

INSPECTION REPORT

HAWKINGE PRIMARY SCHOOL

Folkestone

LEA: Kent

Unique reference number: 118385

Acting Headteacher: Ms J Dabnor

Reporting inspector: Paul Canham
1353

Dates of inspection: 26th February- 2nd March 2001

Inspection number: 211383

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INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Type of school:	Infant and Junior
School category:	Community
Age range of pupils:	4 – 11 years
Gender of pupils:	Mixed
School address:	Canterbury Road Hawkinge Folkestone Kent
Postcode:	CT18 7BN
Telephone number:	01303 892224
Fax number:	N/A
Appropriate authority:	The governing body
Name of chair of governors:	Mrs G Hardie
Date of previous inspection:	February 1999

INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Team members			Subject responsibilities	Aspect responsibilities
1353	Paul Canham	<i>Registered inspector</i>	Design and technology; Physical education; Science.	The characteristics and effectiveness of the school; The school's results and pupil's achievements; Teaching and learning; Leadership and management.
8991	Pamela Goldsack	<i>Lay inspector</i>		Pupils' attitudes, behaviour and personal development; Pupils' welfare, health and safety; Partnership with parents and carers.
20457	Brian Fletcher	<i>Team inspector</i>	Mathematics; Music.	Quality and range of opportunities for learning.
20864	Maurice Leyland	<i>Team inspector</i>	English; History; Special educational needs.	
	John Linstead	<i>Team inspector</i>	Geography; Equal opportunities.	
22831	Clive Lewis	<i>Team inspector</i>	Art; Information and communication technology; Religious education.	

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PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Hawkinge is larger than most primary schools; currently it caters for 132 boys and 152 girls aged from four to eleven years. The school serves the needs of pupils from a wide diversity of backgrounds. Almost all pupils are white and very few pupils speak English as an additional language. The proportion of pupils eligible for free school meals is similar to the national average. The proportion of pupils with some form of special educational need, including those with statements, is well above average. During both key stages a substantial proportion of pupils leave and others join the school. The attainment of pupils on entry to compulsory education, at the age of five, is broadly average when compared to national expectations, with particular weaknesses in language and literacy skills.

HOW GOOD THE SCHOOL IS

Hawkinge is an improving school which is striving hard to overcome the challenging circumstances in which it currently works. The school is passing through a period of uncertainty, although the acting headteacher, with the support of governors, is providing stability and giving the school a clear direction in which to work. Teaching has improved significantly since the previous inspection and is now beginning to address levels of underachievement. The strong relationships that exist in the school are used effectively to help pupils improve their confidence. By the time pupils leave school in Year 6, standards in English and mathematics match those of pupils in similar schools, although they are below the average in science. Standards of work seen in several other subjects, including art, history, geography and music, are similar to those expected for pupils' ages. The school provides satisfactory value for money.

WHAT THE SCHOOL DOES WELL

- Children achieve well in the Foundation Stage because of the good teaching and some stimulating activities.
- Pupils aged seven reach good standards in reading, writing and mathematics, and substantial proportions reach levels above those expected for their age.
- The current leadership provides clear direction through good monitoring and evaluation procedures.
- Pupils have good attitudes to their work and they want to achieve. They enjoy good relationships with one another and behave well in lessons.
- There are good procedures to support pupils with special educational needs.
- There is good involvement of parents in the classroom in support of their children's learning.

WHAT COULD BE IMPROVED

- Standards in English, mathematics and science for pupils aged 11.
- The provision for information communications technology for pupils in Years 3 to 6.
- The small proportion of unsatisfactory teaching.
- Strategic planning over the medium and long term.
- Child Protection procedures.

