

INSPECTION REPORT

HIGH HALSTOW PRIMARY SCHOOL

Rochester, Kent

LEA area: Medway

Unique reference number: 118434

Associate Headteacher: Mrs H Taylor

Reporting inspector: Mrs JM Punnett
17826

Dates of inspection: 12th – 14th March 2001

Inspection number: 209301

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

INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Type of school:	Community
School category:	Primary
Age range of pupils:	4 to 11
Gender of pupils:	Mixed
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Appropriate authority:	The governing body, High Halstow Primary School
Name of chair of governors:	Mrs C Peek
Date of previous inspection:	January, 1999

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INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Team members			Subject responsibilities	Aspect responsibilities
17826	June Punnett	Registered inspector	Information and communication technology, design and technology, religious education.	Characteristics of the school. How high are standards? How well is the school led and managed?
9569	Jan Leaning	Lay inspector		Behaviour, attitudes, personal development. How well does the school care for its pupils? How well does the school work in partnership with parents?
19142	Audrey Quinnell	Team inspector	English, art and design, music, English as an additional language, equal opportunities.	
10808	Alan Britton	Team inspector	Mathematics, geography, physical education, special educational needs.	How good are curricular and other opportunities offered to pupils?
19142	Wendy Simmons	Team inspector	Foundation Stage, science, history.	How well are pupils taught?

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PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

High Halstow Primary School educates boys and girls aged between four and 11. It serves a village community and its surroundings near Rochester, Kent. During the term of the inspection, there were 20 children in the Foundation Stage. In total, there are 175 full-time pupils, which is smaller than most other schools of the same type. The school has two more girls than boys on roll. There are a few pupils from ethnic minority families at the school. There are no pupils who speak English as an additional language. About three per cent of the pupils are entitled to free school meals, which is below the national average. Approximately 42 per cent of pupils are identified as having special educational needs, which is above the national average. This is twice the number compared with 1999. The percentage of pupils with statements of special educational need, less than one per cent, is similar to the national average. During the last school year, 31 pupils entered the school other than at the usual time of first admission and 21 left it at times which were not those of the normal leaving or transfer for most pupils. This is an above average level of pupil mobility. Children enter the school at well below average levels of attainment.

HOW GOOD THE SCHOOL IS

The acting headteacher gives good educational direction to this school, which has been without a permanent headteacher since December 1999. The current headteacher was appointed in January 2001. She is well supported by the governors and the staff. There is good teamwork that supports teaching and learning and answers the varying needs of pupils. The management of pupils' behaviour is good. The staff have worked hard to make sufficient progress to enable the school to come out of serious weaknesses, although assessment practice across the school and aspects of the Foundation Stage have not been fully developed. The governors fulfil their statutory responsibilities well. The school gives satisfactory value for money.

What the school does well

- The current acting headteacher provides good leadership, with a focus on promoting effective teaching and learning.
- Pupils' attitudes to learning and their good behaviour help to promote a positive working atmosphere.
- The provision for special educational needs is good and, as a result, pupils make appropriate progress.
- The provision for pupils' moral and social development is good.
- The governing body has a very good understanding of the strengths and weaknesses of the school and provides it with good support.
- The quality of teaching is satisfactory overall, and good in Key Stage 1.

What could be improved

- Standards in English and mathematics at both key stages and science at Key Stage 2.
- The quality of teaching and aspects of the provision for children in the Foundation Stage.
- Assessment practice and the use of on-going assessment across the school.
- The breadth and balance of learning opportunities at Key Stage 2.
- Standards of attainment in information and communication technology, design and technology and art and design in both key stages.

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

HOW THE SCHOOL HAS IMPROVED SINCE ITS LAST INSPECTION

The school was last inspected in January 1999 when it was identified as having serious weaknesses; this is no longer the case. In January 2000, it was further inspected by Her Majesty's Inspector (HMI) who concluded that although satisfactory progress had been made in addressing the needs of children in the Foundation Stage, other aspects had improved insufficiently. Overall, the school's improvement since the January 1999 inspection is satisfactory and substantial improvements have taken place during

the past three and a half terms under the leadership of two acting headteachers. The school has improved in all the areas identified by the 1999 inspection due to the very good support received from the Local Education Authority and the commitment of the staff and governors.

The school acknowledges that improvements are still required in assessment practice and the use of on-going assessment. Good improvements are recognised in the provision for the Foundation Stage, nevertheless, some areas of learning and the quality of teaching are not fully developed. The school is on course to reach the targets it has set for pupils to reach Level 4 and above in English and mathematics in the end of Key Stage 2 tests 2001. These reflect the high proportion of pupils with special educational needs in the current Year 6 class, 56 per cent. The quality of teaching is satisfactory overall and it is good in Key Stage 1, which is an improvement since the last inspection. A sound team spirit has been established and a clear commitment to improve exists. The acting headteacher has a good vision for the development of the school, which has been effectively communicated to all within it and she is well supported by the staff, especially by the deputy headteacher. The school has a satisfactory capacity to continue to improve.

STANDARDS

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

Performance in:	Compared with			
	All schools			Similar schools
	1998	1999	2000	2000
English	E	D	C	E
Mathematics	E*	E	A	A
Science	C	E	B	C

Key	
well above average	A
above average	B
Average	C
Below average	D
well below average	E
very low	E*

The information shows that standards in mathematics were well above average when compared with all schools and when compared with similar schools. In science, when compared to all schools, standards were above average and average in comparison with similar schools. In English, standards were average when compared with all schools and well below average when compared with similar schools. Boys achieve less well in English and science than girls. Between 1998 and 2000, there has been a sharp improvement in standards in mathematics. All three subjects have improved during the past year. During the inspection, the work seen in English, mathematics and science was below average. This is due to the high proportion of pupils with special educational needs. Pupils achieve satisfactorily in relation to their abilities, although in English there is a degree of under expectation for the more able pupils. The work seen in information and communication technology, design and technology and art and design was also below average. Achievement in swimming is satisfactory. The standards found in all other subjects, including religious education, are average.

The findings of the inspection are that the current Year 2 pupils are attaining below average standards in listening, reading, writing and mathematics. Standards in speaking and science are broadly average. Standards in art and design, design and technology and information and communication technology are below average. Standards in geography, history, music, physical education and religious education are average. Children in the Foundation Stage attain lower than average standards overall. They are on course to achieve the Early Learning Goals in most aspects of their work in mathematics, creative development, and physical development and in most aspects of knowledge and understanding of the world. However, achieve in some areas is not high enough, especially in speaking skills and in their personal development.

Pupils with special educational needs make good progress in their learning and achieve standards that reflect their potential. More able pupils make satisfactory progress.

PUPILS' ATTITUDES AND VALUES

Aspect	Comment
Attitudes to the school	Good. Pupils are keen to do their best, which helps them to make satisfactory or better progress.
Behaviour, in and out of classrooms	Good. Pupils behave well in assembly, around the school and in class.
Personal development and relationships	Good. Pupils work well together, share resources and ideas well and take responsibility with enthusiasm. Pupils have limited opportunities to develop their skills as independent learners.
Attendance	Satisfactory. Unauthorised absence is below the national average. Most pupils are punctual to school and to lessons but a few are not.

TEACHING AND LEARNING

Teaching of pupils:	aged up to 5 years	Aged 5-7 years	Aged 7-11 years
Lessons seen overall:45	Satisfactory	Good	Satisfactory

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

During the inspection, 45 lessons were seen, 95 per cent were satisfactory or better and four per cent (two lessons) were unsatisfactory. Overall, one third of lessons were satisfactory (34 per cent) and over a half of all observed teaching was good (51 per cent). Eleven per cent of the teaching was excellent or very good. The quality of teaching in the Foundation Stage is too variable and this is a weakness. There is too much over direction of children's learning. The identified weaknesses in the teaching of art and design, and design and technology are due to insufficient challenge and progression in the development of skills and knowledge, which have resulted in lower than average standards of attainment. The quality of teaching of literacy is satisfactory, and in numeracy, it is good. The needs of pupils with special educational needs are well met. The school's provision for more able pupils is satisfactory overall.

The quality of the pupils' learning reflects the quality of teaching. Learning is unsatisfactory for children aged under five, it is good at Key Stage 1 and satisfactory overall at Key Stage 2. Strengths in learning include the way the pupils take turns and use equipment effectively and the enthusiasm with which they take part in lessons and answer questions when they are motivated by the teaching. The major weaknesses in the pupils' learning are the slow pace at which they work and their lack of independence.

OTHER ASPECTS OF THE SCHOOL

Aspect	Comment
The quality and range of the curriculum	Curricular provision is satisfactory overall. There are weaknesses in provision at Key Stage 2 and in some aspects of the Foundation Stage.
Provision for pupils with special educational needs	Good. Procedures for identifying pupils with special educational needs are effectively in place. They receive good support.
Provision for pupils' personal, including spiritual, moral, social and cultural	Good overall. Spiritual and cultural development is satisfactory. These aspects make an important contribution to pupils' personal development. There are missed opportunities to develop visits and visitors in art and

development	design, music and religious education.
How well the school cares for its pupils	The school cares for pupils well. The procedures for monitoring and promoting good behaviour are good, and lead to good standards of behaviour. Assessment is unsatisfactory overall, and is identified by the school as a key area for development.

There are satisfactory links with parents and the information the school provides supports pupils' learning adequately. Some parents help in the school.

HOW WELL THE SCHOOL IS LED AND MANAGED

Aspect	Comment
Leadership and management by the headteacher and other key staff	The leadership of the acting headteacher is good. Overall, the leadership and management of the headteacher and key staff are satisfactory. This is because the roles of staff with curricular and management responsibilities are still being developed. The school's ethos is good.
How well the governors fulfil their responsibilities	Good. The governors have a very good understanding of the school's strengths and weaknesses. They give the management of the school good support and work well as 'critical friends'. The governing body seeks competitive prices for services and resources and applies best value principles to measure the success of the school against others.
The school's evaluation of its performance	Good. The school uses the results of national tests to identify pupils who need extra support. The governors make regular visits to monitor the subjects for which they have responsibility.
The strategic use of resources	The school's resources are used satisfactorily to promote pupils' learning. Developments are carefully costed but criteria to determine cost effectiveness are not in place. School development planning appropriately covers a three year period.

The school has an appropriate number of teaching and support staff who are well qualified, however, some staff are working with age groups different from their initial training phase. The number of midday supervisors is barely adequate. Accommodation is satisfactory but not all rooms are the appropriate size for the number of children and storage remains a problem. Resources are satisfactory overall, although the library does not sufficiently support learning. The school already plans to improve the library and facilities for storing resources.

PARENTS' AND CARERS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

What pleases parents most	What parents would like to see improved
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> It is a caring school with very supportive staff. Their children enjoy school. Newsletters are informative. Problems are generally resolved quickly. The appearance of the school. The school's involvement in church and village life. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Homework is variable across the school. Pupils are not being prepared for secondary school. There are insufficient opportunities for residential trips. They would like class sizes reduced. Concern was expressed about safety arrangements with regard to car parking.

The inspection supports the positive views of parents. They find that the provision for homework is variable and lacks consistency across the school although new procedures are now in place. The school prepares pupils satisfactorily for secondary school. There are no opportunities for residential visits for the older pupils and this limits their social development. The classes in Key Stage 2 are large, and this becomes more of an issue for the school as the pupils grow in size. However, many lessons have learning support assistants working with the pupils so they can get more attention. The car parking

issue relies very much on other parents and the ways in which they gain access to the school area. All reasonable precautions have been taken by the school to ensure pupils' safety.

PART B: COMMENTARY

HOW HIGH ARE STANDARDS?

The school's results and pupils' achievements

1. Children are assessed when they start school. Overall, the results of these assessments show much lower attainment than average. Speaking and listening skills are well below average, with boys being weaker than girls. Writing skills are average. Reading is below average. In mathematical understanding, children's knowledge of numbers is broadly average, although boys are stronger than girls, and their ability to use and apply skills is lower than average. Personal and social development is much lower than average: children do not show sufficient independence and boys are poor at making relationships. Children's physical skills are average. Children's knowledge and understanding of the world are below average. Creative development is well below average, with boys showing significantly weaker skills.
2. By the time children leave the Reception class, they attain lower than average standards overall. They are on course to achieve the Early Learning Goals in most aspects of their work in mathematics, creative development, physical development and in most areas of knowledge and understanding of the world. They make satisfactory progress from their much lower than average starting point overall. However, they do not achieve well enough, especially in speaking skills and in their personal development, and in these areas, they are not on course to achieve all of the Early Learning Goals. Assessment information is not being used sufficiently well to raise attainment.
3. In the end of Key Stage 1 tests in 2000, standards were above average compared with all schools in reading, writing and mathematics. Standards were average in reading and below average in writing and in mathematics compared with similar schools. Standards in mathematics have risen compared with 1997 when they were average. Standards in reading are the same as in 1997 and in writing are not as good. Between 1997 and 2000 standards vary year on year. In science, the 2000 assessments made by teachers were well below those found in most schools at Level 2 and above. At the higher Level 3, assessments showed below average standards.
4. The findings of the inspection are that, in Year 2, the pupils reach below average standards in English and mathematics, including literacy. In numeracy, attainment is average. Half of the pupils in the current Year 2 are on the school's special educational needs register and there is a wide range of ability, which is reflected in pupils' attainment in writing. In science, history, geography, music and physical education pupils attain average standards. Standards in science have risen since the last inspection. In art and design, design and technology and information and communication technology, attainment is below average. These judgements are different from those of the last inspection where in design and technology, no previous judgement was made, and in information and communication technology where standards were judged as in line with the national average. Pupils reach satisfactory standards overall at Key Stage 1 and more able pupils are sufficiently challenged by their work, for example, in science. This was not the case at the time of the previous inspection. Pupils with special educational needs make good progress in relation to their abilities.
5. In Year 1, most pupils are keen to answer questions yet often call out when they recognise words that rhyme during a literacy lesson. They attain close to average skills in speaking but their listening skills are weak. Pupils in Year 2 listen attentively and most can clearly express their ideas, although with a limited vocabulary. Most pupils enjoy reading and listening to stories, and the more able pupils read with good expression and understanding. Less able pupils read simple texts, guessing words by the initial letters, and continue to read even when what they are reading does not make much sense. Year 2 pupils show understanding of story structure but very few write at an appropriate length for their age. The most able use a broad vocabulary, spellings are generally correct and capital letters and full stops are often used accurately. The less able pupils print their writing, and presentation is often untidy, and lacks punctuation. Although they can spell words such as, 'I' 'and' 'he' and 'was', most spellings are developmental. Overall, standards are below average. In mathematics, pupils in Year 2 can count and order numbers to 100 using their knowledge of place value. They can identify halves and quarters in shape and halves of numbers to

ten but most have difficulty in identifying quarters of numbers. In science, pupils in Year 2 have an idea about fair testing. They have a good knowledge of plant and animal habitats and know that plants need light and water to survive. However, their knowledge of forces is weak and this prevents pupils from attaining higher levels.

