year 2000. However, the number of pupils achieving the higher level 3 has increased from eight percent in the year 2000 to 30 percent in 2001. The progress made in the number of pupils achieving higher levels is also in line with national expectations. Analysis of the school's statistics shows that in mathematics, girls' achievement is better than boys', but that boys make better progress than girls from the foundation stage to end of Key Stage 1.
114. Pupils in Year 4 also achieve standards in line with national expectations. Early in Year 4 pupils learn to develop efficient written calculation methods for addition and subtraction. They can solve simple 'real-life' problems involving money and use the correct vocabulary to describe two or three-dimensional shapes. Pupils can also use standard units of length to measure perimeter and read numbers from a scale. However, at this stage in the first half of the autumn term, there is no evidence of any pupils at Key Stage 2 investigating problems or solving puzzles involving number or shape.
115. The school has made considerable progress since the last inspection by implementing the National Numeracy Strategy (N.N.S.) and adopting the N.N.S. framework as a basis for a scheme of work for mathematics. The N.N.S. guidance has helped to address issues raised in the last inspection such as an "over-reliance on work books or worksheets" and "too much time wasted while pupils wait for advice on marking". However, there is a need for all teachers to make frequent reference to the supplement of examples within the framework to ensure that objectives are clear and that there is progression within topics, building on pupils' previous experience and ensuring that the most able pupils are suitably challenged.
116. Scrutiny of pupils' work at Key Stage 1 shows that pupils make satisfactory progress over time. Early in Year 1 they are able to write number sentences such as $7 + 2 = 9$. They can name common three-dimensional shapes and measure and compare lengths using non-standard measures. By the end of Year 1 many pupils can write

numbers 1 - 100, tell the time (hours and half-hours) and are recording more calculations.

117. In the autumn of Year 2, pupils can halve numbers to 20, double numbers 1 - 10 and find multiples of 10. They recognise and continue simple number sequences and know the months of the year. Progress within lessons is satisfactory, although in one lesson observed, where teaching was unsatisfactory, pupils made no progress. At Key Stage 2 progress ranges from very good to satisfactory within lessons, but is mainly good. Scrutiny of work indicates satisfactory progress from Year 2 to Year 4 but, as evidence from written work is necessarily limited at this stage in the school year, it is not possible to make a judgement about progress over time at Key Stage 2.
118. Pupils' attitude and behaviour in lessons is generally good. They are keen to learn, work well in groups, discuss their work sensibly, respond well to teacher's questions, stay on task with minimum supervision and take pride in their work.
119. The quality of teaching ranges from unsatisfactory to very good. However, teaching is good overall. Teaching and progress are consistently good in Year 2.
120. Teaching is good where the teachers' own subject knowledge is secure, learning objectives are clear and shared with pupils, pace is good and day-to-day assessment is used to inform planning, ensuring that pupils are suitably challenged. In good lessons, teachers model the correct vocabulary, ask probing questions and make good use of pupils' explanations. Pupils are often given target times within which to complete a task.
121. In less satisfactory lessons, teachers' own subject knowledge is not always secure and they are, therefore, over-reliant on year group, short-term plans without having a clear understanding of the objectives. They do not use day-to-day assessment to help them make decisions about the appropriateness of the recommended tasks or work sheets to the needs of the pupils in their class and expectations are not high. In these lessons pupils make little or no progress.
122. For example, in a Year 1 class, pupils who could already partition numbers into tens and units spent much of the lesson building multi-link towers to represent ten and nine. While in a Year 4 class, pupils spent a lot of time on a low-level drawing exercise, reflecting shapes to show one line of symmetry although many were confident in describing shapes with two or more lines of symmetry.
123. The mathematics leader has good subject knowledge. She has attended training for the N.N.S. and worked hard to implement this within the school. She has provided appropriate training and modelled good practice through demonstration lessons. Standards have improved. However teaching has not been monitored in the last year and the range in the quality of teaching in the daily mathematics lesson is too variable. Not all teachers have sufficient subject knowledge to make good use of the very good sample short-term plans, which the school provides, or to adapt them to suit the needs of their own class. The school plans to address this issue by giving the maths co-ordinator regular release time to monitor teaching in all classes. This is particularly urgent in the case of newly qualified teachers, who are not well supported in developing good classroom practice. There is insufficient monitoring and analysis of pupils' test results. This is a future staff training need. Observation of lessons indicates the need to put into place the use of day to day assessment to inform planning and the full implementation of target setting in all classes. Teachers do not