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

HOW THE SCHOOL HAS IMPROVED SINCE ITS LAST INSPECTION

Despite the current circumstances, the school has made some good improvements since its last inspection in February 1999, and it no longer has serious weaknesses. Systems have recently been introduced to monitor and evaluate teaching and learning. Standards have gradually improved over time, and the school is beginning to address the levels of underachievement with much better teaching. Assessment procedures are now established, enabling the school to follow closely the progress of pupils and to guide planning. Pupils in Years 1 and 2 write well, but writing remains a weakness in Years 3 to 6. Personal and social education is now planned within the curriculum, though all staff have yet to be advised of the school's Child Protection procedures. The information for parents does not include all the required details. The school has a strong commitment to raising standards, and the capacity for improvement is satisfactory.

STANDARDS

The table below 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	E	D	C
Mathematics	E	D	D	C
Science	E	D	E	D

Key

well above average A

above average B

average C

below average D

well below average E

Results have fluctuated and standards have remained below the national average over several years. The most recent results indicate levels of underachievement when judged against the pupils' corresponding Key Stage 1 results in 1996. Results of tests taken by pupils in Year 2 over several years are well above the national average. However, almost half the pupils left or joined the school through Years 3 to 6, and a significant proportion of pupils have special educational needs. Over time, there has been an improving trend in the three core subjects, which broadly reflects the national trend. Evidence from this inspection broadly reflects these

standards. Standards in other subjects are at the expected levels, with the exception of information communications technology, where they are below the national expectation. Pupils with special educational needs make good progress. The school has set realistic targets for English and mathematics for the Year 2001, and the most recent results indicate that the school is well on its way to achieving them.

PUPILS' ATTITUDES AND VALUES

Aspect	Comment
Attitudes to the school	Pupils are keen to learn and have positive attitudes. These contribute considerably to the progress made in lessons. Pupils show their maturity by being responsive and responsible, though they are not always given sufficient opportunities.
Behaviour, in and out of classrooms	Behaviour is good in lessons and is one of the strengths of the school. Pupils understand what is expected of them, though the behaviour of some of the boys can be aggressive when they are playing games during outdoor break times. There have been three fixed-term exclusions during the previous year.
Personal development and relationships	Relationships are good and are a feature of the school community. However, pupils are not given enough opportunities to take responsibility in lessons, or in the daily routines, as they progress through the school.
Attendance	Attendance levels are above the national average.

TEACHING AND LEARNING

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

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

Teaching is satisfactory overall. Good teaching in Reception has a significant impact on the children's thirst for learning when they start school. Teaching overall was judged to be satisfactory or better in 93 per cent of all the lessons seen. Good teaching was seen in 32 per cent of lessons, and very good teaching in a further 9 per cent. Examples of good teaching were seen throughout the school, and during these lessons pupils benefited significantly from clearly defined and well-focused tasks, which encouraged pupils to take a full and active part in the lesson. Just one subject, English, was judged to be taught consistently well, due largely to the expertise among staff. Seven per cent of teaching in the school was unsatisfactory, as a result of unclear learning intentions, weak subject knowledge on the part of the teacher, and a slow pace. A general weakness in teaching throughout the school is the lack of attention given to the more able pupils. Conversely, careful attention is given to pupils with special educational needs.

OTHER ASPECTS OF THE SCHOOL

Aspect	Comment
The quality and range of the curriculum	Satisfactory overall. The curriculum places a great emphasis on the development of literacy and numeracy skills, and this reflects the needs of the pupils. However, pupils are not given sufficient opportunities in information communications technology, the provision for which does not meet statutory requirements.
Provision for pupils with special educational needs	The good provision for pupils with special educational needs enables them to be given work matched to their learning at an early stage. Pupils benefit from effective support when working individually or in small groups. The detailed individual education plans are used well to help with assessments.
Provision for pupils' personal, including spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	Satisfactory overall. Pupils are made aware of other cultures and beliefs through the curriculum. Pupils know right from wrong and relate well to each other. Some aspects of the school's curriculum enable pupils to reflect on events and on their lives.
How well the school cares for its pupils	There are some good procedures to ensure that pupils are well cared for. Staff know the pupils well and take care of them in a supportive environment. However, Child Protection procedures are unsatisfactory because not all staff are aware of the school's formal procedures.