6. In geography at Key Stage 1, the pupils have appropriate early map work skills and can distinguish between human and physical features in their locality. They have begun to identify areas on maps by using simple grid references. In religious education, the pupils know about the meaning of bread and wine at the Last Supper but they are not so able to talk about customs in other faiths. In history, the pupils have a sound sense of chronology and are interested in the history of the local area but their methods of recording their work are limited. In physical education, Year 2 pupils show sound control and co-ordination when hopping, jumping and skipping. In design and technology, pupils plan and use their ideas to make hand puppets but they do not make enough decisions about the choice and use of resources for themselves. In art and design, the pupils make pencil observational drawings of different styles of boots and shoes, and study the works of Monet, but they have too few opportunities to learn the basic techniques of drawing, painting and designing which results in below average standards. In music, pupils sing a variety of songs tunefully with good control and enjoy using appropriate actions. In information and communication technology, the pupils show satisfactory levels of independence, for example, changing colours and drawing when using a painting program, but they find difficulty in controlling the computer mouse and lack confidence when opening and saving documents.
7. In the end of Key Stage 2 national tests and assessments in 2000, the school's results were average in English, well above average in mathematics and above average in science compared with all schools. Compared with similar schools, standards were well above average in mathematics, average in science and well below average in English. Since 1996, the standards reached by the pupils have been broadly in line with the national trend although there are yearly variations since 1997. The school has appropriate targets for 2001 although they are lower in both English and mathematics than the 2000 targets, due to an increased number of pupils (56 per cent) with special educational needs in the current Year 6 group.
8. The findings of the inspection are that, in Year 6, the pupils reach standards in English, mathematics and science that are below average, including in literacy and numeracy. Since the school's last OFSTED inspection, standards overall are satisfactory and have improved, but are not reflected by the current high proportion of pupils with special educational needs in the school. In art and design, they remain unsatisfactory. In information and communication technology standards are below expectations, which is not as good as those found at the time of the last inspection. Standards in design and technology are also unsatisfactory. Due to the high proportion of pupils with special educational needs in the current Year 6, standards are lower than indicated by the 2000 national results. Pupils with special educational needs make good progress in relation to their abilities and more able pupils reach their potential although they do not make enough progress in English.
9. In English, in Key Stage 2, most pupils have a limited vocabulary and speak in simple sentences. However, the whole school productions and sharing assemblies are good incentives to encourage and develop good speaking and listening skills. In Year 6, the most able pupils read with fluency, accuracy and precision. They give a concise summary of events and can predict what they think might happen later in the book. However, the enclosed nature of the school library limits pupils' opportunities to browse and extend their research skills. Less able pupils enjoy reading books, sometimes choosing to re-read favourite books several times. Most pupils can name a favourite author, such as Roald Dahl, J.K. Rowling and Paul Jennings. Older pupils in the Year 5/6 class write in a variety of styles and all pupils, including the more able, are sufficiently challenged, but this is not consistent across the key stage. In this class, pupils write in an appropriate range of styles, including stories, newspaper reports and poetry. When studying the story of "The Little Match Girl" by Charles Dickens, they create their own versions of the story, but written in various styles. However, many pupils in Key Stage 2 lack the skills and confidence to write extended stories and do not adequately develop their ideas. There is a lack of emphasis on pupils planning, drafting and refining their written work. The below average attainment in writing affects pupils' achievement in other subjects such as history, geography, and religious education. A few pupils in Year 6 are working at the appropriate level for their age in mathematics although many have difficulties. Some

pupils have good skills in using their knowledge of place value to multiply and divide by 10, 100, 1000, but most have difficulty although they can order numbers and have a good knowledge of multiplication tables to ten. The use of fractions and percentages to describe proportions is under developed for most pupils. In science in Year 6, pupils know about the effect of heat in dissolving and melting, but their knowledge of condensation is below average. Pupils are not sure about friction and how to make more advanced circuits. Their knowledge of earth and space is also weak. The mixed-age classes restrict the progress made by pupils.

10. In music at Key Stage 2, the pupils sing confidently with good rhythm and pitch but their knowledge of music from other cultures is not well developed. In history, pupils have acquired some factual knowledge about the Victorians and Tudors but their learning is not closely linked to good quality visits or visitors and this restricts pupils' understanding. In religious education, they have a good understanding of the beliefs and traditions of Judaism but this is not well reflected in their written work. In geography, pupils compare and contrast the climate, weather and population of Ghana with Great Britain. Lack of research opportunities restricts pupils' progress in the subject. By the time that they leave the school, almost all pupils can swim at least 25 metres safely using a recognised stroke, and in games, although they demonstrate sound catching and throwing skills, pupils' limited vocabulary means that they do not remember words such as 'sequence'. In design and technology, the pupils have a sound understanding of the design process but do not always follow through their designs to completion. In information and communication technology, pupils are confident computer users but their keyboard skills are not highly developed as most use one or two fingers to operate the keyboard and they have insufficient 'hands on' experience. In art and design, they use pencil to create drawings of shoes and musical instruments, but their work is immature for their age.
11. Pupils with special educational needs make good progress and reach good standards in line with their abilities. All of these pupils do well, but most do not attain national standards by the time they take the national assessment tests in Year 6. This is due to a low attainment on entry to school and the large number of pupils with special educational needs, approximately 42 per cent, in the school. There are nine pupils with special educational needs out of 16 in the present Year 6 class, 56 per cent. Parents are generally pleased with their children's progress. Pupils make particularly good progress in the basic skills of numeracy and literacy during the numeracy and literacy hours when given extra support by teachers and learning support assistants. All pupils make significant progress towards achieving the targets on their individual education plan in the allotted time. This judgement is an improvement on the previous OFSTED inspection when pupils were found to make satisfactory progress and attain standards in line with their abilities.
12. Throughout the school, overall standards in literacy are below average. Pupils' lack of literacy skills is having an adverse effect on their attainment in other areas of the curriculum. In subjects such as science, geography and history, pupils' below average attainment in reading and writing results in their having difficulty in expressing their ideas clearly.
13. The National Numeracy Strategy has been successfully introduced into all classes in both key stages and it is applied effectively. Overall, standards in numeracy are satisfactory. An appropriate emphasis has been placed in all year group classes on mathematical vocabulary, open-ended questioning and mental strategies. Good practical activities are planned by all teachers to stimulate pupils' interest in the subject and develop their learning. The successful implementation of the strategy is improving the investigative skills of pupils of all ages and abilities and is improving standards.

Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development

14. Throughout the school, pupils' attitudes, values and relationships are good. The school's aims have been revised and now appropriately include increasing pupils' self esteem, raising standards, and improving the quality of teaching and the learning environment. Pupils enjoy school; they work hard, concentrate well and are polite, courteous and respectful to each other and to the adults. Pupils instinctively hold doors open and show other courtesies. Although the playground lacks stimulus, pupils play well together and have concern for each other. At lunchtime, efforts are made to ensure that there is a social atmosphere. Pupils understand the rules and know right from wrong. They

say that behaviour has improved since the new acting headteacher came, 'because we know what we have to do'. Pupils are appreciative of the 'gallery star' initiative, in which they have an opportunity to be 'special' and have access to special books. This is a reward for good work and best effort. Pupils with special educational needs show good attitudes to their work and generally behave well in and around the school. They show respect to teachers and support staff and relationships with other pupils are good. They are well accepted by their classmates in all aspects of school life.

15. Children in the Foundation Stage show positive attitudes to learning and behave well. Personal and social development is identified in planning, but staff are not always skilled in developing this area of learning. The organisation in this class is often over directed by adults. Opportunities for children to develop independence and make choices about activities and resources for themselves are too limited. As a result, the development of imaginative and creative skills is often stifled. Sometimes, the limited range of resources shortens children's concentration.
16. Behaviour in the school is good; expectations are high and, overall, pupils respond well. In lessons, pupils listen carefully, settle quickly to their work, and concentrate well on their tasks. They 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. No bullying was seen during the inspection; pupils know that it is unacceptable, and do not think that it takes place. There is no litter or graffiti. There have been no exclusions.
17. Personal development in the school is good: there are opportunities for pupils to think about their actions and the effect these have on others. They are given some responsibilities, such as taking registers and helping to get out and put away equipment. Older pupils pick up litter, lock gates, care for plants and are responsive to the needs of younger children. At lunchtime, a Year 4 pupil spontaneously offered help to a small girl having difficulty cutting up her food. Pupils raise funds for those less fortunate and last year at Christmas took part in filling shoeboxes for Eastern European children. They also wrote personal letters to go with them. Pupils, however, have only limited opportunities to develop their skills as independent learners. Social and personal education is taught through the health education programme across the school and through high quality assemblies. These good standards ensure positive opportunities for pupils to achieve their best.
18. Attendance figures are satisfactory: they are in line with national averages and the figures for unauthorised absence are below the national average. Parents are given good information to encourage them to send their children to school regularly. Most pupils are punctual to school and to lessons but a few are not. Recent initiatives, including the involvement of the educational welfare officer, are aimed at ensuring that these few pupils are also helped to attend school punctually and regularly. They are already beginning to have an impact. There is no evidence of pupils with special educational needs being reluctant to attend school or being late for school. Evidence from parents indicates that their children like attending school.
19. Since the previous inspection, the good standards in attitudes, values and behaviour have been maintained and those in personal relationships have improved from satisfactory to good. Attendance remains satisfactory.
20. The inspection team agrees with the parents that the ethos is positive, that behaviour has improved overall and that most pupils enjoy school. However, the team found no evidence that there was bad language and no incidents of bullying took place during the inspection.

HOW WELL ARE PUPILS OR STUDENTS TAUGHT?

21. The quality of teaching and learning is satisfactory overall. During the inspection, 45 lessons or parts of lessons were observed. Of these, 43 were satisfactory or better and two were unsatisfactory. Overall, one third of lessons were satisfactory and over a half of all observed teaching was good. Four lessons were very good and one lesson was excellent. In coming to an overall judgement about teaching, teachers' planning, assessments and samples of pupils' work were evaluated. Furthermore, discussions were held with pupils about their work.

22. The quality of teaching and learning in the Foundation Stage is too variable and this is a weakness. At the last inspection in 1999, teaching was judged to be satisfactory in the lessons seen. However, only two out of the six areas of learning were being taught and none of the planning was directly linked to the correct curriculum for this age group. This was a very significant weakness, which formed a key issue for development. Since then, improvement has been good, but there are still weaknesses and the provision is still not satisfactory overall.
23. In the Foundation Stage, teaching and learning in language and communication, and personal and social development are unsatisfactory. The teaching of physical and creative development, knowledge and understanding of the world, and mathematics is satisfactory. Basic skills in mathematics are taught appropriately, as at the last inspection, but the teaching of language skills sometimes lacks continuity, pace and challenge. The teaching of information and communication technology skills is poor.
24. During the inspection, children in the Foundation Stage were taught by their usual class teacher, two assistants and by the acting headteacher. Ten lessons or parts of lessons were seen. One was unsatisfactory and the others were satisfactory or better. Teaching by the very knowledgeable acting headteacher, is of high quality. In the four lessons that she led, it ranged from good to excellent. This support was provided for two out of the three days of the inspection and demonstrates the school's commitment to supporting and improving the provision. However, when this support is not provided, teaching is not always good enough.
25. Foundation Stage staff are not skilled enough in linking the knowledge of how young children learn to their teaching. This was best when the acting headteacher led an excellent physical development and mathematics session. Here, learning was rooted in what children already knew and then extended practically. This resulted in excellent learning about 'behind, in front, in between, next to and under'. This was less successful in the role-play about the story of 'Anna and her multicoloured glasses'. The children were provided with two straw hats and no other resources and then asked to act out the story. Here, the uninspiring, over directed intervention by staff resulted in very little learning. This lack of resources is also evident in other activities and does not allow children to make decisions, sustain interest or extend their skills and imagination. Overall, staff like to exert too much control over children and activities and this does not help children to learn for themselves.
26. The pace and challenge in activities at the Foundation Stage are not demanding enough as there is too much variation in the way in which staff organise their time, ask questions and intervene in children's learning. Children are not always encouraged to think for themselves. Moreover, opportunities for spontaneous questioning and learning are often missed. For example, when the children looked at the development of growth in an amaryllis, a primula, a chrysanthemum and a hyacinth bulb, the teacher talked to the children about leaves and stalks and petals, but did not name the plants or introduce words to describe their texture, scent, shape or colours. Then, when the children went into groups, the plants were not taken to each table for further 'hands on' exploration. As a result, children did not really talk about what they were learning. While they successfully made collages and chose some resources for themselves, the teacher did not make sufficient links from one area of learning to another. Furthermore, their natural curiosity was not used to develop their descriptive vocabulary, nor was it used as a means of assessing their knowledge of plants. The finished collages clearly showed the differences in children's understanding and skills. However, this was not identified for assessment and, therefore, could not be used to best advantage to develop learning in the next lesson. Assessment is unsatisfactory overall. In lesson planning, the objectives for learning are usually too general and do not easily link to assessment.
27. In the Foundation Stage, the class teacher planned her best session when she invited parents in to help to make books about their children. This session was very productive: children chatted about their own photographs and quickly recorded their ideas using writing and pictures, while others selected different activities for themselves. This resulted in sustained concentration and appropriate learning.
28. The quality of teaching and learning in the lessons seen at Key Stage 1 was good and there was no unsatisfactory teaching. Fourteen lessons were seen and of these, 12 were good or better and two were satisfactory. This shows good progress since the last inspection when teaching was satisfactory. Furthermore, the range and challenge for more able pupils have improved. At the time of the last inspection, lessons in art and design, and design and technology were not seen and no

judgement was made about teaching. However, in this inspection, teaching in design and technology is judged to be unsatisfactory. The weaknesses in art and design, and design and technology are a result of insufficient challenge and progression in the development of skills and knowledge and this has resulted in lower than average standards. The quality of teaching and learning is good in English, mathematics, science, physical education and music. In the remaining subjects, teaching is satisfactory.

29. In Year 1, teaching is good. In Year 2, teaching is a significant strength of the school as seven out of the eight lessons were good and of these, two were very good in physical education and science. In both of these very good lessons, there was very good pace, very good use of time and a wide range and use of practical resources. Moreover, the planning showed good links to previous work, good knowledge of the subject and challenges for all abilities. As a result, pupils understood exactly what they were doing, concentrated very well and learnt quickly about different ways of sorting textures in their scientific investigations. In physical education, control and co-ordination of ball skills improved quickly and resulted in very good learning.
30. At Key Stage 2, the quality of teaching and learning is satisfactory as at the last inspection. Twenty-one lessons were observed. One lesson was unsatisfactory in science. Seven lessons were satisfactory and 13 lessons were good or better. Two lessons were very good. The amount of good and very good teaching has improved. As at Key Stage 1, the teaching and learning in design and technology were unsatisfactory. At the time of the last inspection, no clear judgement was made. Progress in developing teaching in this subject is unsatisfactory. Teaching is satisfactory in English, science, geography, history, art and design, information and communication technology and religious education. Teaching is good in mathematics, physical education and music.
31. In Year 3, teaching is satisfactory. The one unsatisfactory science lesson was a result of work not being resourced well enough or explained clearly. As a result, the pace of progress for over half of the class was too slow. Learning was unsatisfactory because pupils did not make sufficient gains in their knowledge about how to measure the strength of magnets. In Year 4, the best teaching was in a very good netball lesson. This lesson was well planned, with good pace and challenge to develop skills of throwing and catching with accuracy. The teacher evaluated pupils' efforts very well and this resulted in very good learning. Good teaching was also evident in music and English. In the good literacy lesson about 'Ellis and The Hummick', the teacher was enthusiastic which motivated pupils to listen attentively. This resulted in most pupils being able to replace different adjectives although the amount of written work produced was barely average as pupils are not skilled in writing at length. The presentation of written work in English is not consistently high throughout the whole school and this is a weakness.
32. Teaching in Key Stage 2 is strongest in English in the Year 5/6 class. This teacher is better at planning and teaching a range of challenging work. In a very good lesson using extracts from 'The Suitcase Kid', the teacher showed very good subject knowledge by very good use of questions to develop pupils' understanding of inference and deduction and of how to use flashbacks when retelling the story. More able pupils were well challenged and learning was very good for all abilities. Furthermore, this was supported by revision homework on prefixes and suffixes. This feature shows how the school has been successful in following up homework, which was noted as a weakness in 1999.
33. Teaching is stronger at Key Stage 1 than at Key Stage 2. This is largely because these teachers have a good knowledge and understanding of how pupils learn. Moreover, they are successful in helping them to make quick progress as their style of questioning is challenging. They are also better at matching their work to the needs of their whole class. At Key Stage 2, all classes have a mixture of two age groups and occasionally, work is not always well matched to the needs of the different year groups and there is a lack of continuity in their learning in several subjects. For example, the Year 5 pupils in one class are challenged in their knowledge about forces, while those in the other class are working on vibration. Nevertheless, there has been improvement in setting work for different abilities since the last inspection and this is especially successful in mathematics, but still not consistent in English. The management of pupils is equally good at both key stages and this is a significant strength.
34. The use of support staff is satisfactory and sometimes good. Pupils apply satisfactory physical and creative effort in their work, although links with art are weaker. Pupils show satisfactory interest and

concentration in their work, although, this is better at Key Stage 1. At Key Stage 2, opportunities for independent learning are under developed. Overall, there are few visits and visitors to enrich pupils' learning and no residential trip. Relationships between teachers and pupils are good. Behaviour is good and well managed. This has been maintained well since the last inspection. However, occasionally, the noise level is too high.