make use of a wide enough range of resources, particularly in the oral and mental start to sessions. Monitoring of pupils' work shows that there are limited opportunities for pupils to use and apply their skills and knowledge to solve problems. This is an area for whole school development.

124. Good attempts have been made to involve parents in their pupils' learning through activity packs and parents' information evenings. The school's plan to share targets with parents will further enhance this initiative. The co-ordinator already has plans for staff training to make better use of ICT/mathematics links by introducing a wider range of software. She also draws attention to other cross-curricular opportunities in the medium-term year group plans. This is an area which the school is aware needs developing in order to maximise learning opportunities.

SCIENCE

125. Pupils' attainment in science, at the end of Year 2 is assessed by teacher-assessment. This year (2001) only 84 percent of pupils attained level, 2 or 3 which is well below the national average for all and for similar schools. The previous year, however, the results were better and broadly in line with national averages. The number of pupils attaining the higher level 3 has improved over the two years and this year meets national averages. There is no evidence of significant differences between the achievement of boys and girls.
126. Lesson observations and a scrutiny of current Key Stage 1 work, particularly those in Year 2, show that most pupils are reaching satisfactory standards in science.
127. Year 1 pupils can sort materials into groups using simple criteria. They can relate their science lessons to their work on 'Homes' in history and design and technology. They use correct vocabulary when talking about materials and can record their ideas on worksheets provided by their teacher. Following their work on magnets, pupils can make simple generalisations, for example – you cannot pick up a rubber band with a magnet because it isn't made of the right metal. However there is little evidence in pupils' work of more able pupils being given more challenging tasks.
128. Year 2 in their work on electrical circuits can predict whether an electrical circuit will work and then test to see if they are right. They work confidently with bulbs and batteries and can talk freely about what they are doing. The amount of work completed and their increased understanding indicate a good pace of work since September.
129. Lesson observations and a scrutiny of Year 3 pupils' work, show that at this early stage in the key stage, overall attainment is below average. However, these are the pupils whose Key Stage 1 levels were low. The work they have done so far this term is of a satisfactory standard and pupils have gained in their understanding of the needs of a plant in terms of light and water.
130. Year 4 pupils have recently been investigating whether one can separate salt or sugar from water by filtration. When questioned they can explain what they are doing and why, but their practical ability needs further development. Currently they lack the skill to be able to analyse their work critically. The standard of their work on solutions this term is satisfactory.

131. Virtually all science lessons take place during the short afternoon session. Though the time allocated to science in the science policy is about two hours per week, in reality pupils are getting little more than an hour and ten minutes. This shortage of time is having an adverse effect on standards as it is reducing the opportunities pupils have to carry out full investigations and to develop their practical, predicting and evaluating skills. Currently there is no common agreed format for recording practical activities.
132. It was only possible to see eight science lessons during the inspection. In those seen teaching was generally good with a number of strengths. There were no unsatisfactory lessons. Teachers plan their individual lessons in detail based on the units of the model schemes of work allocated to them. They use their knowledge of science well to make each topic interesting to their pupils. They have a good rapport with their pupils and use questioning effectively to pull together ideas at the end of each lesson. They know their pupils well and have good classroom management skills.
133. However, detailed planning does not always highlight key points which should be learnt. New science vocabulary does not have a high enough profile within some lessons and pupils' understanding is insufficiently checked. Little use is made of computers in science lessons.
134. Whilst teachers often plan for pupils with special educational needs to have support from learning support assistants and sometimes produce modified worksheets or activities for them, they rarely cater as well for more able pupils.
135. Pupils have a positive attitude to their work. They work well together and are keen to get on. Pupils are proud of their work and are happy to talk about what they are doing. They show an interest and want to contribute to the lesson. Pupils enjoy science. Levels of concentration are good. Most pupils can maintain their attention for a reasonable length of time. Pupils respect the equipment they use and work safely.
136. The school's science curriculum is based on a nationally produced scheme of work. Staff have agreed which units are to be taught in any year but there is insufficient planning to establish the depth of coverage and which new ideas and skills pupils are expected to learn. Day-to-day assessments of pupils and checking what they know and have learnt by the end of a unit are not recorded or monitored. Pupils currently do not know how well they are doing in science and how to improve. Insufficient records are held of pupils' attainment and progress in science. This is a particular issue at the end of Key Stage 1 and in Year 4.
137. Currently there is no science co-ordinator in post, although the headteacher has advertised a number of times. The effect has been that recently science has not been properly led and has not progressed as it should have done. Resources for science appear adequate though a thorough audit by a new co-ordinator would help identify any shortfalls. The resources need reorganising and matching to curriculum needs. The number of science books in the library is inadequate if pupils are to research their work properly.
138. A number of the issues raised at the last inspection have not been addressed. Assessment is still insufficiently developed and is not helping teachers to plan their