The school is making a determined effort to improve links with parents. Currently, links are satisfactory, though the school has a strong working partnership with a small number of parents. Some of the information sent to parents does not contain all the required details.

HOW WELL THE SCHOOL IS LED AND MANAGED

Aspect	Comment
Leadership and management by the headteacher and other key staff	The acting headteacher has introduced a systematic approach to the school's development during a period of change and uncertainty. She is supported well by some key staff, who now have a good understanding of their roles though they need strengthening.
How well the governors fulfil their responsibilities	Members are supportive and well informed about the work of the school. They use their professional expertise and knowledge of the community to promote and improve the school and its work. The governing body is not fully effective in fulfilling all its statutory responsibilities, and has yet to plan a long-term strategic view of the school.
The school's evaluation of its performance	Procedures for monitoring and evaluating the school's performance have improved since the previous inspection and are now satisfactory. Systems for monitoring the quality of teaching and learning are in place, and the information is used to help staff to develop and improve professionally. Information from assessment and test data is analysed for trends of achievement. The school is beginning to establish effective strategies to identify the value added to its work.
The strategic use of resources	Day-to-day financial control is sound and efficient. The school makes good use of its resources and has budgeted carefully in the short term. Systems have been established to ensure the prudent use of resources and specific grants. The school uses principle of best value.

The school places a high priority on staffing, and pupils benefit from the additional support in lessons and around the school. The school has a sufficient number of teachers and other adults with subject expertise.

Resources are sufficient overall, though there are not enough computers and books to stretch the more able pupils. The accommodation is adequate but some of the rooms are small and cramped.

PARENTS' AND CARERS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

What pleases parents most	What parents would like to see improved
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Their children like school. • The good progress. • The good teaching. • The way the school deals with their issues and concerns. • The school expects their children to work hard. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Working more closely with parents. • Being kept informed about their children's progress. • Behaviour. • Their children's personal development. • Extra-curricular activities. • Leadership and management.

Inspection evidence supports some of the positive features and the areas for improvement featured in parents' response to the questionnaire and at the meeting with the registered inspector. Pupils

have positive attitudes to school, although the school is not giving pupils sufficient opportunities for them to become mature and responsible. Behaviour in lessons is good, though at playtimes it can be rough and even aggressive. Teaching was judged to be good in Reception, and it is satisfactory overall, though the more able pupils are not stretched enough. The information sent to parents does not include all the required details, and pupils are not given enough responsibilities as they progress through the school. The range of extra-curricular activities enhances the curriculum.

The acting headteacher has brought stability to the school during a period of change and uncertainty, and she has introduced a systematic approach to the school's development.

PART B: COMMENTARY

HOW HIGH ARE STANDARDS?

The school's results and pupils' achievements

1. When the children enter Reception their attainment in areas of learning is similar to expectations for their age. There are weaknesses in speaking and listening but some strengths in numeracy skills. Children make good progress throughout the Foundation Stage. All children are likely to achieve the early learning goals by the end of the Reception year.
2. Throughout the school, pupils made good gains in their knowledge and understanding in 41 per cent per cent of the lessons observed, and satisfactory progress in all but 6 per cent of the remaining lessons. The achievement of pupils with special educational needs is good when measured against their individual education plans and the appropriate National Curriculum Programmes of Study.
3. The results for the national tests in 2000 show that standards for pupils aged seven were well above average in reading, writing, and mathematics. When these results are compared with schools which have a similar proportion of pupils eligible for free school meals, standards were high in reading and writing, and well above average in mathematics. The proportion of pupils reaching the higher level in these subjects was well above the national average. In science, the performance levels of pupils in the teacher assessments were close to the national average, though the proportion of pupils reaching the higher level was well above the national average. There was little difference between the performance of boys and girls. There has been an improving trend which broadly reflects the national picture.
4. The results for the national tests in 2000 show that standards for pupils aged 11 were below the national average in English and mathematics, and well below average in science. When compared with those of schools having a similar percentage of pupils eligible for free school meals, standards were average in English and mathematics, and below average in science. The proportions of pupils reaching levels above those expected for their age were well below average in all three subjects. The most recent results show little difference in performance between the performance of boys and girls. There has been an improving trend which broadly reflects the national picture, though standards have remained below average.
5. The difference in the results of pupils aged seven and eleven is largely due to the high proportion of pupils who joined the school at a time other than at the usual time of admission during Years 3 to 6. For example, 48 per cent of the pupils who left in the summer of 2000 at the end of Year 6 joined the school during Key Stage 2, with over 20 per cent joining the school in their final year. In addition, 46 per cent of pupils had special educational needs. In the current Year 6, 44 per cent joined the school during Key Stage 2 and 50 per cent have special educational needs; 38 per cent of these pupils are given additional support, and targets for progress are set within their individual education plans.