35. Across the school, teaching is satisfactory overall in information and communication technology, although good teaching was observed during the inspection. However, the impact of the new curricular planning and time allocation for the subject has not had an effect on attainment and this is why pupils are achieving lower than average standards. Links between information and communication technology and other subjects are underdeveloped. The library is not supporting learning effectively enough. It is drab, uninviting and poorly organised. Numeracy is taught well as teachers make good use of questioning to develop mental arithmetic. There is challenge, good planning and organisation, which result in good learning for all abilities. Literacy is taught satisfactorily. A particular strength of teaching is pupils' understanding of what they are learning in lessons and this shows good development since 1999. Currently, there is no whole school marking policy and marking is not always helpful in identifying and encouraging pupils to overcome difficulties and extend learning. Overall, the use of assessment is unsatisfactory and is expanded upon in section five of this report. This is already recognised by the school as a key area for development.
36. Very few pupils come from ethnic minority families. Pupils speak English fluently and have full access to the curriculum. They receive the same quality of teaching as other pupils in the school.
37. The quality of teaching for pupils with special educational needs is good and promotes a similar rate of progress for these pupils. This judgement is an improvement on the findings of the last OFSTED inspection when the quality of teaching and provision for pupils with special educational needs was sound overall. In a school with a relatively high proportion of pupils with special educational needs, all class teachers and support assistants show a good awareness of this provision. Teachers' planning is well-focussed on pupils' needs and the targets on individual education plans are clear and realistic. Targets are planned in small, achievable steps to encourage these pupils and to give them confidence. Consequently, pupils make good progress in their learning of basic skills. Learning support assistants provide good support in lessons, actively taking part in whole class sessions and in individual or small group activities, especially in the literacy and numeracy hours. Teachers' planning folders contain copies of their pupils' individual education plans and they are used well to plan differentiated lessons and activities for these pupils. They are also well involved in the formulation of the plans in consultation with the special educational needs co-ordinator.
38. The teaching of gifted, able and talented pupils is good overall. Although there is a written policy, it has not been adopted by staff. There is one pupil in Year 2 who is especially gifted in mathematics. Work is well planned for his needs and he achieves well for his ability. In music, able and talented pupils are given opportunities to enrich their learning in lessons and through extracurricular activities. In physical education, talented pupils develop their skills appropriately, although links with the local community sports activities are underdeveloped.

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

39. Overall, the school provides a satisfactory range of appropriate learning opportunities that promote its aims effectively. The curriculum is generally broad and balanced and relevant to the appropriate age groups in the school. It includes all subjects of the National Curriculum, and religious education is taught according to the locally agreed syllabus. All statutory requirements are fully met, including the requirement for a daily act of collective worship. The key issues for action identified in the previous inspection concerning curricular provision for children under five and the provision of clear details in schemes of work and curricular plans about the level of work expected to be achieved by pupils of different ages, particularly those with higher attainment, have been addressed. However, curricular planning for mixed-age group classes is still not wide enough to give all pupils equal access to the full curriculum especially in subjects other than English, mathematics and science. Total weekly teaching time is adequate to meet the needs of the full curriculum although time allocation for science in Key Stage 2 is below the lower national recommendation.

40. The school places a strong emphasis on the teaching of English and mathematics. The National Literacy Strategy and National Numeracy Strategy have been satisfactorily implemented and teachers are confident when managing them. The introduction of the strategies has had an impact on raising standards in literacy and numeracy in the school, but an overall improvement in standards is limited, due to the high proportion of pupils with special educational needs in some year groups of the school. Policies have been introduced for all subjects and schemes of work are in place but some of these, notably science do not ensure that, for example, Year 5 pupils in two classes have the opportunity to cover the same work. Some of the policy documents are 'heavyweight' and insufficiently focused to provide useful guidance for staff.
41. The teacher's planning in the Foundation Stage shows that considerable effort is going into improving it. Overall, since the last inspection, improvement is good as there were many significant weaknesses in the curriculum. Pupils are now receiving a broadly balanced curriculum and the range of activities is more successful in developing their imagination and creativity than in 1999. However, weaknesses still exist. Opportunities for children to express themselves freely, take the initiative and make decisions are underdeveloped. The balance between structured and independent learning is unequal.
42. Curricular provision for pupils with special educational needs is good. There is good provision made for pupils' literacy support in Years 3 and 4 through the additional literacy support programme and in classrooms where learning support assistants work with individual pupils or with small groups. Targets on Individual education plans are arranged by consultation between the special educational needs co-ordinator, teachers, parents and pupils and are reviewed regularly. Targets include goals for literacy, numeracy and behaviour. These targets are prepared in small, achievable steps in order to give pupils the confidence to succeed. The needs of pupils with statements of special educational need are well met and the annual reviews at the end of the year provide a good focus for further improvement. Pupils with special educational needs are supported in ability groups in the classroom for most of their work to ensure that they receive appropriate support. There is some withdrawal for extra tuition, in particular, for additional literacy support. This withdrawal compromises the pupils' entitlement to the whole curriculum. There is concern by some parents about the provision for pupils with special educational needs, but lesson observations and interviews with teachers, including the co-ordinator, indicate good provision in the school.
43. The school provides good enrichment through its extra-curricular provision for both infant and junior pupils. A soccer club is provided as an after school activity for the older pupils, boys and girls, and is also open to infants. Pupils from Years 3 to 6 are eligible for the netball club and there is a dance club for pupils of all age groups. All age groups are given the opportunity to swim in the school's own swimming pool during the summer term. Year 6 have extra swimming tuition at the local pool to ensure that all pupils are able to swim by the time they leave for secondary education. Competitive sporting events including, soccer, cricket and netball are arranged and the school participates in an athletics meeting with neighbouring schools in the summer. Apart from sporting provision, a computer club is planned for Year 6 pupils. There is also a choir meeting and recorder tuition provided during lunch times. Most staff are concerned with these extra-curricular activities, either organising or assisting, and invaluable help is given by parents and friends of the school. No residential trip is arranged but the older pupils visit the Arethusa Centre for a day to participate in outdoor activities.
44. The school provides equality of opportunity and access for the majority of pupils. However, due to the mixed-age classes and planning, Key Stage 2 pupils are not getting equal opportunity in science. In the junior classes, some pupils do not have equal opportunity in art and design, science, geography, design and technology and religious education lessons, when they are taken out for their additional literacy support sessions. Occasionally, the same pupils miss the same subject for a couple of weeks although it is the first half-hour and then the second.
45. Provision for pupils' personal, social and health education is satisfactory overall. The majority of these aspects are discussed in assemblies, science and physical education lessons. This provision is closely linked to moral and behaviour issues and is introduced by discussion in lessons by the very youngest pupils. In a Year 1 lesson, the question of 'keeping your hands and feet to yourself' was discussed after a session on clean hands. Most pupils had a good idea of the times that hands should be clean and the reasons why. They could also explain why it was sensible to

keep their hands and feet to themselves. A sex education policy is in place and is taught as part of the broader health education topic and includes a strong emphasis on relationships. Parents are invited to view any videos before they are shown to the pupils and a 'mothers and daughters' evening is planned.

46. Links with the local community are also satisfactory and they make a positive contribution to pupils' experience and learning. Much of the fieldwork in geography, history and science is carried out in the local village and environment. There are strong links with the village church, the vicar visits the school frequently to participate in school assemblies and pupils of all ages visit the church as part of their history and religious education studies. Members of the local community help in the school, for example, when six mothers were invited to assist in the Reception class for an afternoon. Volunteers come into school to help with cooking, reading activities, and art and assist with outside visits and trips. The opportunity for pupils to use the Internet to link with other communities is under developed. Satisfactory links and relationships with local secondary schools help significantly when pupils transfer from one stage of education to another. There are also satisfactory links with the pre-school group and between the school and neighbouring primary schools.
47. Pupils' good behaviour and their positive attitudes to their work are founded on the school's good provision, overall, for their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. In the previous OFSTED inspection pupils' moral and social development was found to be good, which is the same judgement as this inspection. However, spiritual and cultural development is judged to be satisfactory, and this is an improvement on the last inspection when both of these aspects were judged to be unsatisfactory.
48. Provision for pupils' spiritual development is satisfactory. Daily acts of worship in the school are an integral part of pupils' spiritual development and follow themes such as 'community' and 'being special'. Worship is mainly Christian but other major religions and cultural events like the Chinese New Year are acknowledged and reinforced in religious education lessons. The provision of appropriate, quiet music when pupils enter and leave the hall for assemblies gives a calm, spiritual ethos to the proceedings. The sensitive leadership of assemblies by the headteacher and vicar ensures a reverent, thoughtful atmosphere to which pupils respond well. This spiritual atmosphere, aided by a single candle, give all pupils the opportunity to reflect on their own life and the lives and values of others. Observations of lessons in all areas of the curriculum indicate that teachers value pupils' ideas, for example, in the Year 34 geography lesson on traffic pollution. Some sense of 'awe' and 'wonder' was observed in class lessons but generally the school does not always use opportunities for pupils to reflect in subjects such as art, music, literature and science.
49. The school makes good provision for pupils' moral development. There are clear expectations of high standards of behaviour to which nearly all pupils respond. This good behaviour is based on courtesy and consideration for others and was very apparent during the inspection by pupils of all age groups opening doors politely and helping the very youngest children in the dining hall at lunchtime. Positive attitudes are promoted by all members of staff who praise and encourage pupils for kindness, care and hard work. Pupils, of all ages, have a clear understanding of right and wrong appropriate to their age. A constructive system of rewards and merit marks underpins the rules of behaviour. All staff, teaching and non-teaching are good role models for pupils and the consistent and caring way in which they deal with issues actively promotes pupils' appreciation of tolerance and fair play. Moral aspects are taught well and result in pupils showing responsibility towards property and their school and local environment.
50. There is good provision for pupils' social development and nearly all parents agree that the school is helping their children to become mature and responsible. Relationships between pupils and between pupils and adults are good and all adults in the school provide an open and friendly atmosphere, which encourages the development of pupils' social skills effectively. Pupils with special educational needs are integrated well into a happy and caring community and into all the activities offered by the school. Appropriate opportunities are provided in lessons for pupils to work collaboratively with a partner or in small and larger groups and to share apparatus and equipment. Pupils are given responsibility for classroom tasks like taking registers to the office and, in the upper part of the juniors, pupils use their initiative to take responsibility for looking after younger ones without being prompted. Pupils are encouraged to take part in fundraising concerns like Red Nose

day. They also donate food to the Salvation Army Hostel at harvest time and produce 'shoe boxes' for children in Eastern Europe at Christmas.

51. The school's cultural provision for pupils is satisfactory, which is an improvement on the previous OFSTED inspection when provision was unsatisfactory. Western culture is promoted appropriately through curriculum subjects like literacy, history, art and music. Year 1 pupils have listened to stories from other cultures including stories from China, Africa, India, Australia and the Caribbean. Year 2 are looking at clothes from Victorian times and have looked at the paintings of Monet. They have also produced work about the island of Sark from the viewpoint of transport in their geography work. Older pupils in the school have looked at the life and times of Queen Victoria and famous people in history like Dr. Barnardo, Logie Baird, Nelson, Florence Nightingale and Helen Keller. The multicultural aspect of this provision is relatively under developed but Year 5/6 have produced a display on the Chinese New Year and have experienced African music with a visitor from Africa. Year 4/5 linked a talk from a visitor from Ghana to learning about the climate, weather, population and languages of that country. Apart from field trips to the immediate locality, very few educational visits have taken place, partly due to the cost, but it is planned to introduce a visit and/or visitor each half-term in the near future.
52. In the Foundation Stage, the provision for spiritual development is satisfactory, but there are many missed opportunities to help children to experience a sense of wonder in their learning. Moral development is good but social development is weaker. Cultural development is satisfactory and it was good to see children playing with dolls of different ethnicities. However, there are no home corner play resources from different cultures.
53. The school ensures that all pupils with special educational needs take a full part in all aspects of school life including, outside visits, assemblies and extra curricular activities in order to enhance their social, spiritual and cultural knowledge, understanding and skills.

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL CARE FOR ITS PUPILS?

54. The school provides good care for its pupils. The school's aims are to provide a caring, stimulating and supportive environment, where pupils can achieve their full potential. The ethos supports this by providing consistently high quality support and guidance for all pupils. Staff know children and their families well. The health and safety and welfare of pupils in the Foundation Stage are satisfactory. Staff show good care towards children's personal needs. Access to the outside play area is barely satisfactory and this inhibits independent learning.
55. Pupils are supervised by an adequate number of adults during break and lunchtimes. Difficulties arise if a midday supervisor is required to accompany a sick child indoors, resulting in insufficient supervision in the playgrounds. Outside agencies, for example, the educational welfare officer and school nurse give good support to the school.
56. The policy for health and safety is satisfactory but it is too detailed and does not enable supply staff and other visitors to access the information easily. The acting headteacher is the responsible officer. There is a health and safety governor and a risk audit has taken place. The school deals effectively with any hazards found on site. However, the siting of the door to the new information technology suite is unsafe. It is solid and opens onto a walking area.
57. There are members of staff qualified in first aid and an accident book is kept. There is no medical room and no provision for anyone to lie down. Anyone who is unwell is cared for in the foyer, which is not appropriate. Fire drills take place each half term; fire and electrical equipment is checked regularly and records are kept of these checks. The school has not adopted a policy for personal, social and health education, and is currently adapting the Medway policy. The practice is good and takes place through assemblies and across the curriculum, a new social profile has been set up, to provide a termly record of pupils' social progress. Sex education is taught through the health education topic.
58. The policy for child protection is good, and the acting headteacher is the responsible officer. All staff have had training in the past year, and they are aware of the need for vigilance and of the school's arrangements. This information is not included in the staff information documents.

59. Although the policy for attendance is unsatisfactory, the practice has been changed this term and is now satisfactory. Registers are maintained according to statutory requirements and a very proactive approach to lateness and absence is now in place. The secretary checks the registers regularly, telephones to check reasons for absence and notifies the headteacher. The educational welfare officer is then able to follow up any problems quickly. Parents are reminded of the need to send their children to school regularly in newsletters and in the school prospectus.
60. Behaviour is managed well, with few sanctions but many rewards, including a merit system, a 'star gallery' and assembly. There are good policies dealing with behaviour and with bullying. No racial intolerance or social exclusion was seen during the inspection.
61. The standards of care are good and have a positive influence on pupils' attainment. The inspection team agrees with the parents' comments that this is a caring, happy school with supportive staff and pupils who respect each other. There were no negative comments.
62. There has been little change since the previous inspection when care for pupils was good. Although efforts have been made to improve pupils' personal responsibility and independence, these areas remain insufficiently developed.
63. The care and support of pupils with special educational needs are good. Teachers and support assistants know the pupils with whom they work, well. There are good procedures for the identification of pupils with special educational needs beginning with baseline assessment in the Reception class. Their needs are quickly identified and appropriate arrangements are made for the regular review of their progress. There is good liaison with outside agencies including the educational psychologist, speech and language therapist, welfare officer and behaviour specialist who provide valuable support. Good, thorough records are kept of pupils' progress in relation to their targets although there is little evidence in the special educational needs register of the movement of pupils off the special educational needs register. A gifted pupil in mathematics in Year 2 is supported well by the class teacher providing appropriate extension work in the subject. Booster classes have recently been provided to support pupils in literacy and numeracy.
64. The procedures for, and the use of, assessment are underdeveloped and are unsatisfactory. This judgement is similar to the findings of the school's last OFSTED inspection. Very soon after children enter the school at the Foundation Stage, they are assessed using a procedure specifically designed for this age range.
65. In the Foundation Stage, there are weaknesses in the assessment and monitoring of children's learning. This is largely because learning objectives are not broken down into small easily measurable steps and, therefore, it is not possible for staff to use these to assess the children's learning. As a result, assessment is not being used sufficiently well to guide lesson planning. Furthermore, the recording of anecdotal observations is too limited. Information from assessments when children start school is not used effectively. This is because it is not used quickly enough to set specific targets for raising children's attainment.
66. The school recognises that assessment is inconsistent across the school and that teachers are not using assessment sufficiently to inform planning. Assessment is to be the main focus in the summer term. An assessment policy is in place, and is due to be reviewed in the summer term 2001. Before the end of 1999, assessment was inconsistent and work was started in 2000 to address this issue. Data from the statutory end of key stage test results for pupils in Years 2 and 6 were analysed to provide the school with useful information to influence future planning. Targets are set for individual pupils, which are agreed with pupils and their parents and are reviewed each half term. From January 2001, the newly appointed acting headteacher recognised the school's inconsistent approach to assessment and to address this, introduced a new daily planning sheet. This identifies three National Curriculum levels for teaching and learning objectives to match the National Curriculum levels. The school has recently introduced new tracking sheets to show clearly if pupils are making sufficient progress to meet their targets. However, it is too early for this to have made an impact on pupils' learning and attainment. A new standardised assessment cycle is to be implemented, starting in the summer term 2001, which provides a consistent approach for on-going

assessment to support the next stage of pupils' learning. Procedures for monitoring and supporting pupils' personal development are in place, but are not in operation.