lessons effectively. There is still insufficient use of ICT and extension work is not being provided for more able pupils.

ART AND DESIGN

139. At the last inspection attainment for the majority of pupils broadly met the expectations by the end of Key Stage 1 and was in line with expectations by the time they left school at the end of Year 4.
140. Based on the scrutiny of pupils' work, work in progress, displays and activities in lessons, standards in art are just below the national expectation. This is lower than at the last inspection. For the last few years less attention has been given to the subject. The recently introduced new scheme of work is in the first year of implementation and has yet to have full impact.
141. The range of materials and resources selected by teachers constrains the opportunities for pupils to investigate visual and tactile qualities in materials and processes. Pupils do not yet have enough knowledge from earlier in the new scheme of work to apply their experiences of materials and processes, and develop their control of tools and techniques at the expected levels.
142. By the age of seven, pupils record their ideas and feelings with varying confidence. They work practically and with some imagination with a small range of techniques in two and three dimensions. They can describe and compare images in simple terms.
143. Year 1 pupils have produced work that includes A4 size collages of figures, A4 landscapes of the evening sky and A3 painted self portraits.
144. In Year 2 pupils have used viewfinders to frame aspects of their local environment to draw. This was extended with exercises on completing part of a scene provided for them and drawing what might have come before and after a frame in time. In Year 3 they had produced whole figure pictures of themselves on A4 paper with some detailed use of felt pens.
145. Pupils in Year 4 are able to interpret their designs for a chair in clay. They use simple techniques to alter the surface and add ornamentation using small decorative objects including beads. They explore the properties of the material and begin to overcome some of their lack of experience as they progress. Earlier in the term they had produced portraits of themselves on A4 paper with some detailed use of felt pens along with comments about their interests. Work in their sketchbooks shows they are beginning to learn how to collect and use visual and other information to help develop their ideas.
146. The last inspection found that teaching was satisfactory or better in half of lessons and unsatisfactory in half. The report identified, as a key issue, the need to arrange appropriate in-service training so that teachers' knowledge and expertise are improved in art. Although in-service training was arranged, staff changes since then and the introduction of a new scheme of work have contributed to the need for further support and training to improve teachers' knowledge and expertise. Teaching has improved and is now satisfactory – no unsatisfactory lessons were seen. Teaching is more effective when the teacher spends time demonstrating techniques to pupils, for example how to produce quickly a background on paper using chalks. Teaching is

not so effective when the teachers do not give pupils constructive feedback on how they are doing or set more challenging extension work for those who need it.