6. However, the school's most recent results for pupils who left the school at the end of Year 6 aged 11, in the summer of 2000, show levels of underachievement when judged against their corresponding Year 2 results in 1996. The school is beginning to address this underachievement with improved assessment procedures, some well-planned lessons, and significant improvement to teaching. However, the school has yet to consistently stretch the more able pupils. The school has raised its targets since the time when they were set. When account is taken of the circumstances in which the school works, the school has set realistic targets for English and mathematics for the Year 2001.

7. Evidence gathered during the inspection does not reflect the high standards seen in the most recent national curriculum results for pupils aged seven, and this is largely because of the higher than usual number of pupils with special educational needs. Currently, pupils in Year 2 are working at levels expected for their age in all subjects, with the exception of history, where standards are above the expectations. Standards attained by pupils in Year 6 are broadly similar to the results in the most recent national curriculum tests. Pupils are working at levels below the national expectation in English, mathematics and science. Standards in information and communication technology match the national expectation for pupils aged seven but they are below the expectation for pupils aged 11. Pupils make enough progress in religious education to meet the objectives of the locally Agreed Syllabus by Years 2 and 6. Standards in other subjects match the national expectation for pupils aged seven and eleven, though it was not possible to make an informed judgement in the case of design and technology.

8. The school places a strong emphasis on the development of literacy skills. Planning in both key stages is based on the targets of the national literacy framework, and teaching follows the recommended structure of the literacy hour very closely. Pupils in Year 2 listen attentively to class teachers, and to other pupils in discussions. Pupils in Year 6 talk and listen with confidence in a range of contexts, but only the more able pupils develop their ideas thoughtfully and convey their opinions clearly. Standards in reading match the national expectation for pupils aged seven and eleven. Pupils read fluently and independently, and express opinions about the plot or characters in stories. However, average attainers and more able pupils do not read books which are sufficiently challenging. Standards in writing are above the expectation by the end of Year 2, due largely to the pupils' confidence in using a joined, legible script. They write for a range of purposes, with strengths in poetry and imaginative stories. However, by Year 6, standards are below those expected because the large majority of pupils have weak punctuation skills and several do not use joined-up writing. The small proportion of more able pupils write fluently and make good use of punctuation.

9. Pupils enjoy mathematics, although numeracy skills are not planned to support work in other subjects. By Year 2, pupils are fluent in the use of number and are familiar with two- and three-dimensional shapes. However, most written work is on worksheets and these do not provide a sufficiently clear and accessible record of what pupils know, understand and can do. By Year 6, most pupils have a secure grasp of place value and the four operations of number, but the more able pupils are not given sufficiently challenging work they can complete independently. In science, pupils are highly motivated when involved in practical investigative tasks. Pupils develop a sound understanding of life processes and living things, materials and their properties, and physical processes. However, by Year 6, pupils lack skills in conducting the whole process of independently planning and carrying out experiments, largely because they are not given sufficient opportunities. In

information and communication technology, pupils aged 11 reach the expected level in communicating and handling information, but standards are below the expected levels in controlling, monitoring and modelling.

Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development

10. Pupils have good attitudes to learning and are generally well behaved. These findings are in keeping with those of the last inspection. A large proportion of parents (85 per cent) who returned the parents' questionnaire confirmed that their children like coming to school. The inspection evidence, including many conversations with pupils, endorses the parents' view. Children at the Foundation Stage learn positive attitudes by observing the good relationships between their parents, carers and teachers. They enjoy meeting other children, and are confident and secure in classroom and school routines. Children relate well to adults, listen to them attentively, and are very well behaved. When working alone or in groups they are encouraged to complete activities.

11. In Years 1 to 6, pupils work hard and are keen to do well. In nearly all lessons observed they listened carefully to their teachers and set to work purposefully. Pupils support each other's efforts and work productively in pairs and small groups. This helps to extend learning, particularly in literacy and numeracy hours. A good example was observed during a Year 3 lesson in information communication technology, where pupils worked well in pairs and made productive use of their time by taking turns sensibly on the computers. To their credit, pupils tend to remain receptive even in lessons that do not provide adequate challenge and where the pace is slow. At worse, some become inattentive and fidgety at these times.

12. Pupils like school and their good rate of prompt, regular attendance has been maintained since the last inspection. The current attendance rate is 95 per cent, which is slightly better than the national average. Pupils' enthusiasm is also reflected in the high level of participation in extra-curricular activities and clubs.

13. The school is an orderly community, and the behaviour policy recently introduced by the acting headteacher is supported by the pupils. Teachers have high expectations in respect of behaviour and pupils know what is expected of them and generally follow the rules. They are delighted to receive house points for good behaviour and hard work. Pupils treat the buildings and equipment with respect. However, pupils' behaviour, particularly among boys, deteriorates when they are outdoors and this leads to some aggressive behaviour. Inspection evidence confirms some of the parents' concerns about the behaviour of pupils, particularly boys, during break times. This behaviour is due largely to the small size of the hard play area. The school places a high priority on engaging adults to supervise the play areas and it has introduced staggered play times. However, the area can become crowded; boisterous play tends to become too rough and results in falls, bumps and bruises on a daily basis.

14. Three boys were excluded for fixed periods over the last reporting year. This action reflects the school's commitment to providing a safe and pleasant environment for all pupils.

15. Relationships within the school continue to be good. Boys and girls treat each other with respect. Assemblies include a time for prayer and reflection, and pupils are well behaved and respectful. Teachers set good examples with their relationships and, in the best lessons, their

knowledge and expertise gives pupils confidence. A good example of this was seen in a well-taught literacy lesson where a class of more able pupils in Year 6 pupils settled quickly and achieved well. Circle Time and assemblies provide good opportunities for pupils to discuss the importance of good behaviour and tolerance. Pupils are friendly and those who join the school at different times of the year are made to feel welcome.

16. All pupils respond positively and sensibly when given tasks, such as tidying resources or taking registers to the office. However, opportunities for personal development are limited and pupils are not given enough assignments that allow them to make choices or find things out for themselves. Pupils do not have adequate opportunities to contribute to the life of the school. Older pupils are not given activities that enable them to work with younger pupils. There is little to distinguish between the opportunities offered to the youngest or the oldest pupils. For example, in science, pupils are not given enough opportunities to investigate and research information for themselves. In English, and other subjects such as history and geography, pupils spend too much time copying notes and not developing independent working skills. These findings are in keeping with the views of a significant minority of parents who feel that the school is not helping their child become mature and responsible.

HOW WELL ARE PUPILS OR STUDENTS TAUGHT?