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL WORK IN PARTNERSHIP WITH PARENTS?

67. The effectiveness of the school's link with parents is satisfactory. Parents are actively encouraged to support their children's learning and many do so well. Some parents give good help in school, with reading and craft activities, and their help is valued. Many say that their children are happy and enjoy school, and that they themselves welcome the school's contacts with the village and with the Church. There is a home school agreement and reading diaries, and these are beginning to be used effectively as contact books.
68. The quality of information provided is satisfactory. There is an informal time each week after school when staff are available to discuss problems. There are two consultation evenings each year and targets are set during the term. Parents in Reception can work with their children on one afternoon each week, and they appreciate this. There are regular newsletters. The annual reports are too general; they contain information about the knowledge taught and only rarely give guidance on the ways in which children can improve. There is no opportunity for parental comment. The school prospectus and the governors' Annual Report to parents are clear and informative. The satisfactory links support and encourage pupils' learning.
69. There is a small but active Parent Teacher Association which holds regular and successful events, which are both social occasions and for fund raising. The money raised provides a valuable extra source of income. Money has been set aside to improve the equipment for activities in the playground. Although parents are reluctant to join the committee, many will help out with events and others support them.
70. Children coming into school are effectively supported. There are meetings with the playgroup and visits with parents, who can spend an afternoon each week with their children, once they start school. Links with the parents and carers are a particular strength of the work in the Foundation Stage. They make a strong contribution to learning. Communication is good overall, although the information in the prospectus about this age group is not clear. Although pupils transfer to a number of different secondary schools, there are sound links with them. They include visits and the passing on of curricular information.
71. Some parents had concerns about homework. The inspection team found that provision for homework is variable and lacks consistency across the school although procedures are now in place. There were also concerns about the information they receive about their children's progress. Although there is an informal meeting after school each week, working parents cannot attend this. They feel that targets are not sufficiently detailed, that annual reports are too general and do not give enough information and that the only way to find out about their children's progress is to ask. The inspection agrees with these concerns. They also talked about the lack of opportunity for pupils to take part in educational visits. The acting headteacher has already planned that each year group will have at least one visit or visitor each half term.
72. Parents were pleased with the sense of community which the school fosters and appreciate the link meeting in the Reception class. These areas were found to be positive by the inspection team.
73. There is little difference from the findings of the previous inspection when many areas were judged to be positive but communication and the lack of information available about children's progress were judged to be a weakness.
74. Parents of pupils with special educational needs are involved appropriately in their child's support through annual reviews, individual education plans, end of year reports and regular parents' evenings. All individual education plans have been signed by the parents of the pupils concerned. They are informed as soon as the school has concerns and are consulted in later procedures. Some parents expressed concern about the role of the coordinator for special educational needs and the lack of opportunity to meet with her and felt that support for pupils with special educational needs was

limited. The findings of the inspection are that parents are kept aware of the school's targets for their child by involvement in their individual education plans and parents' meetings with the class teacher. Part of the co-ordinator's non contact time is set aside for consultation with parents and interviews can be arranged at other times if requested. This provision by the school is not mentioned in the school prospectus to give all parents further information about the parents' and school's role in the education of pupils with special educational needs.

HOW WELL IS THE SCHOOL LED AND MANAGED?

75. The acting headteacher leads and manages the school well. Overall, the leadership and management of the school provided by the headteacher and other key staff are judged satisfactory because the roles of the curriculum co-ordinators are insufficiently developed. The headteacher is newly appointed and in her first term at the school. During the past year, the school had a senior adviser from the Local Education Authority as an acting head. Before this inspection a permanent headteacher was appointed and will take up post in September. The present headteacher is well supported by staff, especially the deputy headteacher, and parents. The purposeful development of the school is clearly indicated by the satisfactory improvement, which the school has made since it was last inspected in January 1999. Since the previous permanent headteacher left in December 1999, the school has now made sufficient improvement to take it out of serious weaknesses. This improvement has taken place in the last three and a half terms when acting headteachers were in post. During this time, the Local Education Authority gave significant support to the school and continues to do so. The key issues for action have been addressed successfully in most areas and partially in assessment practice and in the quality of provision for the Foundation Stage. Since that inspection, standards have risen in English, mathematics and science, as shown by the 2000 national test results at Key Stage 2. However, results this year are unlikely to be as good due to high pupil mobility and the incidence of pupils with special educational needs in the current Year 6 group. There is a shared commitment evident in the school to enable pupils to achieve the best of which they are capable and this gives the school a satisfactory capacity to continue to improve under the present leadership. It also means that the school's aims are met. The school has a good ethos.
76. The acting headteacher is well supported by the deputy headteacher who is increasingly assuming a 'real' management role within the school. This has strengthened the partnership and better utilised the deputy's talents and skills. The role of teachers with curricular responsibilities is still not sufficiently developed. At present, there are no regular opportunities for them to monitor their subject or to share good practice with their colleagues. They also lack some understanding about their management roles and responsibilities but this is being addressed by the acting headteacher through in-service training. The monitoring, evaluation and development of teaching by the acting headteacher are strong and are having a positive impact on raising standards at the school.
77. Assessment practice is inconsistent, including marking, and has been identified as a key area for development by the school. This is especially crucial as there is an above average pupil mobility factor at this school. There are good procedures in place for the induction of new and newly qualified teachers to the school. Job descriptions are in place, which is an improvement. The school has taken appropriate steps to ensure that performance management procedures are in place to support staff development.
78. In the Foundation Stage, the teaching staff are trying to improve their understanding of this age group. There is a good development programme in place to monitor and support the improvement. Furthermore, this is well supported by additional training and specialist support from within the Local Education Authority and excellent support from a very knowledgeable governor. Since the last inspection, progress in developing the provision for this age group is good. Nevertheless, there is still some way to go before the quality of provision is satisfactory overall.
79. The school has satisfactory links with the playgroup. Transfer arrangements with local secondary schools are also satisfactory. The school works to promote equality of opportunity but some pupils miss important aspects of the curriculum through leaving lessons for extra English or music lessons. It is unclear how this missed curricular time is made up. The development plan is a weighty

document. The previous acting headteacher and governors, as a first step to defining the school's purpose and priorities, devised this version. It has now been further developed and refined by the current acting headteacher to become a more focused user-friendly working document. The latest development plan supports the school's priorities well. The last inspection found the development plan to be too short term, not focused on raising standards and insufficiently evaluative in looking at cost effectiveness.

80. The provision for special educational needs is good. A comprehensive policy is in place and this is especially essential in a school with rising numbers of pupils requiring this provision. The school fully meets the statutory requirements of the Code of Practice for Special Educational Needs. A class teacher has responsibility for the co-ordination of special educational needs for half a day each week. She also has responsibility for the Reception class and a core subject, which is a heavy work-load in a school with a high percentage of pupils with special educational needs. Precise records are kept of all pupils on the register and their progress is tracked well except for notation of their movement on and off the register. A member of the governing body has been delegated to oversee the provision of special educational needs in the school. She is very well informed and spends at least two mornings a week in the school working with special educational needs groups. All funds allocated for pupils with special educational needs are used appropriately and to good effect. Learning support for these pupils is satisfactory. When these assistants are available, they support pupils very well. However, there is not always sufficient support in every classroom, especially for the literacy and numeracy hours, to support fully learning for pupils with special educational needs. Resources are satisfactory and are usually provided in the classrooms where most lessons for the majority of special educational needs pupils takes place.
81. The governing body fulfils its responsibilities well. The governors have an appropriate sub-committee structure that assists them to manage their work effectively. They have a very good understanding of the strengths and weaknesses of the school. Through focused visits and their committees, governors are well informed about the school and they work effectively as 'critical friends'. Relationships with the school are good.
82. Overall, the school monitors its performance well. The acting headteacher is gaining a good knowledge of the school, is addressing the school's weaknesses and is setting appropriate targets for school improvement and curricular planning. Careful financial planning, administration and monitoring of expenditure ensure that the school's resources are well used to promote the pupils' learning. The governing body has successfully managed the deficit budget situation, resulting in a carry forward figure for the first time in some years. The governors oversee all aspects of the school's income and expenditure. The school undertook a financial self-evaluation and has successfully implemented the minor areas for improvement. The day-to-day management of finance is now satisfactory. In order to ensure best value for money, three quotations are obtained when significant expenditure is planned. The school does not fully utilise information and communication technology for administration and for the education of the pupils. The school's administration has recently been reorganised. Criteria to determine how well the money used is spent are not established, although the governors have a draft finance policy in place. The strategic role of governors is good.
83. The staff, who are involved with children in the Foundation Stage are suitably qualified and experienced, but not in that phase of education. They receive regular training and information on national developments that influence this phase of education but training does not have a consistent impact on the quality of teaching, curricular planning and the appropriate provision for this age group. Overall, staffing requirements are met and there are sufficient well-qualified teachers to allow the curriculum to be taught effectively. There are training needs for some support staff and these are being addressed through curriculum co-ordinator's action plans, for example, training in computer skills.
84. Accommodation in the school as a whole is satisfactory although the classroom for the oldest pupils in the school is small, especially to meet the needs of 34 pupils. Storage in the school is limited and makes access to resources for religious education, design and technology, history and geography difficult. The resources for science are stored inappropriately and many items have to be

moved in order to have access to the storage cupboard. The new computer suite has design faults, for example, the door opens outwards into a corridor and a normal sized person would find it difficult to open the top windows. Overall, the accommodation allows the curriculum to be taught effectively. The outside area is well maintained. The secure outdoor play area for children in the Reception class does not allow access directly from the classroom so that it limits children's free-play opportunities. There is no designated medical room. The school uses the accommodation to its fullest extent although opportunities are missed to use the extensive school grounds for science and environmental study work. Previously, there was a pond area for science and environmental work but vandalism ruined the area. The library is not an immediately attractive environment and does not encourage pupils to develop their enthusiasm for reading and books. There are few areas around the school where pupils can read quietly.

85. Learning resources are satisfactory overall, and provide adequately for the curriculum. In English and mathematics, they have been improved to provide for literacy and numeracy teaching. There are a number of outdated and worn copies of books in the library and the book resources in classrooms require improvement. The present range of computers is unsatisfactory and the mismatch of hardware is causing difficulties for the school. In addition to the school's own learning resources, pupils are taken out to enhance their learning to places such as the Heron Centre. However, visits and visitors do not feature sufficiently strongly in the school's provision.

WHAT SHOULD THE SCHOOL DO TO IMPROVE FURTHER?

86. In order to raise standards further, the headteacher, staff and governors should:

(1) Further raise standards of attainment in English and mathematics across the school and science at Key Stage 2 by:

- improving the provision and access to the library;
- improving book areas in classrooms;
- further developing pupils' writing skills and improving the quality of presentation and amount of written work;
- putting a greater focus on developing speaking and listening skills;
- improving the use of literacy and numeracy skills across the curriculum;
- identifying areas of weakness in mathematics and ensuring that pupils have opportunities to revisit those areas;
- ensuring that pupils' knowledge of forces, friction and earth and space is better developed in science;
- making alternative arrangements to ensure that those pupils removed for additional literacy support do not miss half their science lessons on alternate weeks;
- reviewing the time allocated to science teaching;
- Improving the inconsistency in the provision between pupils in mixed age classes.

(Paragraphs 5, 9, 31,33, 40, 84, 85, 91, 92, 94, 98, 99, 101 to 109, 111 to 116, 122, 123, 124, 126)

(2) Improve aspects of provision and the quality of teaching for children in the Foundation Stage by:

- developing the teacher's understanding of the recommended curriculum for children in the Foundation Stage;
- creating opportunities for children aged under five to develop their independence in selecting and pursuing an activity;
- ensuring that teacher's plans reflect the importance of independent learning at the Foundation Stage;
- providing in-service training for early years staff to raise their levels of understanding about best practice;
- providing more first-hand opportunities for exploration and investigation.

(Paragraphs 1, 2, 15, 22,23,24,25, 26, 41,54, 78,83,84, 90,91,92, 93,95,96,97)

(3) Develop assessment procedures and the use of assessment for those subjects where this report indicates they are unsatisfactory;

- clearly identifying in planning the aspects of the curriculum to be assessed;
- using assessment and record keeping to adapt teaching to meet the needs of individuals more effectively;
- developing agreed and consistent procedures for checking the progress of pupils across all subjects;
- using marking procedures and target setting more consistently to encourage pupils to improve their work.

(Paragraphs 2,26,35,64,65,66,77,108,111,112,126,132,135, 136,140,143,144,148,156,161)

(4) Improve the breadth and balance of the curriculum at Key Stage 2 by:

- improving the role of the curriculum co-ordinators so they support colleagues teaching mixed-age classes more effectively;
- ensuring that the curricular organisation for this key stage meets the needs of all pupils;
- ensuring through assessment and tracking that pupils are not missing valuable learning opportunities when taken from the classroom for other lessons;

- having clear plans about how missed lesson time will be made up. (Paragraphs 33,39,40,42, 44,79,122,126)

(5) Raise levels of attainment in information and communication technology, art and design and design and technology by:

- teaching specific skills in all three subjects so pupils are able to apply them more effectively to support their learning;
- further developing the use of information and communication technology in all curriculum areas so that it is better used as a tool for learning;
- working systematically through the schemes of work to ensure that pupils' skills and knowledge in all three subjects are built upon progressively;
- systematic monitoring of curricular planning, teaching and learning by curriculum coordinators to raise standards in the subjects;
- Arranging in-service training for all staff so that they feel more confident about using the new technologies.

(Paragraphs

6,8,10,28,30,35,75,76,95,117,124,127,128,130,131,132,133,135,136,139,143,144,145,146,147,148)

(The school has already identified writing, assessment and information and communication technology as areas for development in its school improvement plan)

OTHER ISSUES WHICH SHOULD BE CONSIDERED BY THE SCHOL

- Address the health and safety issue already reported to the governors and headteacher. (Paragraphs 56 and 84)
- Improve opportunities for independent learning across the school. (Paragraphs 17, 25,26,34, 41,62, 90,96,144)
- Improve the quality of annual reports to parents. (Paragraphs 68 and 71)

PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS

Summary of the sources of evidence for the inspection

Number of lessons observed	45
Number of discussions with staff, governors, other adults and pupils	31

Summary of teaching observed during the inspection

Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
2	9	51	34	4	0	0

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

Information about the school's pupils

Pupils on the school's roll

	Nursery	Y R – Y6
Number of pupils on the school's roll (FTE for part-time pupils)	0	175
Number of full-time pupils known to be eligible for free school meals	0	5

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Special educational needs

	Nursery	Y R – Y6
Number of pupils with statements of special educational needs	0	2
Number of pupils on the school's special educational needs register	0	73

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	31
Pupils who left the school other than at the usual time of leaving	21

Attendance

Authorised absence

	%
School data	5.2
National comparative data	5.2

Unauthorised absence

	%
School data	0
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

Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 1 for the latest reporting year	Year	Boys	Girls	Total
	2000	10	14	24

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		Reading	Writing	Mathematics
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	*	*	*
	Girls	*	*	*
	Total	21	21	22
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	88(78)	88 (65)	92 (65)
	National	84 (82)	85 (83)	[90] (87)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	*	*	*
	Girls	*	*	*
	Total	20	21	17
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	83(65)	88 (57)	71 (52)
	National	84 (82)	88 (86)	88 (87)

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

*Figures omitted as only 10 boys in year group.