147. Learning is satisfactory. Pupils show a willingness to become involved in their work and persevere when they find things more challenging. The attitudes and behaviour of pupils are good. They listen well to instructions, make sensible suggestions about how artists might have produced effects and use resources appropriately and clear up quickly. Pupils show positive attitudes to their art lessons. They show good levels of commitment and enjoyment. They are sensible and responsible when they use their materials and resources in close proximity to each other.
148. Art and design is used extensively throughout the school to illustrate and enhance work in other areas of the curriculum. Examples include pictures of aspects of life in Ancient Egypt, shapes and patterns in mathematics, alphabet pictures in literacy, scenes from "Our Window" in geography and "My Friends" for personal social and health education.
149. The scheme of work meets statutory requirements. It is enriched by the provision of an art club for pupils in Year 3 and 4. This is very popular and well attended. The session observed was well planned and the two teachers spent time with the children teaching techniques so they could tackle the effects for which they were striving. The children were very involved and very much enjoyed the experience. The sessions in the club are also linked to trips to galleries in London at various times of the year.
150. The work of the co-ordinator has not had the status and support needed to bring about the improvements required in the subject. The policy is a useful document that gives background information. The distinction between art, design and craft could be made more explicit so that teachers could be more secure in their understanding of the characteristics of these various perspectives.
151. The policy states that the subject leader is expected to monitor quality and standards – amend schemes, be a consultant, look at pupils' work, planning and teaching, and conduct an annual review. She has an action plan for the subject based on the need to review the position after the first year of implementing the scheme of work. It is expected that this will identify training needs and aspects of the scheme that require refinement or alteration. Work on developing support for assessment is being shared with a local group of teachers who plan the effective transfer of pupils across the phases of the local first, middle and upper school system. The lack of exemplary materials to help teachers pitch work at the appropriate level is a weakness. If used for the end of year review, it would help identify strengths and weaknesses and ways to raise attainment.

DESIGN AND TECHNOLOGY

152. During the week of the inspection due to the constraints of the timetable and schemes of work it was only possible to arrange to see one design and technology lesson.
153. The school follows a national scheme of work and in the half term of the inspection two year groups, Years 2 and 4 do not have design and technology lessons. Pupils' work in Years 1 and 3 was scrutinised as was evidence of past work from Years 2 and 4 provided by the school.

154. The work seen, though relatively limited, indicated that pupils are getting the appropriate experiences of the design process. Work in Year 1 relates to the topic 'Homes' and is of a very good standard. Pupils have chosen particular boxes from which to make their homes and used scissors, glue etc sensibly and effectively. They chose appropriate materials to produce simple furniture to fit their home. The work was obviously completed with care and pride. The lesson seen relates to the 'Working with Materials' and shows that Year 1 pupils are being given a good range of design and make activities. All aspects of the Programmes of Study are being covered and the appropriate skills are being developed. The only lesson observed was in Year 1 and was well planned and effective.
155. Year 3 has been following the unit Sandwiches and Snacks. Very little evidence was available at this stage of the term but the written material produced by the pupils was of a satisfactory standard and appropriate for the age of the pupils.
156. The co-ordinator gives teachers very effective support. Her particular focus is progression and she monitors pupils' work and progress as they move up the school. The design technology curriculum is planned in detail.
157. The issues raised at the last inspection have been addressed and standards have risen.

GEOGRAPHY

158. Standards of attainment at the end of Key Stage 1 are in line with national expectations. Pupils in Year 4, the oldest pupils in the school, also attain standards in line with national expectations.
159. In Year 1 pupils' awareness of the wider world is developed through the travels of the fictional character Barnaby Bear. They begin to make comparisons between their own home surroundings and the New Forest and have enjoyed contributing to a display of holiday postcards from other parts of the U.K. and around the world. By Year 2, pupils make a more detailed study of the fictional Scottish Island of Struay. They are able to talk about and record the different purposes for which buildings are used and the work which people do. This enables them to make comparisons with life on the Isle of Sheppey. They can make statements such as "We need a lot more shops here because there are a lot more people on Sheppey".
160. At Key Stage 2, Year 3 pupils study life in Benin. Through the use of television programmes and good quality photographs, they are able to write and present simple reports on climate and its implications, types of homes, clothes and food. They make comparisons with their own life drawing out not only differences but also similarities. They make statements such as "I was surprised that people in Benin have television and videos". Pupils at the beginning of Year 4 discuss their own environment in more detail. They can understand and use a plan of the school, follow a route and colour code the plan to indicate land use.
161. The progress pupils make in lessons is satisfactory at both key stages. Pupils respond well to high expectations. The school has a clear policy and makes good use of national documents to contribute to a scheme of work which supports teachers in their planning and ensures progression across both key stages.