17. The quality of teaching has improved since the previous inspection. This judgement mirrors the picture painted by the recent HMI report. During the current inspection, teaching was judged to be satisfactory or better in 93 per cent of all the lessons seen. Good teaching was seen in 32 per cent of lessons. Very good teaching was seen in a further 9 per cent of lessons. Examples of good teaching were seen throughout the school, and during these lessons pupils benefited significantly from clearly defined and well-focused tasks, which encouraged them to take a full and active part in the lesson. Pupils are well managed and effective use is made of almost all the support staff to ensure that pupils fully understand the tasks. The quality of teaching in Reception is good because the large majority of children are involved in a variety of skilfully structured activities. The best teaching was exemplified by the teacher's good knowledge of the early learning goals, and the effective use of support staff to help children to explore their understanding and guide learning. Just one subject, English, was judged to be taught consistently well throughout the school, owing largely to the expertise among staff. The quality of teaching in Years 1 and 2 was similar to that seen in Years 3 to 6. Seven per cent of the teaching observed in the school was judged to be unsatisfactory.

18. Common features of the unsatisfactory teaching are unclear learning intentions, weak subject knowledge on the part of the teacher, slow pace, and too few opportunities for pupils to make their own choices. A general weakness in teaching throughout the school is the lack of attention given to the more able pupils. In general, pupils would benefit significantly from the development of independent learning skills, such as those used when pupils work by themselves in the library, during investigative work in science and mathematics, and when using computers. In some classes, there is an over reliance on copying teachers' notes and conclusions from the board.

19. Features of good teaching are the effective management of pupils and, in some cases, the clarity of the learning intentions. The use of some day-to-day assessment procedures underpins much of the very good quality teaching and learning. Very good teaching in Reception made use of

information from assessments and from a good understanding of children's learning needs. This knowledge was used to plan challenging and stimulating activities which encouraged pupils to want to learn more about the subjects. In English, and in a few cases in mathematics and science, well-planned lessons and resources of good quality led to pupils achieving well and learning at a good rate. For example, the teaching of science was judged to be most effective in Year 2 because the pace of learning was good, and the pupils were given good opportunities to handle and closely observe growing plants and bulbs. An example of good mathematics teaching was seen in Years 3 and 4 when the cordial relationships with pupils were put to good use in managing the class.

20. The quality of direct, whole-class teaching is often good, with clear explanation, demonstration, and probing questioning to ensure that pupils understand. However, the teachers do not always strike a balance between direction and independent learning. In consequence, pupils do not develop good independent learning skills by the time they leave school at the end of Year 6. Pupils' progress is beginning to be secured over time because their achievement is now being monitored and the planning has improved. The best lessons in music, such as those seen in Years 3 and 4, included a good balance of direct teaching and opportunities for pupils to practise and refine their singing. Similarly, pupils in Year 5 benefited significantly from clear instructions and sufficient opportunities to practise swimming strokes and improve their health-related fitness. Where pupils are challenged by the teaching, they behave very well, concentrate on what they are doing and work hard to overcome difficulties.

21. A particular strength in teaching throughout the school is the supportive approach used by teachers and other adults. In many ways, this reflects the school's aims, and all but a few pupils reciprocate the good relationships which have been established. In many lessons, the good relationships are used to raise standards in the quality of pupils' work. For example, the teaching of English was judged to be good largely because of the close match of tasks to pupils' prior learning, the pace, and the lively and interesting manner of the teacher. This stimulated pupils' interest and ensured that they were well motivated and worked productively. In consequence, pupils were motivated by the tasks and activities, which successfully extended their thinking and understanding.

22. The good teaching is based on good knowledge of the subject. For example, careful planning in several subjects, including English, music, and mathematics, is underpinned by a good understanding of the subject material. This leads to well thought out instructions that emphasise pupil involvement, and well-structured activities which guide all pupils in applying and extending their knowledge. For example, during a very good English lesson in Year 5/6, pupils benefited significantly from the teachers' very good subject knowledge, which gave the teacher confidence to ask thought-provoking questions. The quality of the evaluative comments helped pupils in Year 2 to make good gains in their learning during science. The teachers' depth of understanding is often used to underpin their clear explanations and incisive questioning, which are aimed at helping pupils extend their thinking. During an English lesson, pupils in Years 3 and 4 were motivated by the in-depth questioning which helped them to understand the different types of poetry.