Attainment at the end of Key Stage 2

Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 2 for the latest reporting year	Year	Boys	Girls	Total
	2000	11	13	24

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys	7	10	10
	Girls	10	12	13
	Total	17	22	23
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	71(62)	92 (57)	96 (48)
	National	75 (70)	72 (69)	85 (78)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys	5	9	8
	Girls	11	10	11
	Total	16	19	19
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	67(67)	79 (52)	79 (52)
	National	70 (68)	72 (69)	80 (75)

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	2
Indian	0
Pakistani	0
Bangladeshi	0
Chinese	0
White	151
Any other minority ethnic group	0

This table refers to pupils of compulsory school age only.

Exclusions in the last school year

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

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

Teachers and classes

Qualified teachers and classes: YR– Y6

Total number of qualified teachers (FTE)	6.4
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	27:3
Average class size	29.1

Education support staff: YR – Y6

Total number of education support staff	9
Total aggregate hours worked per week	168

Financial information

Financial year	1999/00
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Total income	345531
Total expenditure	327518
Expenditure per pupil	2035
Balance brought forward from previous year	-16034
Balance carried forward to next year	1464

Results of the survey of parents and carers

Questionnaire return rate

Number of questionnaires sent out	175
Number of questionnaires returned	61

Percentage of responses in each category

	Strongly agree	Tend to agree	Tend to disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know
My child likes school.	49	38	11	2	0
My child is making good progress in school.	27	53	17	3	0
Behaviour in the school is good.	23	62	13	2	0
My child gets the right amount of work to do at home.	23	52	18	5	2
The teaching is good.	34	48	7	5	5
I am kept well informed about how my child is getting on.	27	35	30	8	0
I would feel comfortable about approaching the school with questions or a problem.	43	51	5	2	0
The school expects my child to work hard and achieve his or her best.	41	49	7	3	0
The school works closely with parents.	31	33	31	5	0
The school is well led and managed.	21	51	23	5	0
The school is helping my child become mature and responsible.	25	67	8	0	0
The school provides an interesting range of activities outside lessons.	25	38	30	5	2

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

87. There has been good progress in the provision for children in the Foundation Stage since the last inspection. Nevertheless, there are still weaknesses. Teaching is too variable and this is having an impact on children's learning and overall achievement. Teaching and learning in language and communication, and personal, social and emotional development are unsatisfactory. The teaching and learning of physical and creative development, knowledge and understanding of the world and mathematics is satisfactory.
88. Most children enter the Reception class with poorly developed speaking skills, with boys being weaker in this respect than girls. Writing skills are average. Reading is below average. In mathematical understanding, children's knowledge of numbers is broadly average, although boys are stronger than girls, and their ability to use and apply skills is below average. Personal and social development is much lower than average. Children do not show sufficient independence and boys are poor at making relationships. Their physical skills are average. Children's knowledge and understanding of the world are below average. Creative knowledge is well below average, with boys showing significantly weaker skills.
89. By the time children leave the Reception class, they attain lower than average standards overall. They are on track to achieve the Early Learning Goals in most aspects of their work in mathematics, physical development and knowledge and understanding of the world. They make satisfactory progress from their much lower than average starting point. However, they could achieve more, especially in speaking skills and in their personal and creative development.

Personal, social and emotional development

90. Personal and social skills are below average and although there has been some progress, the planning for this development is not challenging enough. Furthermore, a significant number are not on course to achieve the Early Learning Goals for this area of development. This is because teaching shows weaknesses. Staff are not sufficiently skilled in knowing how and when to intervene in children's learning. Furthermore, they do not provide enough opportunities for children to develop independence by helping them to feel confident about what they can achieve. Pupils are making satisfactory progress in developing relationships and sometimes, boys make good progress. They learn to take turns well and overall, their behaviour is good. They are interested in learning, but this is often stifled by over direction from the teacher and lack of time to investigate things for themselves. Adults treat the children and each other with respect and this has resulted in the development of trusting relationships. Equipment and resources are not always easily accessible. For example, the creative area is not well organised and the range of accessible materials limits the development of children's imaginations. They are not confident to try or initiate new ideas and are very reluctant to speak in larger group settings. The planning and organisation of teaching do not take sufficient account of how to develop independence.

Communication, language and literacy

91. By the end of the Reception class, skills in language and communication are below average overall and well below average in speaking. Children enjoy listening to stories and share books with each other. Adults are not always confident about how to talk with children to good effect and this hampers learning. Opportunities are missed to help children clarify their thinking, develop their vocabulary and express their opinions. The 'wallpaper shop' was a good idea, but resources limited discussion. For example, there was no telephone, writing equipment or dressing up clothes. Although children had painted some striped wallpaper patterns, there was no 'making area' in which children could design and make orders for their customers.
92. Children are developing a satisfactory understanding of reading and letter sounds. More able children can read a range of simple words and know all of the letters in the alphabet. They also write simple sentences showing a good understanding of how sounds are grouped together to make words.

However, a high proportion of children are not yet confident in doing this although they can write some letters for themselves. Most are on course, by the end of the year, to be confident in writing their name without help, although a few still need considerable help as they are not skilled at controlling the pencil. Furthermore, writing is not modelled often enough for children in both whole class lessons and in group work activities. The writing area is appropriately resourced, but not always well used.

93. When the acting headteacher is taking the children, learning is good. Her questioning is very clear, lively and fun, with each question showing progressive challenges to children's thinking and learning. For example, the way in which she told the children that they were to be 'detectives' and stick letters together to make the words and together they made: 'the, at, and, of, on and in'. Following this, children made good gains in their learning as they confidently found these words in 'Anna and her multicoloured glasses'. This was then related to writing work, as several children wrote their own version of the story and overall, in this good lesson, children achieved average standards for their age. In an unsatisfactory literacy session, using the same story, the class teacher did not make enough links between the spoken and written word. Furthermore, there were not enough resources to ensure that all children were well challenged in the following group work activities. Overall, the teaching of language skills lacks continuity, pace and challenge and children make unsatisfactory progress.

Mathematical development

94. In mathematical development, children are attaining broadly average standards. Boys and girls achieve similar standards. Overall, their ability to use and apply their knowledge is lower than average. Progress is satisfactory. Numbers are taught satisfactorily and there was some excellent teaching by the headteacher, which resulted in excellent learning about words denoting position. Children are developing a simple understanding about addition and subtraction, can count to 20, and know simple shapes. Their understanding of measurement is underdeveloped and is not well linked to their work in plant growth. Number songs and rhymes were very limited during the inspection and are not supporting learning enough. Children used money in the wallpaper shop and this helped them to become more familiar with coins. However, many opportunities to link mathematical development in the shop were missed, for example, in using shapes, and in developing ordering, counting and measurement work.

Knowledge and understanding of the world

95. Children's knowledge and understanding of the world are broadly average, but skills using information and communication technology resources are poor. Overall, the quality of teaching is satisfactory and leads to satisfactory progress in this area. Children can talk about their own lives and what has happened to them since they were babies. The good links with parents and carers enhance children's learning and good use is made of photographs to develop discussion. Children use construction apparatus with growing confidence. Resources have improved, but there is insufficient small world play. Children make the best of what is available and make up little stories. They plan what they would like to do and think about what they have learnt. However, this is still very teacher directed. Children talk about changes in the growth of plants and have planted different seeds and bulbs for themselves. They know that plants need water to survive. Children use some modelling materials according to the planning, but it was not seen during the inspection. However, there was a display of clay tiles, which children had made earlier. Opportunities for children to design and make things for themselves are limited. They can cut and stick with accuracy and have made some attractive collages of 'The Rainbow Fish' and detailed pictures of their own eyes.

Physical development

96. Attainment in physical development is average and children achieve satisfactorily, although this is variable, as opportunities are missed to develop outside play. The quality of teaching is satisfactory. There has been good progress in developing this area and the resources. Children are aware of how to use the space safely. The planning shows that independent learning is underdeveloped and too often children do not use this area as much as they should. For example, the class teacher used

this area for ten minutes only on the first day of the inspection and although the children practised counting and jumping skills with the teacher, they did not have an opportunity to take part in free choice activities. The acting headteacher used the area well. Her well-organised range of resources resulted in children making decisions for themselves. Good co-ordination and learning resulted as one boy walked on stilts and several other children negotiated cones while riding bicycles and a truck. Children showed sustained concentration, especially at the wet sand tray activity.

Creative development

97. Children attain lower than average standards in their creative work and this shows satisfactory progress from their very low attainment when starting school. The quality of teaching is satisfactory. Children use feathers, sequins and a range of papers for their flower collages. In one session, there was a real sense of wonder as one boy commented about the sequins, "Look, these sparkle and shine and wink at you." This was a very good example of what these children are capable of when given sufficient opportunities to explore things for themselves. Even though the teacher responded kindly to this remark, she did not share this wonder and learning with the other children in this session. In a session, which was led by the acting headteacher, children looked through coloured cellophane. She used animated questions to help children to learn about how the sky changes colour as children looked through them. Occasionally, children mix powder paints for themselves. When painting giraffes, children were not helped to improve paintbrush skills and as a result, children were using them in a scrubbing style. Children do not do enough singing and practical music making. The singing of 'heads, shoulders knees and toes' was not tuneful. Overall, staff are weak at taking on characters in role play and in making this learning fun. Moreover, the lack of appropriate interaction with role play stifles children's learning.

ENGLISH

98. Overall, standards in English are below average for seven and eleven year olds. This represents a decline in standards at Key Stage 1 and similar standards at Key Stage 2 to those reported in the school's last inspection. The findings of this inspection are lower than the results of the 2000 national test results at Key Stage 1 and at Key Stage 2, when compared with all schools nationally. The school's results at both key stages are broadly similar to those found in similar schools. Over the past four years, at Key Stage 1 there has been a decline in standards in reading between 1996 and 1999 and a sharp improvement in 2000. In writing, standards dipped sharply in 1998, but since then there has been a slow improvement. At Key Stage 2, standards in English fell in 1998, but since then there has been a gradual improvement in 1999 and 2000. When compared with similar schools, pupils' results in the national tests in 2000 were average for reading and below average for writing at Key Stage 1 and well below average for English at Key Stage 2. The school has a high mobility rate and there are only sixteen pupils in the present Year 6 with 56 per cent of these pupils on the school's special educational needs register. The school has set the challenging target of 56 per cent for the current Year 6 pupils to reach Level 4 and above in the national tests in 2001. The school has identified pupils' writing as an area of weakness and has made it a main priority for development. Targets for improvement are appropriate. A key issue in the last inspection in 1999 was to raise pupils' attainment in English.
99. All pupils make satisfactory progress from their below average starting point, when they first enter the school, although standards in all aspects of English are still not high enough by the end of Year 6. There is insufficient differentiation in the teaching in the mixed-age classes in Key Stage 2, which is inhibiting pupils' learning and progress. Pupils who have special educational needs make good progress when compared with their previous attainment, especially when they receive well-targeted support in class. The additional literacy programme for some pupils in Years 3 and 4 supports their needs well and is helping to raise their standard of attainment. During the inspection, no differences were found in the attainment and progress of boys and girls.
100. In both key stages, overall standards in speaking and listening are average. Many pupils enter the school with below average levels of spoken language. Pupils in Year 1 are achieving close to average skills in speaking, but their listening skills are weak. They are keen to answer and often call out when they recognise words that rhyme during a literacy lesson. Their listening skills are enhanced well during a music lesson, when pupils listen intently in order to try to recognise which

musical instruments are being played. However, there are a high proportion of pupils who have special educational needs and many are easily distracted. They have difficulty in listening to others even though the teacher is making a consistent effort to get pupils to understand how they should behave in lessons. Pupils in Year 2 listen attentively and most can clearly express their ideas, although most of them have a limited vocabulary. They are aware of the importance of taking turns, which was clearly demonstrated in the literacy lesson when pupils put up their hands and waited their turn before making their suggestions, such as 'hair' and 'hear' for words using the letter strings of 'air', 'are', 'ear' and 'eir'.

101. In Key Stage 2, most pupils have a limited vocabulary and speak in simple sentences. In the Year 3/4 class, when describing 'hair' a pupil spoke about the 'size' instead of the 'length' of hair. When Year 4/5 pupils were asked to imagine themselves as 'Ellis' and explain their feelings and emotions from their first meeting with the imaginary 'Hummick', one described it as 'It feel weird'. Only a few of the most able pupils in Year 6 use a mixture of simple and complex sentence when speaking and in their writing. Many pupils throughout the key stage are diffident when expressing their ideas during whole class work, but are more confident to express their ideas individually or in small groups. This was evident in a Year 5/6 lesson, when pupils were reluctant to express their ideas about what may have preceded events in an extract from 'A Suitcase Kid' by Jacqueline Wilson. However, when some of these pupils read individually to an inspector during the inspection, they animatedly and clearly expressed their views about their enjoyment of reading. Overall, drama is insufficiently developed across the curriculum to extend pupils' speaking and listening skills. However, when it is used, as in the Year 5/6 religious education lesson on Judaism about the importance of the Shabbat meal, pupils' understanding is greatly enhanced and they speak with confidence to the whole class. The whole school productions and sharing assemblies are good incentives to encourage and develop good speaking and listening skills.
102. Overall, standards in reading are below average at both key stages. At all ages, pupils enjoy reading the shared text in the literacy hour, as this gives them access to some aspects of reading which many would have difficulty in reading on their own. In Key Stage 1, pupils handle books with care and are encouraged to take them home regularly to practise their skills. The most able pupils read challenging texts accurately, with good expression and understanding and are attaining above average standards in reading for their age. They willingly express their ideas about what may happen later in the story and can name their favourite author, such as Dick King Smith. Pupils attaining average standards read accurately, but with little expression. The text is simple, lacks challenge and does not help to extend pupils' vocabulary. They do not know what an author is and cannot name a favourite story. Less able pupils make a good attempt to read very repetitive, one line text, but find it difficult to read words out of context. They read simple texts, guessing words by the initial letters and continue to read even when what they are reading does not make sense. Most pupils do not have any favourite authors or stories, although all enjoy listening to stories.
103. Pupils continue to enjoy books in Key Stage 2. In Year 6, the most able pupils read with fluency, accuracy and good expression. They can give a concise summary of events and can predict what they think may happen later in the book. Other pupils in Year 6 are attaining below what is expected of them for their age. They read appropriate books with some hesitancy, although mostly accurately. They employ simple strategies to tackle unfamiliar words, such as splitting the words into syllables. They sometimes misread words, substituting them with words that have a similar meaning and do not recognise this. They understand the main parts of the story and express their preferences for a range of books. Less able pupils enjoy reading books, sometimes choosing to re-read favourite books several times. However, they still misread some words and do not have sufficient strategies to help them decipher unknown text. Most pupils can name a favourite author, such as Roald Dahl, J.K. Rowling and Paul Jennings. Many older pupils lack confidence when reading aloud before their classmates. Research and referencing skills are limited across the key stage. However, younger pupils' learning was extended well, when they used reference books and a computer to find out facts for their 'interview with Alexander Graham Bell' in their history lesson. The enclosed nature of the school library limits pupils' opportunities to browse and extend their research skills.
104. Overall, standards in writing are below average at both key stages. Year 2 pupils show understanding of story structure, but very few write at an appropriate length for their age. The most able pupils use a broad vocabulary; spellings are mostly correct and capital letters and full stops are

often used accurately. A few are starting to use interesting adjectives, such as 'rumbling forest' and 'deep, dark sea' to illustrate their 'sea creature' writing. The less able use a narrow range of words with plausibly correct spellings and, although they are aware of correct punctuation, they do not use this consistently. These two groups of pupils mostly use joined writing and their presentation is usually neat. However, half of Year 2 pupils are on the school's special educational needs register. The less able pupils print their writing, and presentation is often untidy, and lacks punctuation. Although they can spell common words, such as 'I', 'and' 'he' and 'was', most spellings are developmental.