162. There is good improvement since the last inspection when attainment and progress at Key Stage 1 were not found to be satisfactory in all classes and the subject policy was not supported by a scheme of work.
163. At both key stages pupils' attitudes to their work and behaviour are good. They respond well to questions and work co-operatively in groups, staying on task while the teacher is focusing on other groups. Year 4 pupils behave sensibly when taken out of the classroom to do field work around the school.
164. Teaching ranges from satisfactory to good, but the majority of lessons at both key stages are good. The good lessons are marked by teachers' secure subject knowledge and high expectations. Pupils are frequently asked to work in groups and encouraged to discuss ideas. Tasks are often open ended. Where teaching is only satisfactory, teachers rely more on commercially produced work sheets, pupils work alone and tasks are more teacher directed.
165. Subject leadership is sound. The co-ordinator liaises with local middle schools and other Island schools to avoid pupils repeating topics when they move to upper Key Stage 2. She encourages joint medium term planning in year groups and liaises with staff to ensure resources are appropriate. Monitoring is done through auditing children's work. Some cross-curricular topics make it difficult to monitor time allocation for this subject.

HISTORY

166. In the week of the inspection, it was not possible to observe a history lesson at either end of Key Stage 1 or in a Year 4 class (the oldest pupils in the school). Judgements have been made from classroom observations in Year 1 and Year 3, scrutiny of pupils work, and discussion with teachers and pupils.
167. At the end of Key Stage 1 standards are broadly in line with national expectations. Pupils have an understanding about how homes and everyday life have changed during the twentieth century, developed through looking at domestic artefacts and toys and looking for evidence of change in their own school. They understand the difference that running water makes to home life. They also study lives of famous characters in history such as Florence Nightingale and Guy Fawkes and events such as the Great Fire of London.
168. At Key Stage 2, pupils' attainment is also in line with national expectations. In Year 3 pupils studying Ancient Egypt are able to recall facts from previous lessons. For example, "That was 6000 years ago", "They buried their Kings in pyramids" and "We wrote our names in hieroglyphics, but there is no equivalent to our letter 'e' ". Pupils understand the significance of the flooding of the River Nile and its relationship to the farmers' year. They also know that the desert itself protected the Egyptians from invaders. The only evidence from Year 4, work samples from last year's cohort, indicates an over-reliance on commercially produced worksheets. This evidence is balanced by classroom observations in Year 3, where pupils make models of a shaduf to help them to understand the Egyptian system of irrigation and search the web during ICT sessions to help them find out more about Egypt.
169. At Key Stage 1 progress is good within lessons. At Key Stage 2 progression is satisfactory in lessons. There is clear evidence of progression over time from Year 1

to Year 3, but not enough evidence to make a judgement about progression in Year 4.

170. The school has improved since the last inspection when attainment and progress at Key Stage 1 were found to be unsatisfactory, with little use of artefacts to encourage enquiry-based learning. Since the last inspection, the school has also developed a scheme of work based on national documents. This is used to guide teachers in their planning. Assessment is still an area for development as, at present, it is mainly informal with recording and reporting limited to work covered, rather than what pupils know, understand and can do.
171. In the limited number of lessons seen, teaching is very good at Key Stage 1 and satisfactory at Key Stage 2. The very good teaching was linked to good subject knowledge and very good use of resources. The teacher was able to explain domestic artefacts such as an icebox and a mechanical food mixer. Pupils were encouraged to bring old photographs from home and add them to their display about the recent past, making sensible guesses about approximate dates. The teacher brought to life changes in kitchens and cooking by reading extracts from her own collection of cookery books, dating back to the early nineteenth hundreds. Pupils showed a good understanding of the difference a refrigerator made to home life and enjoyed the chance to handle some of the old books.
172. The subject co-ordinator has been in post for one year. She liaises with local middle schools and other Island schools to ensure appropriate topic coverage. She monitors learning through an audit of pupils' work. However, it is difficult to monitor time allocation for this subject due to an element of cross-curricular work. There is a need to monitor each year groups' overall yearly plans to ensure that pupils are not confused by the positioning of some history and geography topics taught in the same week. For example, during the inspection the geography topic on Benin and the history topic on Ancient Egypt led to some misunderstanding among Year 3 pupils. Pupils began to muddle the locations.

INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATIONS TECHNOLOGY

173. At the last inspection, attainment was below national expectations and progress was unsatisfactory. The report identified, as a key issue for action, the need to meet the statutory requirement for information and communications technology (ICT) within the National Curriculum by providing training for teachers. This would improve their skills in ICT and by monitoring all teachers' planning to ensure that they are including sufficient opportunities to teach information technology so that pupils can be confident and aware of how it can be used in all subjects of the curriculum.
174. Standards of achievement in ICT are now in line with the nationally expected standards for pupils of at the end of Key Stage 1 but still below expectations for Year 4. In Key Stage 1 pupils have been working with a colour drawing and graphics package and saving work. In Year 2 pupils successfully worked in pairs on making changes to pictures of autumn they were working on. They could suggest changes to each other's work and select appropriate tools to do this. They began to learn that how ICT can make it easier to correct mistakes and explore possibilities.
175. In Years 3 and 4 pupils have been working with word-processing packages. In Year 4 pupils are at the early stages of exploring features of a word-processing package to indicate the relative importance of sections of text. These include highlight, underline,

font, font size and bold. They also plan how to lay out information in the style of a newspaper and have begun to use a proforma to help them organise and present their information. The ability to enter, save and retrieve work is not yet well established.

176. Pupils demonstrate good, positive attitudes and behaviour during lessons; they are sensible about using the equipment and follow the safety rules. They can collaborate effectively when they work at a shared workstation and take turns without fuss. They generally listen well to instructions and are well motivated.
177. Teaching is satisfactory overall. Where teaching is more effective planning is clear, detailed and identifies appropriate assessment, and the tasks challenge the pupils in the time available. Where teaching is less effective the organisation and support in the lesson did not ensure enough progress in the time available and feedback on progress and the learning objectives was not effective.
178. Progress on improving standards in ICT has been good recently. The school has made a substantial and important addition to the provision for the subject by developing a dedicated ICT suite. This has been successfully funded in a variety of ways. The accompanying training programme is underway and the skills, knowledge and understanding of the staff is improving. Training has been given to both teaching and support staff on the basis of a training needs audit. The training has been well received and has had a beneficial impact on confidence and skills of the adults involved. It is expected that this will be revisited in the near future so the effects can be evaluated.
179. Alongside this, the introduction of a subject scheme of work has enabled the planning of specific and focused subject teaching. This aspect of the programme is developing well and in time the effects of learning in Key Stage 1 will be apparent in Years 3 and 4. The staff and pupils tend to regard ICT as using computers rather than the wide range of sources of information such as television, videos, books and people. The current provision does not give sufficient attention to sensing, control and modelling. The cross-curricular use of ICT has not been developed so well, although a useful start has been made. Teachers regularly identify the contribution of ICT in planning for other subjects and this is linked to the programme of direct teaching in the suite.
180. The subject leader monitors planning and teaching; she also keeps a useful log of ideas, needs and informal observations. Assessment has been rightly identified as an area for priority development. The ability of the school to make meaningful evaluations of the action for improving standards will be compromised without clear guidance on appropriate and up-to-date expectations. The materials will also be needed to enable teachers to identify the prior attainment of pupils and effectively plan extension work for those who are progressing at a faster rate.

MUSIC

181. Only two music lessons in Key Stage 1 were observed during the inspection. During both sessions the attainment of pupils was broadly in line with national expectations. Pupils could identify long and short sounds and use a range of simple instruments to illustrate the difference. They listened well to taped music, identifying the different sounds and instruments. The teaching in both sessions was satisfactory; staff had

sufficient subject knowledge to develop pupils' understanding. Lessons were well planned, identifying learning objectives and a range of tasks to develop these.