23. Pupils with special educational needs are well taught when given specialist help, either within the class or on withdrawal to another area. They take part in a carefully chosen range of activities which engage them mentally, physically and emotionally. In class lessons, they work with other pupils at a similar level and are given additional support wherever possible.

Their progress is monitored and adjustments are made to their individual education plans so that future lessons meet their needs. The quality of teaching ensures that these pupils have full and equal access to the curriculum. Members of the support team have a good understanding of how these pupils learn.

24. There is a good range of methods and strategies to support learning. Teachers who have established a good rapport with pupils manage groups well while focusing their attention on individual pupils.

25. The teaching of pupils in similar attainment groups, such as those seen in English and mathematics, is effective because pupils benefit from well-targeted support. Final summary sessions are used well to consolidate and share what has been learnt. For example, pupils in Year 1 were given good opportunities to share their understanding during a lesson in English. Homework is set to reinforce and extend pupils' learning; homework supports achievement in English, science and mathematics.

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

26. The curriculum is mainly broad and balanced. All subjects of the national curriculum are taught, including religious education. Sex education and drug awareness are taught only as part of the science curriculum, although governors are reconsidering provision for sex education. There is little evidence that design and technology is taught separately as a subject in its own right, and provision for information and communications technology is weak throughout the school. There are too few computers and no planned provision for the progressive development of pupils' skills. Overall, the provision for personal, social and health education is satisfactory and now has a firm place in the curriculum.

27. Most subjects have schemes of work that are carefully implemented. In some subjects, such as music, schemes are being revised to reflect current requirements. Since the previous inspection, attainment targets have become an integral part of the schemes in mathematics, science and English, and have provided a sharper focus for learning. Teachers plan work together, identifying learning objectives and opportunities for the assessment of pupils' progress. This helps to offset the difficulties inherent in mixed-age classes. In mathematics at Key Stage 2, pupils are grouped on the basis of prior attainment, and this allows pupils to work at their own levels of understanding

28. Provision in English and mathematics is well supported by the successful introduction of the national schemes. Each subject is given a prominent place in the curriculum, and the time allocated is well used. Teachers plan lessons carefully and give proper weight to each element. Although the prominence of core subjects has detracted from the time allocated to other areas of the curriculum, pupils have benefited significantly by the emphasis placed upon the core skills of numeracy, speaking, listening and writing. Numeracy and literacy skills are satisfactorily taught across the curriculum.

29. The school provides an inclusive curriculum. Good arrangements are in place to enhance pupils' access to it, through a mixture of withdrawal and in-class support. The provision for pupils

with special educational needs is good and they make good progress overall. They receive good support from the co-ordinator for special educational needs, support staff, and learning support assistants. Assistants are well briefed and provide useful

evaluation of pupils' progress. Several assistants have taken external certificates and all have received in-service training in the school. Weekly meetings with the co-ordinator keep them well informed. Generally, the needs of the more able pupils are not well met by the school, although two pupils who have high ability in mathematics and English work with older and more able pupils.

30. A range of extra activities enhances the curriculum, as was reported at the previous inspection. Pupils are encouraged to take an active part in the lunch-time clubs for music, chess, needlework and sport. Occasionally, the school organises soccer and netball matches with other schools. Pupils who attend the clubs enjoy the experience and have high regard for the teachers who give up their lunchtime to teach them. Music club provides pupils with good opportunities to develop their skills and, during the inspection, one recorder group performed successfully in assembly.

31. The school has some links with the local community but these are not yet fully developed. However, the school does take part in concerts with the local brass band, and the vicar of the nearby parish church regularly visits the school. The links with local schools are satisfactory and pupils in Year 6 have the opportunity to visit the secondary school of their choice.

32. The school makes satisfactory provision overall for pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. This judgement compares unfavourably with that of the last inspection, which reported that the provision was good overall. The school's provision for pupils' spiritual development is satisfactory. Through classroom Circle Times, the religious education syllabus, and whole-school assemblies, the school provides pupils with knowledge and insight into values and beliefs and enables them to reflect on their experiences.