105. All pupils in Year 5/6 class, including the most able pupils, are sufficiently challenged, but this is not consistent across the school. In this class, pupils write in an appropriate range of styles, including stories, newspaper reports and poetry. They sustain concentration well, which enables them to extend their learning. Although approximately one third of the present Year 6 pupils are attaining an above average level for their age, the majority of this year group is achieving below average attainment. The most able pupils present their work neatly, with mainly correct spelling and punctuation. The best writing shows a good command of style and expression. They use complex sentence structure and creative vocabulary. Their writing is organised in a logical sequence. In the Year 5/6 class, pupils studied the story of 'The Little Match Girl' by Charles Dickens and then created their own versions of the story, but written in various styles. The 'newspaper reports' and the 'autobiographies' show great understanding of another's feelings, especially how the little girl felt when standing in the 'cold, bitter wind' or looking through the window at the 'multi-coloured tinsel' in a rich person's house.
106. Many pupils in Key Stage 2 lack the skills and confidence to write extended stories and do not adequately develop their ideas. The analysis of work in Key Stage 2 shows a lack of emphasis on pupils planning, drafting and refining their written work. Also, there is little evidence of paragraphing being taught early enough for pupils to develop this skill, and so enable them to reach higher attainment. These aspects in provision undermine achievement in writing in the school. There is little evidence of pupils discussing and appraising each other's work. Most work is marked, but does not always contain helpful comments on how pupils can improve their work, for example, untidy presentation is often not commented on. A good new initiative is that individual targets, which are regularly reviewed, are set for each pupil. Pupils are responding well to the innovative idea for the whole school to produce an anthology of stories for children in Demelza House Hospice. It is giving pupils a reason to write, and to take pride in their work, and is also enabling them to understand how to structure, sequence and present their writing.
107. Throughout the school, overall standards in literacy are below average. Pupils' lack of literacy skills is having an adverse effect on their attainment in other areas of the curriculum. In subjects such as science, geography and history, pupils' below average attainment in reading and writing results in their having difficulty in clearly expressing their ideas.
108. The quality of teaching and learning in English is good at Key Stage 1, and satisfactory overall at Key Stage 2 with some good features. This shows an improvement in teaching from the previous inspection, when teaching was judged to be satisfactory overall with some good features. Since the previous inspection, there have been a number of changes in staff. The indications are that the improvement in teaching is enabling pupils to make at least satisfactory progress. There are good relationships between staff and pupils, which provide pupils with a very supportive, caring environment for learning. All staff set clear guidelines for acceptable behaviour and pupils respond positively. Staff realise the need to raise pupils' attainment in English and language is a high priority in the school. Teachers use correct terminology well, such as similes, alliteration and anthology, which enables pupils to further their knowledge and understanding of these terms. Teachers confidently manage the literacy hours and have good subject knowledge, which they clearly convey to pupils. All teachers use effective, open-ended questioning, which enables pupils to think clearly before answering. Teachers help pupils to feel successful by praising them for their efforts, which encourages them to sustain concentration and extend their learning. Most teachers clearly explain what pupils are expected to learn within each lesson and use plenary sessions well to reinforce pupils' learning.
109. Strengths in teaching and learning of English across the school were well illustrated in a Year 5/6 lesson, when pupils were asked to discuss an extract from 'A Suitcase Kid' by Jacqueline

Wilson. Through very perceptive questioning, the teacher enabled pupils to explore the underlying meaning and feelings within this story. The teacher's very high expectations of the quality of work she expected from pupils enabled them to feel confident to write their own 'flashback' to add extra impact to the story. This very challenging task engrossed pupils. They enthusiastically set to work to create their own short 'flashback', with some pupils writing in a similar style to the author. They enjoyed the lesson and made very good gains in their understanding of how authors use words to create different moods and atmospheres. This was the result of good subject knowledge clearly conveyed to pupils and the high level of challenge set by the teacher. This stimulating lesson was appropriately challenging and pupils made good progress in their understanding of the use of 'flashbacks' to illustrate points in a story. However, although more able pupils produced high quality writing, most pupils' written work was of below average attainment due to their limited vocabulary and weak spelling skills.

110. In all classes, teachers use effective open-ended questioning to develop pupils' oral and listening skills. They pitch questions at an appropriate level and ensure that all pupils are fully involved, which is helping pupils to become more confident speakers. In Key Stage 1, teachers use every opportunity to help pupils develop confidence in all aspects of English. In a Year 1 lesson, the teacher used the story of 'Cinderella' well to help pupils gain in their understanding of the use of dialogue. The combination of a story, which pupils knew well, her quick fire questioning and the very good use of large flash cards with some dialogue from the story enabled pupils to make good progress in their understanding of dialogue. She inspired pupils and many were so eager to answer that they called out their answers, but the teacher minimised this by reminding them to listen to others, reinforcing their awareness of how to behave and praising those who did so. This resulted in a positive attitude by the majority of pupils all of the time and by others for most of the time. Pupils respected the comments of others and most willingly spoke clearly. This good lesson resulted in pupils making good progress in their oral and listening skills and with their early reading skills.

111. When teaching is satisfactory, teachers use effective questioning, share what pupils are to learn with them and have good relationships, which results in confident, self-assured pupils. In Key Stage 2, the number of pupils is high in each of the mixed-age classes. However, there is insufficient differentiation in the work for all pupils to make sufficient progress to achieve higher attainment and expectations are not always high enough. Also, some work is not marked, which results in pupils being unaware of how well they have achieved or how they can improve their work.

112. The curriculum in English is balanced and meets the requirements of the National Curriculum. The National Literacy Strategy is being implemented satisfactorily. The use of assessment is unsatisfactory, which is similar to the previous inspection when it was judged to be inconsistent. The language policy and scheme of work support teaching and learning well, which is an improvement since the previous inspection, when the policy was judged to be 'out of date' and the school did not have a scheme of work for English. Pupils have appropriate individual targets in literacy to motivate them and give them responsibility for their learning. Information and communication technology is insufficiently used throughout both key stages to support teaching and learning in English. The co-ordinator has been in post for eighteen months and provides good support for staff. She has high expectations, but is also realistic about the challenges facing the school in order to raise pupils' attainment in English. She monitors planning and has undertaken some monitoring of the teaching of English. Learning support assistants provide good support for group work. Resources are overall unsatisfactory in English, and most reading areas in classrooms are not sufficiently stimulating or conducive to browse and enjoy books. Although the school library is situated in a classroom, which is also used for some music lessons, the library area is sterile and the range of books is inadequate for most areas of the curriculum. It is not conducive to support research and study skills, as it does not have any system for pupils to find books easily, such as a Dewey system, a computer or any story tapes. The co-ordinator is fully aware of this and of the need for more books for the library and for each class.

MATHEMATICS

113. The judgement of this inspection is that pupils in Year 2 attain below average standards in mathematics, but there is evidence of average attainment in numeracy by a majority of pupils. This finding is below the result of the latest national assessment tests due mostly to the large number of pupils with special educational needs in the present year group and the low attainment on entry

standards of the cohort. It is also below the findings of the last OFSTED inspection when standards were found to be in line with national expectations. In the latest national assessment tests for seven-year-olds in 2000, the proportion of pupils attaining the national average was above average. This performance was an improvement on the previous year's results when attainment was very low. Pupils' attainment in comparison with pupils in similar schools is below average in the latest tests. Between the years 1997 to 2000, there is a significant difference in performance between boys and girls, with girls out performing the boys. All pupils, including those with special educational needs, make satisfactory progress in this key stage, from a starting point of well below average attainment.

114. Standards in Year 6 are below average. The judgement of this inspection shows a decline from the results of the last national assessment tests. This finding is due to the high number of pupils with special educational needs in the present Year 6, nine pupils out of a group of 16. There has also been a considerable amount of pupil mobility in this year group. Standards have declined since the 1999 inspection. In the tests for eleven-year-olds in 2000, pupils' results in mathematics were well above average both in comparison with national and similar schools. Test results in 2000 show a vast improvement from those in 1999. There was no significant difference between the performance of boys and girls in these test results. Progress, including that for pupils with special educational needs, is good at this key stage. Pupils' attainment is overall unsatisfactory. Performance targets have been set to raise the standards of mathematics in Year 6 and these are appropriately linked to the teacher assessment of this present year group but below that requested by the Local Education Authority.

115. At Key Stage 1 the quality of teaching and learning is good and leads to satisfactory progress for pupils of all abilities. This judgement is an improvement on the last OFSTED inspection when the quality of teaching was satisfactory. In lessons, good quality teaching was observed and most Year 2 pupils are working appropriately within Level 2 of the National Curriculum for mathematics, except for pupils with special educational needs. A small minority of pupils in Year 1 and Year 2 are working at a higher level. Most pupils can count and order numbers up to 100 using their knowledge of place value. They have good mental recall of addition and subtraction facts to ten and are able to choose the correct operation when solving simple problems involving addition and subtraction, sometimes using their fingers. They can identify halves and quarters in shape and halves of numbers to ten but most have difficulty in identifying quarters of numbers. In their work with money, most pupils can work out the change to be received from purchases up to ten pence and their knowledge of coinage up to ten pence is well developed. Most of them are able to identify odd and even numbers either in a pattern or at random. Teachers are well organised and lessons are planned well to the format of the National Numeracy Strategy. In the Year 2 lesson, the teacher introduced the lesson by giving out a homework task to be produced by the end of the week ensuring that it was linked to the week's work in the classroom. When pupils found it difficult to count back in fives the teacher produced a long pole with numbered cards in fives. The cards were gradually removed and the teacher asked, 'What cards are missing?' thus encouraging pupils' learning to identify the gaps. Resources were used very well, including the pupils who participated in a 'doubling' rhyme indicating parts of their body. Ongoing assessment was good in this class, planning contained implications from previous learning and the teacher made notes on the back of lesson plans after each lesson. However, the teacher's initial input to the whole class went on too long resulting in some lack of concentration from pupils and a subsequent slowing down of learning. In the Year 1 lesson, there was a lively pace to the initial mental session, which motivated all pupils to answer questions enthusiastically. However, although the objectives of the lesson were placed on the board they were not referred to during the lesson. Pupils then moved on to work on simple problems using mixed coins. About a third are able to add ten pence, five pence, two and one pence mentally. Pupils, in both classes, are managed well in a quiet, friendly but firm way and this enables pupils of all abilities to maintain good progress in all aspects of mathematics. Support staff are involved well, when available, to support groups of pupils with special educational needs. Pupils are questioned continually, usually with open-ended questions, which results in most of them having a good developing ability to explain their mental strategies to the rest of the class.

116. At Key Stage 2, the quality of teaching and learning is good, overall, and this enables pupils to make satisfactory progress in their learning. This judgement is an improvement on the previous inspection when the quality of teaching and progress were considered to be satisfactory.

Observations of lessons found no teaching less than satisfactory. Teachers' knowledge and understanding of the subject are generally good and all classes are working to the format of the National Numeracy Strategy. Nearly all pupils in Year 6 make good progress and they are working at levels relevant to their age and ability. However, due to the high degree of mobility in this year group and the number of pupils with special educational needs most find the work difficult. Pupils' work is usually neat and well presented and work is marked up-to-date with helpful comments from the teachers. Some pupils in Year 6 have good skills in using their knowledge of place value to multiply and divide by ten, 100 and 1000, but most have difficulty with this, although they can order four figure numbers. Most have good mental recall of the addition and subtraction of two digit numbers and have a good knowledge of multiplication tables to ten. The use of fractions and percentages to describe proportions is under developed for most pupils. In the Year 3/4 lesson observed the teacher shared the objectives of the lesson with the class and made good use of pupils' everyday experiences, for example, using shopping and chocolate to encourage pupils' mental abilities. There was some unnecessary noise during the group and individual work and the teacher did not ensure that all were on task. In the useful plenary session, pupils were encouraged well to talk about any problems that had arisen, giving the rest of the class an opportunity to resolve the problems. Pupils in the Year 4/5 class started a well-paced and challenging lesson by reciting the seven and eight times table and then reciting and clapping equivalent decimal numbers to one. This was a good method of ensuring that all pupils participated and learning was good. Lesson objectives were shared with pupils and they were given good opportunities to work independently moving from counting squares to find the area of a shape to discovering a 'rule'. Extension work was provided for more able pupils, for example, 'there are only six shapes that can be formed with an area of 15 square centimetres, true or false?' In the Year 5/6 lesson, the teacher ensured that all pupils understood the range between 'certain' and 'no chance' before starting the lesson on probability. To encourage pupils' learning, the teacher used examples from pupils' experience and an emphasis was placed on the use of correct mathematical vocabulary. A high proportion of direct teaching was contained in this lesson and the teacher's challenging questioning ensured that all abilities worked to their full capacity. Some Year 6 pupils are reaching a level above that applicable to their age in numeracy but a significant minority are not achieving the average level. Overall standards of numeracy are average. Teachers' planning is generally good and makes good use of support assistants in helping the progress of pupils with special educational needs.

117. The National Numeracy Strategy has been successfully introduced into all classes in both key stages and it is applied effectively. An appropriate emphasis has been placed in all year group classes on mathematical vocabulary, open-ended questioning and mental strategies. Good practical activities are planned by all teachers to stimulate pupils' interest in the subject and develop their learning. The successful implementation of the strategy is improving the investigative skills of pupils of all ages and abilities. The leadership and management of the subject are good and ensure good educational direction for the subject in both key stages. The subject co-ordinator is well qualified and experienced and has produced a policy and scheme of work, which offer guidance to class teachers and support staff. All teaching staff have been trained in the implementation and planning of the National Numeracy Strategy. Class teachers have been monitored in their teaching of the numeracy hour and pupils' work is tracked against teachers' plans. When the numeracy hour was introduced in September 1999, the school was placed, with other schools in the Local Education Authority, to receive 'intensive numeracy support'. Strengths in the management of mathematics include the monitoring and evaluation of the subject's performance and the strategic use of resources. However, the effectiveness of the use of information and communication technology in the subject is still relatively underdeveloped. Learning support assistants are used appropriately and effectively to support pupils with special educational needs in the classrooms. Numeracy 'booster' classes have been introduced into Year 5/6 but the number of pupils on course to reach the average Level 4 at the end of Key Stage 2 is significantly down on last year due to the high number of pupils with special educational needs. There is sound use of numeracy in other areas of the school curriculum. Graphs are used to record pupils' findings in geography and science and in a physical education lesson warm up session, pupils had to turn in clockwise and anti-clockwise directions for 360, 180 and 90 degrees. National Curriculum requirements are met.

SCIENCE

118. In Year 2 standards are average and show improvement on the 2000 teacher assessment results.
119. In 2000, attainment in science in Year 6 was above average when compared nationally and was average compared with similar schools. This shows good improvement on the findings of the last inspection, when attainment was average when compared nationally and below average when compared with similar schools. Trends over time between 1996 and 2000 show below average attainment overall. However, there has been very rapid recent improvement. Boys and girls achieve similar standards.
120. The findings of this inspection show that in Year 6, standards are below average although the quality of learning is satisfactory. This does not represent a decline in achievement, but rather, this is because the proportion of pupils with special educational needs is high. Thus, the proportion of pupils achieving average and above average levels is lower. In all other year groups, pupils attain average standards and, sometimes, this is above average. Pupils are achieving satisfactorily overall, including those with special educational needs.
121. Teaching and learning at Key Stage 1 are good. This is stronger than at Key Stage 2, because work is consistently challenging and well matched to pupils' different abilities. There are no mixed-age classes. The analysis of work showed that pupils have a satisfactory knowledge of scientific enquiry, although work lacks individuality in the style of recording. Pupils are beginning to develop an idea of fair testing. The best work was in developing an alarm using a simple electrical circuit. Here, there were far more individual ideas as the recording sheet allowed pupils to think for themselves and work was not copied. Pupils have a good knowledge of plant and animal habitats. They know that plants need light and water to survive and have a clear knowledge about healthy eating, growth of humans and how to keep fit. Work on forces is not rigorous enough, and it is not identified clearly enough in the new planning document. Teaching of materials in Year 2 was very good. In this lesson, learning was very good as pupils had plenty of opportunity to explore and sort textures for themselves. Work was challenging, especially for more able pupils who used vocabulary such as 'brittle, uneven, opaque and transparent' and then recorded their ideas using simple Venn diagrams. Teaching in Year 1 is good, although writing skills are weak.
122. Teaching and learning at Key Stage 2 are satisfactory. Four lessons were seen and, of these, three were good and one was unsatisfactory. In the weakest lesson, pupils were confused about how to measure the strength of magnets. This was because the teacher had not given the pupils an adequate range of resources and the addition of a Newton force meter confused them further. Nevertheless, Year 3 pupils know about magnetic materials and that, usually, metals containing iron are magnetic. The teacher introduced new learning about alloys well. The Year 4 pupils know about magnetic attraction but are not skilled in explaining repulsion. In this class, 12 pupils miss at least half of their science lesson every other week for additional literacy support and this hampers their learning of science. Scientific investigative work is lower than average in this class, but other areas are broadly average. The recording books are not suitable for science as there is no plain page for drawing. Too much work is copied. The quality of written work is below average and work is not well presented. The links to literacy in this class are not strong enough.
123. In the Year 4/5 class, teaching is good overall. Lessons are well planned and organised so pupils can work in small groups. In the lesson on vibration, the teacher used very focused questioning and demonstration. For example, she showed the pupils how chime bells vibrate. Pupils listened intently and there was a moment of real spirituality as the sound tailed off into the distance. In this lesson, resources were very varied and well organised. This resulted in good 'hands on' investigation. By the end of the lesson, pupils' learning was good. They could explain how polystyrene, salt dough, bubble wrap and other materials could be used to reduce sound, by reducing vibration. Work on forces is less well developed in this class, although knowledge of electricity is broadly average.
124. The teaching and learning in the mixed Year 5/6 class are good overall. There are appropriate links to numeracy and literacy. The recording of work shows appropriate development of investigative

skills, although some work by average and less able pupils is not finished. Pupils are clear about fair testing and have average knowledge of life cycles, nutrition, movement and healthy lifestyles. A few pupils have used information and communication technology to make posters. However, links with this work are poor overall. Pupils' understanding of materials is broadly average in Year 5, but lower in Year 6. They know about the effect of heat in dissolving and melting but their knowledge of condensation is below average. Pupils are not sure about friction and how to make more advanced circuits. Their knowledge of earth and space is lower than average. In a good lesson on comparing the weight of objects in water and in the air, pupils' learning was good. They worked well in groups and used the Newton force meter accurately. They applied good intellectual effort in their work and, by the end of the session, were able to talk simply about up thrust. Good learning resulted from good challenging questioning and strong links to past learning. For example, the teacher said, "What objects would give a zero weight reading in water? Try to look for patterns that you have already discovered and then generalise."