182. The choir was observed as part of an after school club rehearsing a production for Christmas. They sang well, matching their voices to the actions and narration provided by other pupils. Staff who had undertaken the work due to the absence of a music co-ordinator skilfully led the session. In assemblies pupils sang with enjoyment and expression.
183. During the recorder club observed, pupils had a real sense of achievement in playing a simple tune in only their third lesson. They knew the fingering and notation for the notes A, B and C and could follow simple written music. They were confident to perform in front of each other, happily trying a range of tunes. They were aware of their performances and tried hard to improve.
184. Scrutiny of teachers' planning indicated that the full requirements of the subject are planned for. The subject is without a co-ordinator at present; other staff are maintaining the subject in the meantime. The school is seeking to recruit a co-ordinator. The resources available to staff and pupils are adequate and of good quality.

PHYSICAL EDUCATION

185. During the week of the inspection it was only possible to observe lessons involving dance activities and indoor team games in the hall. Judgements are also based upon discussion with the co-ordinator and scrutiny of teachers' planning. Standards in physical education are in line with national expectations by the end of Key Stage 1. By the age of nine pupils attainment is in line with expectations for their age. The last inspection judged attainment to be similar. There is no difference in standards between boys and girls. Pupils with special educational needs make appropriate progress and attain standards in line with their abilities.
186. All pupils wear appropriate clothing for physical education lessons and understand the need for safety procedures such as the removal or taping of jewellery. Pupils during the course of the lessons are taught the safety needs of the subject. All teachers explained the need, at the beginning of sessions, for warm up activities and the need to cool down at the close. Pupils were encouraged to note their heart beats in relation to these activities.
187. Pupils enjoyed activities. They try hard and collaborate well with each other. They listen and respond well to teachers' instructions and questions. The standard of teaching is good. Lessons provide pupils with sufficient challenge and enjoyment, enabling them to practise and develop skills. Lessons are well planned; staff have good subject knowledge and use this to develop their pupils' skills. The school uses the Tops sports programme to support the delivery of the National Curriculum programme of study. Staff have received training in the programme.
188. Pupils in both key stages are able to move around the hall well, finding space to work and use apparatus sensibly. Pupils in Key Stage 2 during the dance session listened carefully to the music, selecting movements, speed and attitudes to good effect. Pupils involved in team games, respected the rules of the game and encouraged team members to give of their best. Pupils have good control when involved in dribbling balls around obstacles.

189. The time allocated for physical education is appropriate. In most year groups there are two lessons a week. Some restrictions are in place, however, due to the availability of the school hall, which is used for other school activities. Younger pupils have to walk some distance to the hall across the playground; this does cause additional problems during wet weather.
190. The co-ordinator leads the subject well. There is a clear plan to improve further the quality of subject content and teaching skills. New equipment has been provided to replace that damaged during a recent leak in the equipment store. Schemes of work have been written to provide support for teachers' planning. The observation of lessons has taken place and staff provided with feedback and guidance. The co-ordinator has begun to write guidance for the assessment of pupils' achievement. It is hoped to complete this task within the near future. The school has made satisfactory progress since the last inspection that noted the need for schemes of work to be put in place.

RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

191. At the age of seven and nine pupils achieve the standards expected by the Kent Agreed Syllabus for religious education which has recently been updated. These findings reflect the findings of the previous inspection, which showed that pupils' attainment was in line with the expectations. Judgements in this inspection are based on classroom observations, analysis of pupils' work, which at this stage in the term is limited, scrutiny of teachers' planning and displays and discussions with the religious education co-ordinator, teachers and pupils. There is a caring ethos in the school overall and the teaching of religious education makes a good contribution to pupils' personal development.
192. In Key Stage 1, pupils are developing an appropriate knowledge and understanding of the beliefs and traditions of Christianity and of the world's faiths. Progress in this element of the subject is satisfactory taking into account the time allocated to the subject and the method of delivery. In Years 3 and 4 there needs to be more time available for religious education to allow pupils to explore issues in more depth and really develop an awareness of the importance of faith in the lives of others. Progress is satisfactory.
193. The school allows time for teaching religious education through the allocation of approximately half an hour slots of time, sometimes twice a week and through the wider curriculum. In some classes teachers use subjects such as art and design to encourage pupils to explore religious education through different media. Care must be taken to ensure that the time allocated is used for teaching religious education as there are times when the objective is more related to other subjects. In Key Stage 1 for example in a 30 minute timetabled RE lesson pupils were listening to the teacher talk about Jewish customs such as making bread before the Sabbath in order to rest on the Sabbath. As the teacher made the bread she talked about the Jewish customs and traditions. Pupils enjoyed this, listened well and did enjoy making the bread themselves with the teacher or with support assistants and parents. However, much of the time was taken up with the making of the bread and more time could have been taken talking about and understanding the reasons and the significance as to why this happened and why it was important to Jewish people. Similarly in another lesson the timetable stated religious education as the subject and it was actually a class assembly, which although related to moral education and taught well,

in this instance was not directly linked to a religion or religious education. In another religious education lesson pupils stopped their work on Diwali to visit the library to change library books which effectively took time out of the lesson.

194. However, during the inspection pupils in Key Stage 1 did have satisfactory knowledge about the significance of special places such as churches and synagogues. They also have some knowledge of Judaism and the history of the Jewish people. Pupils know the story of Noah's ark and the main events in the life of Jesus, from the Nativity to the crucifixion. Overall the teaching of religious education is satisfactory in Key Stage 1.
195. In Key Stage 2 pupils are aware of some of the main Christian festivals, such as Christmas, Easter and harvest festivals and can compare this to celebrations in the Jewish faith such as the Sukkat and Simchat Torah. As they get older pupils begin to explore more difficult concepts such as "Who was Jesus" and more detail about his life and symbolic language used about him. Discussion with pupils indicates that they have some knowledge of the Bible and are developing understanding of the moral code of the Ten Commandments. Some know about aspects of the practices of Judaism, the importance of the Torah and the keeping of the Shabbat or Sabbath and develop an understanding of the traditions associated with it. They also have ability to express their religious ideas and talk about their own beliefs.
196. In the lessons seen teachers make appropriate links with literacy, by encouraging pupils to communicate their thoughts and ideas and good links are also made with numeracy and ICT where possible. The speaking and listening skills of some pupils in Years 3 and 4 in religious education are of a good standard, and this supports their learning. Pupils with special educational needs are also well supported in religious education lessons as the written work is planned to meet their learning needs. Pupils who are more able also have extension work in some classes. Overall the quality of teaching and learning is good at Key Stage 2.
197. The curriculum is satisfactorily planned with the main focus being on Christianity and a sufficient breadth of teaching related to Judaism, Hinduism, and Sikhism and Islam. The policy and scheme of work have recently been updated and there is a curriculum map that provides a good framework for the subject. Opportunities for religious education are provided for in Christian assemblies and personal, social and health education. The co-ordinator for religious education is aware of current issues and has identified new resources needed for the teaching of works from the bible and for the teaching of Islam and generally resources for the subject are satisfactory. The co-ordinator for religious education is also working with the staff to identify how to assess the current objectives from the Kent Agreed Syllabus for RE which are for children to learn about religion and to learn from religion. The staff are considering how they will extend religious vocabulary and how they will assess what children have learned from religion. They have taken advice from an external adviser for religious education as part of a staff development programme.
198. There has been formal monitoring of RE teaching in the past but not recently. Currently there are plans to develop the monitoring of religious education to identify exactly how much time is spent on the teaching of religious education and the quality of it. Shortcomings in provision could mean that over time pupils' work and understanding could be affected, due to a lack of range and depth of religious experiences. There are visits or visitors to enrich the curriculum; the local vicar regularly visits school and pupils visit local churches for baptism ceremonies, for

example. There are very good displays and artefacts throughout the school to provide a focus for pupils' learning. The contribution of religious education to the pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is well developed to provide opportunities for reflection and discussion on a range of issues.