125. Leadership and management are satisfactory. There is a clear understanding of how to develop the subject and appropriate understanding of strengths and weaknesses. The monitoring and evaluation of teaching and pupils' work are underdeveloped. The local environment is used appropriately to support work on forces and life processes. Visits to a bird sanctuary, opportunities for pond dipping and visits to the power station enrich learning

126. Progress since the last inspection is good and there has been an improvement in standards. The challenge for more able pupils is good and shows good improvement on this key issue. The analysis of national tests results has been used to identify strengths and weaknesses in pupils' attainment, but overall, assessment is unsatisfactory. There is some inconsistency in the provision between pupils in mixed-age group classes and this results in some gaps in pupils' knowledge when they change classes. Pupils' knowledge of solids, liquids and forces has improved, especially in the mixed Year 5/6, but this is much weaker for the Year 5 pupils in the other class. The amount of time allocated to science is lower than average. Moreover, the way in which classes organise this time does not make it easy to do in-depth scientific investigations. The subject meets National Curriculum requirements.

ART AND DESIGN

127. During the inspection, it was only possible to observe the teaching of art and design in the Year 3/4 and 5/6 classes due to the school's timetabling and curricular organisation. Judgements are based on this evidence, discussions with teachers and pupils, analysis of art displays around the school and on the school's planning and records. The judgement of this inspection is that pupils attain below average standards by the end of Key Stage 1 and Key Stage 2, which is similar to the judgement made in the school's previous OFSTED inspection report in 1999.

128. From the analysis of pupils' artwork and teachers' planning, the quality of teaching and learning are judged to be satisfactory at Key Stage 1, as pupils enter the key stage with well below average attainment in their creative development. However, overall, the quality of teaching and learning is unsatisfactory at Key Stage 2, even though teaching and learning were satisfactory in the two observed lessons. Overall, pupils, including those with special educational needs, make insufficient progress in Key Stage 2 to raise their standard of attainment in art and design. Few of the teachers are sufficiently confident in their knowledge of the subject to ensure that pupils learn the basic skills of drawing, designing and painting well. There is little evidence of the teaching of different skills and techniques and an insufficient range of stimulating experiences in using a variety of materials and processes to improve pupils' expertise, as they progress through the school. This inspection recognises that the school has linked art and design with its emphasis on attempting to raise the standards of writing across the school by concentrating on observational drawing during art and design lessons this term.

129. Year 1 and 2 pupils make pencil observational drawings of different styles of boots and shoes. Although most are mainly outline drawings and lack detail, a few show good attention to detail, such as sequins on one pair of shoes. Year 2 pupils enjoy mixing paint to create interesting colours as they swirl their brush across the paper. A good feature of pupils' work is the strong link it has with

other subjects. In Year 2, pupils painted 'toys', such as a 'helicopter' and a 'teddy bear' for a 'toy shop', linked with their mathematics. In their art and design lessons, pupils are studying the works of Monet. The teacher's good subject knowledge enables pupils to gain in confidence when using a computer to create their own pictures in the style of Monet. They create a 'castle' and a 'dinosaur' by using a 'spray paint' technique for the background and for the coloured 'body'. Last term, Year 2 pupils used clay to create colourful 'gourds'.

130. As pupils move into the Key Stage 2 classes, there is insufficient teaching of art and design skills and few opportunities for pupils to experience a wide range of media. The lack of teaching of different techniques detracts from pupils' learning of how to refine their skills and, together with their weak hand control, detracts from their finished artwork. Many of their pencil drawings of shoes and musical instruments are immature for their age and there is a lack understanding of how to create proportion of the items. In their work linked with geography and history, Year 3 and 4 pupils' drawings for 'ways of controlling traffic' and 'Queen Victoria's marriage to Prince Albert' are very immature for their age. Pupils in the Year 5/6 class concentrate well, but most have difficulty making their observational pencil drawings of parts of a car. They lack sufficient understanding of the skill of using pencils in various ways to create perspective by different depths of shading. There is insufficient teaching of the different styles and techniques of famous artists from different times and cultures.
131. The analysis of examples of pupils' work, displays and discussions with pupils indicate that pupils have insufficient choices of different media and experiences of a wide range of artwork, which restricts their understanding of art and their creative development. They have very few opportunities to use malleable materials or to create sculptures. There is insufficient teaching of art skills, such as the effects produced by use of differently sized paintbrushes or how to create light and shade or perspective by using pencils in various ways.
132. The coordinator has very good subject knowledge and has worked hard to produce a comprehensive scheme of work, which provides a good structure for teaching and pupils' learning. She has based it on the Qualifications and Curriculum Authority documentation for art and design, but has adapted it to the needs of these pupils and staff. She provides good support for staff. However, at present, all aspects of the scheme of work are not being taught. The coordinator realises the need for staff to plan more effectively to cover all areas of the art and design curriculum in order to raise the standard of pupils' attainment. Overall, resources are adequate, but there are insufficient resources on the work of famous artists. A weakness in art and design is the lack of assessment procedures to gauge pupils' progress and to raise standards.

DESIGN AND TECHNOLOGY

133. Due to timetabling, it was not possible to see any design and technology lessons at either key stage. This is the same as at the last inspection. The judgement, therefore, is based on the scrutiny of planning and pupils' work and discussion with pupils and the co-ordinator. Indications are that pupils make unsatisfactory progress and achieve below average standards in Year 2. In Year 6, standards are also below average. This includes pupils with special educational needs.
134. The analysis of work and discussions with pupils indicate that teaching and learning are unsatisfactory at Key Stage 1. There are insufficient sustained periods of blocked time to enable pupils to make real progress in the subject. In Year 2, pupils plan and use their ideas to make hand puppets from material, and use scissors with developing precision. They design patterns for their puppets and use basic assembly skills to join two parts together. When making paper puppets, pupils show satisfactory joining skills when using paper fasteners. Overall, pupils' skills are not well developed, as shown by the pupils' sewing efforts when joining two pieces of material to make puppets. Pupils made sound evaluations about their hand puppets, including ideas about how to improve their work. They say they enjoy making things. There was no evidence of work in Year 1 on which to make a judgement.
135. The quality of teaching and learning is unsatisfactory at Key Stage 2. Teachers have satisfactory subject knowledge but expectations are too low. There is no agreed method of assessment in the subject to help pupils improve their designs. Pupils say they are keen on design and technology activities. Work is suitably planned and develops progressively. In Year 5/6, pupils

design slippers. They have a satisfactory understanding of the design process as they clarify their ideas well using clearly labelled diagrams. They confidently discuss design features that work well or could be improved. However, the execution of design is less well developed. In Year 3/4, pupils explore the nets of boxes but work is of an unsatisfactory standard as the teacher's expectations are too low.

136. Leadership in the subject is broadly satisfactory. The co-ordinator has satisfactory ideas about how to develop the subject, such as a design and technology week towards the end of the academic year to raise the subject's profile. A sound policy and scheme of work are in place and there is planned monitoring time for the next academic year. However, there is no action plan, thus resulting in slow development of the subject. The co-ordinator has monitored teachers' planning and has given informal support to staff. Assessment procedures are not in place and this is a weakness. Resources, although badly organised, are adequate. The accommodation is satisfactory but storage facilities are unsatisfactory. There has been little discernible improvement in design and technology since the last inspection, although no judgements were made about the subject due to insufficient evidence. Since that inspection, the school's focus has rightly been on raising standards in English, mathematics and science resulting in design and technology being given less priority. Links with other subjects are unclear and the use of information and communication technology is unsatisfactory. The provision for pupils with special educational needs and more able pupils is unsatisfactory overall.

GEOGRAPHY

137. The teaching of geography was only observed in the Year 3/4 class during the inspection due to an alternating timetable with history in the rest of the school. Judgements are based on this observation, an analysis of pupils' work, classroom displays, discussions with pupils and teachers, and on the subject's long and medium term planning. The evidence indicates that pupils reach average standards in both key stages and that their progress and attainment are satisfactory in Year 2 and Year 6. This judgement is in line with the findings of the previous OFSTED inspection when standards were found to be average in both key stages. Pupils with special educational needs make satisfactory progress relevant to their ability and there are no differences in the attainment of boys and girls.

138. The quality of teaching and learning is satisfactory at Key Stage 1, which is the same judgement as that of the school's last inspection. No infant class lessons were observed, but workbooks and folders show that pupils in Year 1 have worked with a plan of the school and its surroundings and have numbered areas of the plan to form a key. Year 2 pupils have progressed from this work to a study of the local area and can distinguish between human and physical features in their locality. They have begun to identify areas on their maps by using simple grid references. In their work on the environment, most pupils of this age are able to explain what they like and dislike about their village and have produced an advertisement extolling the virtues of High Halstow. As pupils in the school come from a wide area, good use is made of their local knowledge.

139. At Key Stage 2, the quality of teaching and learning is also satisfactory. This is similar to the judgement of the last OFSTED inspection. In the Year 3/4 lesson observed, the teacher started with a useful introduction to the lesson by ascertaining pupils' knowledge and understanding of traffic problems from a previous lesson. The lesson was well planned and contained differentiated tasks related to recording their knowledge for two groups, and the formulation of traffic signs for use on the overhead projector for pupils with special educational needs. Two learning assistants supported these pupils well within groups. Pupils were encouraged to answer and explain the ways that traffic affected the environment by the use of appropriate, open-ended questioning. In the discussion on pollution, pupils' interest was stimulated by reference to real life situations, 'Why are there three different kinds of fuel available at the garage when your Mum or Dad fill the car with fuel?' However, the initial whole class discussion was too long and some pupils' concentration and rate of learning began to slow down. The lesson was challenging but only a few pupils were given the opportunity to answer questions. The work analysis in the other year groups indicated other studies on the local environment by Year 4/5 pupils about their travel to school from other areas. This age group had also carried out a study of Ghana in connection with a visitor from that country and linked to an African music workshop. Pupils had worked on the culture of Ghana and compared the climate,

weather and population with this country. Year 5/6 pupils had carried out a considerable amount of work on rivers and could identify the source, mouth, meander, channel and tributaries of various river systems. They had also produced a map illustrating how rivers erode, transport and deposit materials and change the appearance of the landscape. Most pupils are able to use an atlas to recognise and identify the main mountain regions of the British Isles, Europe and the world. There is little evidence of research work being carried out by pupils including the use of information and communication technology.

140. The co-ordination of geography is satisfactory and a useful and comprehensive scheme of work has been produced based on the requirements of the National Curriculum. Statutory requirements for the subject are satisfactorily covered. This scheme has been developed to ensure that pupils do not repeat work due to the mixed age group classes in Key Stage 2. The school has recently opted for a cross-curricular approach to the subject and new planning is due to be implemented. This can be adapted to provide a rolling programme if single age group classes are introduced in the future. Field visits are incorporated into the scheme of work and the local area is used well for field studies. These studies include visits to the local village and visits to a new building development in the locality. However, the facilities a little further afield are not sufficiently used to further pupils' learning skills. The co-ordinator has analysed pupils' work and teachers' planning from workbooks, folders and classroom displays but has had no opportunity to monitor teaching of the subject. Teacher's short term planning is good in the subject but little use is made of assessment information in planning lessons. Resources are generally satisfactory and include a wide collection of aerial photographs and a digital camera, which provide a useful link with information and communication technology.

HISTORY

141. Standards in history are average in Year 2 and Year 6, as at the last inspection. Pupils achieve appropriately for their abilities, including pupils with special educational needs.
142. At Key Stage 1, the quality of teaching and learning is satisfactory. In Year 1, teaching is good. This is because the teacher uses historical evidence and challenging questions. In her lesson about the history of the school, she had many photographs and letters from former teachers, As a result, children could work in twos to evaluate change and compare similarities and differences since the school opened. This resulted in discussions between pupils which was of a higher than average standard of attainment. The samples of pupils' work and teaching in Year 2 show satisfactory teaching overall. The amount of recorded work is limited. Pupils have a growing knowledge of costumes through the ages and can talk about simple timelines for their own lives. However, much of this work relies too heavily on commercially produced worksheets. Moreover, there is not enough use of historical evidence, such as visits and artefacts.
143. At Key Stage 2, the quality of teaching and learning is satisfactory. Pupils confidently learn facts in lessons, but do not exhibit much creative effort in their learning as links with other subjects are underdeveloped, especially between art and design, and design and technology. However, in a Year 3/4 lesson, pupils learnt many facts about Alexander Graham Bell while also making their own telephones and exploring sound in science. The range and quality of written historical work are below average and some pupils have several pieces of unfinished work in their books. Furthermore, work is not marked well enough so that pupils build on their understanding. Pupils are able to talk about life in Tudor times and compare pastimes with the present day, but their learning is not closely linked to good quality visits and visitors to school. They are not able to talk about any aspect of the dissolution of the monasteries, although they have learnt about this topic. Visits in Years 5/6 support learning better. As a result of a visit to The Guildhall Museum, pupils contrast the style of life in the Victorian age very lucidly. They compare the value of tea and coffee by describing the locked caddies with the jars of today. They know about glove stretchers and button hooks and can describe the intricate and delicate detail of the kid gloves. Furthermore, they could talk about Dickens and the first chapter of Great Expectations with sensitivity, as some pupils had visited the graveyard site at Cooling. They have limited knowledge of the World Wars and ancient history.

144. The co-ordinator provides satisfactory leadership. The development plan is good and clearly identifies how the school is hoping to address the organisation of the curriculum so that all pupils have equal opportunities in the mixed-age classes. Monitoring of teaching and pupils' work has not taken place. Procedures for assessment are unsatisfactory and do not show enough development since 1999. Progress in developing the subject since the last inspection is satisfactory as the amount of good teaching has increased at Key Stage 1. Resources are unsatisfactory overall, as are the storage of, and access to, resources. Opportunities to develop independent learning using information and communication technology and the library are weak. The teaching of basic skills is broadly satisfactory, with work on spelling and note taking. However, extension in writing by linking this to the literacy hour is underdeveloped.

INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY

145. Standards are below average in Year 2 and Year 6. This judgement is not as good as the findings of the previous inspection when attainment at both key stages was in line with the national average. Since then the school has re-organised the computer hardware and developed a computer suite. However, this is yet to have a positive impact on standards due to the mismatch of hardware resulting in problems for whole class teaching. In addition to the observation of lessons, discussions took place with pupils and the co-ordinator, and work was scrutinised. Throughout the school, most pupils make satisfactory progress in lessons and show positive attitudes. Pupils are learning effectively for much of the time. Pupils understand what they are doing and the tasks are sufficiently demanding. Pupils collaborate well in the computer suite and demonstrate the good relationships that exist. Attitudes are good in Year 3/4 and a reflection of the good quality of teaching. Pupils, including the more able, make satisfactory progress. Pupils with special educational needs make good progress.

146. The quality of teaching and learning is satisfactory overall at Key Stage 1, with good teaching seen in the one observed lesson. This is based on the clear instructions, which teachers provide, and the way skills are effectively taught. As a result, pupils in Year 2 show a satisfactory level of independence when using computers. For example, when investigating a 'paint' program to create a picture in the style of Monet, they were able to change colours, draw lines, use various paint effects and amend things they had done. Pupils' 'mouse' control skills are not well developed, consequently, it took a long time to produce a finished piece of work. Pupils co-operate well in small groups at the computers; they listen well to each other and show respect for others' work. They are not confident at opening a new document and have difficulty in saving their work. Helpers, whether they are teaching assistants or another teacher, make a limited contribution to pupils' learning because of the lack of knowledge and skills of staff.

147. The quality of teaching and learning is satisfactory overall at Key Stage 2, with good teaching seen in the two lessons observed. Teachers carefully build on the pupils' knowledge and each step in their learning builds on the previous one well so that, by the end of the key stage, pupils are confident in using the applications they have experienced. Much of their confidence stems from having access to a computer at home. They say they are able to use the Internet for research purposes at home. Those with computers at home talk enthusiastically about making posters to persuade you to 'give up smoking' or to continue smoking. They word-process beginnings of stories. At lunchtimes, pupils work in the computer suite and the majority of Year 6 pupils are able to print and save their work. Keyboard skills are less developed and, for much of the time, pupils only use one or two fingers. Year 5/6 pupils word-process work in English although not all are confident to include text and graphics together. Evidence from last year shows that some charts have been used in mathematics. During the autumn term, pupils used the digital camera to print photographs of themselves, some with special effects. Pupils are unable to access the Internet at school due to only two machines being connected. This is directly related to having insufficient equipment and the mismatch of equipment. Pupils use commercial programs to support their learning in mathematics and search for information to support their work in history. In Year 3/4, pupils add speech marks to text, and word-process prayers in religious education. Evidence from last year shows that some pupils confidently used colour and text to make Christmas cards.

148. The subject meets the requirements of the National Curriculum. All aspects of the programme of study are addressed and there is a clear, concise well-structured scheme of work in place. Assessment and methods of recording what pupils have learned are not securely in place. The expenditure on information and communication technology has been well targeted on the computer suite but there is an unsatisfactory ratio of pupils to computers and a mismatch of some hardware. There are additional software needs but the current computer operating system causes many problems for whole class teaching. The time allocated to the subject is satisfactory but pupils are not familiar with computer applications in areas other than mathematics and English. The subject enhances pupils' personal and social development, when they work well in pairs sharing tasks, sensibly discuss which options they will choose and relate positively to peers and adults alike. The subject co-ordinator provides satisfactory leadership through her enthusiasm and determination. The four-year action plan effectively underpins her aim of wanting information and communication technology to be a successful area of the school's curriculum. The subject co-ordinator has undertaken an audit of staff training needs and there are plans to address these. There is currently no monitoring of teaching although informal monitoring with staff through discussion has taken place. Information and communication technology is a key area for development in the school improvement plan. The attached subject governor gives good support to the co-ordinator and school.

MUSIC

149. Standards in music, overall, are average for pupils at seven and eleven years old. This broadly reflects the findings of the school's previous OFSTED inspection. Evidence from this inspection is based on lesson observations, scrutiny of teachers' planning, assemblies and discussions with teachers and pupils. Pupils enjoy their music making and their achievement is sound across the school. Pupils with special educational needs achieve appropriate standards and take a full part in all musical activities.

150. The quality of teaching and learning is good at both key stages, which is an improvement from the previous OFSTED inspection, when they were judged to be satisfactory. Lessons are planned well and prepared with a broad range of musical activities that are suitably challenging. Teachers help pupils to be aware of what they are expected to learn and they accomplish this by sharing the learning objectives with pupils at the start and end of lessons. Key Stage 1 pupils sing a variety of songs tunefully, with good control and enjoy using appropriate actions. They are able to sustain a good rhythm when singing during assemblies. The class teacher makes learning fun for Year 1 pupils and enhances their listening skills, when she asks them to listen carefully and guess which instruments are being played by the learning support assistant, who is hidden from their view. They know the names of various percussion instruments, such as 'tambourine', 'drum' and 'triangle' and that the instruments are made from different materials, such as wood, metal or a combination of these and play them appropriately. Year 2 pupils listen attentively when the teacher plays three notes as a repeating pattern on a xylophone, going up or down the scale. They recognise the repeating patterns and can describe if the music is getting higher or lower. They record this by drawing arrows or dots as symbols for the notes, either pointing up or down to represent the direction of the music. One pupil draws a crochet and a quaver, and knows that these are 'notes', but cannot name them. They enjoy listening to their own voices recorded on tape and refine and improve their performance. The quality of teaching and learning is enhanced by the pupils' interest and good behaviour and because teachers work hard to stimulate pupils and help them to feel successful.

151. The quality of teaching and learning is good at Key Stage 2. Pupils have a good understanding of rhythm and basic musical structure. They sing a wide repertoire of songs from different eras with accurate pitch. In the Year 4-5 class, the teacher is an accomplished pianist and her accompaniment enhances pupils' tuneful singing of 'Oom-pah-pah' and 'I'd do anything'. They maintain a good rhythm with their unaccompanied singing of traditional Victorian 'street cries', such as 'Who will buy my red, red roses?' The teacher creates good links with pupils' history work about the Victorians, when she asks them about the different sorts of Victorian street sellers before getting them to create their own 'street cries'. The teacher's enthusiasm and love of music are clearly conveyed to pupils, which creates an air of excitement and ensures pupils' total involvement in their learning. Before a whole school assembly, an older pupil volunteered to play the piano while pupils walked into the hall. He confidently played a selection of music from memory, such as 'Pachelbel'

and 'Kum by yah'. When the headteacher asked pupils if they would like pre-recorded music or the pianist at the end of the assembly, they requested that he played again for them. A small group of recorder players confidently accompany pupils when they sing the hymn 'Sunday, Monday'. Pupils are able to learn to play recorders during an extra-curricular club, and some pupils have peripatetic music lessons to learn to play the piano and violin, which enhances their knowledge of correct musical notation. During the inspection, pupils listened carefully to classical music, when entering and leaving the hall for assemblies.

152. The subject is well led by the co-ordinator, who provides good support for staff. There is a satisfactory policy for music. The co-ordinator is adapting the Qualifications and Curriculum Authority guidelines for music to the needs of the school. She provides teachers with good support and feels that the new scheme of work for the subject is helping teachers to be more confident in teaching music. There is a good range of resources, including electronic keyboards. Key Stage 2 pupils have opportunities to join the choir and recorder group. Each year, the choir takes part in the Medway Schools Carol Service in Rochester Cathedral and, together with the recorder players, takes part in the Medway Schools' Music Festival in the Central Theatre in Chatham. The choir sings at the harvest and Easter services in the local church. Once a year, Year 5 pupils have the opportunity to join with other local schools to take part in a music day at the local comprehensive school. All pupils are able to take part in the productions at Christmas, which allows every member of the school to enjoy making music. Key Stage 2 pupils take part in the yearly major productions, which are a great success and well supported by parents. Year 6 pupils have a 'leavers' concert, which was an 'Old Time Music Hall' last year. The subject is enhanced by visiting musicians, the African workshop last term and by the yearly visit of a lady, who brings into school a wide variety of instruments, which pupils are encouraged to play. Music makes a good contribution to pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development when they make and reflect on music together, share instruments and take part in musical productions.

PHYSICAL EDUCATION

153. Standards of attainment are average in both key stages. This judgement matches the findings of the previous OFSTED inspection when pupils' attainments matched those expected nationally. In Key Stage 1 and Key Stage 2, pupils make good progress and achieve good standards. Throughout the school, pupils with special educational needs make good progress and reach appropriate standards in relation to their previous levels of attainment. There are no significant differences in the standards achieved by boys and girls.
154. At Key Stage 1, the quality of teaching and learning is good. This judgement is an improvement on that made by the last inspection when only one lesson was observed. In a Year 1 gymnastics lesson, the teacher's planning and management of the class created a positive working atmosphere for pupils of all abilities to practise and refine their gymnastic skills. There was good evidence of the teacher taking note of implications from pupils' previous learning in the planning of this lesson. Pupils showed sound control and co-ordination in their activities when hopping, jumping and skipping. They could change direction smoothly and with control both on and off the apparatus using high and low movements. A variety of musical instruments were used well by the teacher to enhance pupils' performance and to help them decide on a change of movement or direction. The learning support assistant was well deployed during the lesson assessing pupils' performance and making learning fun by using the musical instruments from behind a screen. Year 2 pupils demonstrated a sound developing ability to be able to control and dribble a large ball around a line of cones with their feet in a confined space, the hall. At the beginning of the lesson, the pupils participated in a lively warm-up session but the teacher missed the opportunity to ask pupils the purpose of the warm-up. Pupils were given the opportunity to practise and improve their ball control skills individually and as part of a team, while the teacher and learning support assistant were actively involved in the lesson, demonstrating and promoting good practice of skills. Pupils were managed and organised very well in a confined space. This led to very good behaviour and a keen interest in the activities and a subsequent sound acquisition of ball control skills.
155. At Key Stage 2, the quality of teaching and learning is also good. This judgement cannot be compared with the previous inspection as no lessons were observed in Key Stage 2 at that time. In the Year 4/5 lesson observed, pupils were practising netball tactics by catching and throwing a ball. They then worked in groups of three to develop their defending skills. They were then organised very

well into groups of six to participate in a 'mock' game indicating a good progression of skills. The teacher managed the lesson very well giving clear instructions to ensure that all pupils understood what they were expected to achieve by the end of the lesson and stopping the session at regular intervals to enable pupils to discuss what works and what does not. Pupils were encouraged to work within small and larger groups thus developing their social skills. When questioned by the teacher, no-one remembered what the word, 'sequence' meant. The teacher emphasised the subject vocabulary well by asking pupils the definition of defending and marking. Pupils who were not participating were used to evaluate and discuss how certain aspects of the activities could be improved. In the Year 5/6 lesson, pupils were building individual exercises, such as forward, backward and log rolls, into a short sequence. Although they practised individually, they were then encouraged to work in groups of two or four. A good link with mathematics was performed in the warm up session by pupils jumping clockwise and anti-clockwise in 360 degree and 180 degree turns. Pupils were used well to demonstrate their sequences and those observing were encouraged, and able, to comment constructively on their classmates' performance and what could be improved.

156. The management of the subject is good and the improvement since the last inspection is satisfactory. The subject co-ordinator gives good educational direction to the subject with formal and informal advice to staff as required, although no monitoring of the subject has been possible. A policy for the subject is in place and has recently been updated although there is no mention of health and safety factors. However, lesson observations during the inspection indicated a sound awareness of these factors by all teaching staff. A commercial scheme ensures that all of the requirements of the National Curriculum are covered. All teachers have recently attended a training course which has resulted in the school receiving extra equipment, in particular a variety of balls and small apparatus. Pupils of all ages get the opportunity to swim in the latter part of the summer term as the school has its own small outdoor pool. Further opportunities for swimming are provided for the Year 6 pupils who visit the local swimming pool during the summer term. The Year 6 pupils are on course to be able to swim 25 metres by the time they leave the school. The physical education curriculum is enhanced by a netball club, soccer club and dance club open to pupils from both key stages. These clubs are very well run and supported by parents and friends of the school. The school also participates in soccer, cricket and netball matches with neighbouring schools. An athletics competitive event is organised for local primary schools and Year 6 pupils visit the Arethusa Centre in connection with their outdoor activities curriculum. The school has two adjoining playing fields, hard surfaced areas, a soft surface play area for infant pupils and a large internal hall which all support learning in physical education well. Learning resources are generally good and support curricular provision for the subject. Teachers use a link with literacy well when they discuss the lesson objectives with their classes and introduce new relevant vocabulary. Assessment procedures are unsatisfactory overall. They are used to record pupils' progress across the year groups, but this assessment is not always used for forward planning.

RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

157. Standards in religious education meet the expectations of the locally agreed syllabus in Year 2 and in Year 6. This judgement is the same as that of the previous inspection. It was reported that more able pupils made insufficient progress. This is no longer the case and progress is now satisfactory. As they move through the school, pupils make steady progress in both key stages. Pupils with special educational needs are involved in all class activities and discussions and, with support and encouragement, make satisfactory progress.

158. The quality of teaching and learning is satisfactory at Key Stage 1, which broadly reflects the judgement of the previous inspection. The analysis of work shows that pupils have a sound understanding of some of the traditions and beliefs important to Christians such as Christmas and of Jesus being a special person. They have also looked at simple aspects of world faiths such as Judaism and Hinduism. Teachers create a warm, supportive environment for pupils to think quietly about what they have learned and to develop responses and new ideas. This was shown when Year 1 pupils talked about artefacts they had seen during their visit to the village church. They give reasons for the position of the font, "so everyone can see". Although pupils have a sound understanding about the meaning of the sign of the cross, "shows they're part of God's family", they are less able to compare and contrast signs from other faiths. Pupils know that the Christian ceremonies of baptism, wedding, marriage and burial take place in a church but have a limited understanding about the customs of other faiths.

159. The quality of teaching and learning is satisfactory overall at Key Stage 2, with good teaching and learning in the two lessons seen. By Year 6, pupils have a sound insight into the beliefs, festivals, symbols, traditions and literature of Christianity, Judaism and Hinduism. They learn to appreciate the importance of prayer in the lives of believers as in the Year 5/6 class where, as a result of well-structured and thoughtful teaching, pupils discussed the blessing of the Shabbat meal. Pupils also understand that holy texts, such as the Bible and Torah, contain teachings and moral guidance that are helpful to people in their lives. The teacher used the Torah effectively as a resource to develop and stimulate pupils' learning about the significance of prayer for the Jews.
160. In Key Stage 2, a strength of the teaching and learning of religious education in the school is the way in which teachers create an atmosphere of mutual trust and support in which pupils are unafraid to voice their opinions and share their experiences. "What do you think Jesus looked like and what role did the disciples play in Jesus' life?" asked the Year 4/5 teacher. Apart from the tax collector "who wouldn't be popular", they thought that the "disciples were 12 men who helped Jesus to do his job to heal people". Pupils from different ethnic backgrounds considered the possibility that Jesus may have been black. The class showed sensitivity to this suggestion. In general, pupils of all ages show sensitivity towards others and the world in which they live. They learn to value others' beliefs and ideas and show respect and tolerance towards different faiths. This was evident in a Year 5/6 lesson when pupils discussed why Jews celebrated Saturday as their holy day. They understood why Jews consider 'using energy' is unacceptable on the day of rest so omit shopping and watching television. The lesson helped pupils to identify the similarities and differences between the Christian and Jewish faiths. The use of role-play to 'celebrate' the Shabbat meal enhanced the learning experiences for pupils and promoted understanding. The blessing of the bread and 'wine', the lighting of the Shabbat candles, the saying of prayers and the singing of the hymn enriched pupils' experiences and promoted good learning.
161. The subject is satisfactorily led by the acting headteacher. Resources are adequate although the range is not wide enough. A sound policy supports teaching and learning well although assessment is under developed in the subject. Themes in collective worship are broadly reinforcing topics covered in religious education such as, community. Targets for development are appropriate including reviewing the new scheme of work and taking an audit of resources. Marking is insufficiently evaluative to help pupils improve their work. Literacy skills are developed well, for example, discussion about religious beliefs, listening to, and reading, biblical stories and writing descriptive reports from Abraham's point of view. Apart from the weekly assembly taken by the vicar and visits to the village church, there are few visits or visitors to enrich the curriculum. Visits to the places of worship of other faiths do not feature in the school's curriculum although are planned for the autumn term. However, the school choir does sing in the Medway Schools Carol Service and at the Easter and Harvest church festivals. The school runs a lunchtime 'Fish Club' where, with parental permission, pupils can join the vicar and curate in praising God through song. Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is developed well when they reflect on prayer and study some major religions.