33. The school complies with statutory requirements for a daily act of collective worship. Provision for pupils' moral development is satisfactory. Principles distinguishing right from wrong are promoted consistently through the newly-introduced personal social and health education lessons and the weekly planned assembly themes.

34. Provision for pupils' social development is satisfactory. In the best cases, pupils are encouraged to work co-operatively and take responsibility for their work and for others. For example, pupils in Year 6 worked co-operatively during a dance lesson when they were asked to choreograph a dance routine. In science, pupils in Year 2 made effective use of the excellent resources by sharing their findings. Children in Reception are encouraged to develop their independence soon after they join the class. However, these skills are not strengthened systematically as pupils progress through the school. Some pupils are responsible for a limited number of day-to-day school routines, such as taking registers to the office. Pupils in Year 6 manage the 'tuck shop'. However, these opportunities are limited, and much of the teaching in Year 6 gives pupils few opportunities to work independently from the teacher and make their own choices.

35. The school's provision for pupils' cultural development is satisfactory. Pupils are taught to appreciate their own cultural traditions, taking part in local events such as a Christmas festival with a local brass band, and visiting local historical sites. Pupils in Year 6 have visited the Houses of Parliament and participate in a 'Children's Parliament'. Pupils are given appropriate opportunities to

develop an understanding of the diversity of other cultures. These take place during music, dance and English lessons which focus on a range of cultures. In addition, pupils study contrasting communities in geography and world faiths in religious education lessons. A range of specialists has visited the school and worked with the pupils, for example a theatre group, and members of the Fire Service and British Transport Police.

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL CARE FOR ITS PUPILS?

36. Members of staff are dedicated to the care of pupils. However, in keeping with the findings of the previous report, Child Protection remains unsatisfactory because not all staff are aware of the school's formal procedures. The school has introduced staff training and developed guidance for Child Protection procedures, although essential information is not contained in the staff handbook.

37. Governors fulfil their responsibility to carry out risk assessments on a regular basis. Fire drills take place each term, and the inspection of fire safety equipment and electrical appliances is up to date. The school has good arrangements to care for pupils with specific medical needs. Information regarding allergies, ailments and medication is circulated to all members of staff who work with these pupils. Staff members have also received specialist training in administering medication to counter symptoms of peanut allergy. The school has grown in recent years and is now larger than most primary schools. The health and safety policy, which is 11 years old, has not been reviewed or monitored by governors and does not reflect the current needs of the school. For example, there are no formal arrangements agreed with parents on the collection of their children at the end of the school day. The school has alerted parents to the potential danger of parking in the school playground, but this remains a cause for concern.

38. The procedures for monitoring and promoting discipline continue to be good. The behaviour and anti-bullying policy, introduced by the acting headteacher, contains specific and relevant rewards and sanctions which are valued by teachers and pupils alike. Staff apply the rules consistently and fairly. Circle Time is well established, and further opportunities to discuss self discipline and care for others now occur within lessons which focus on personal social and health education.

39. The school has sound procedures to ensure that oppressive behaviour is identified early and is addressed. For example, such behaviour is identified in the individual education plans, and effective strategies are introduced to support pupils with emotional and behaviour difficulties. The school places a high priority on the elimination of occasional bullying that takes place during outdoor break times. There is an adequate number of adults on duty but they do not circulate enough to ensure that all pupils are monitored whilst outdoors.

40. Procedures for teachers to monitor and support pupils' personal development are satisfactory. Class teachers keep their own notes on such development, and progress is reported to parents in the annual end of year report. The school has maintained its good arrangements to record and improve pupils' attendance. Registers are called at the beginning of each session and they fully comply with statutory requirements. They are monitored weekly, and parents and pupils are regularly reminded about the importance of prompt, regular attendance. Despite

the old and worn state of many fixtures and fittings, the caretaker's efforts ensure that all areas of the school are clean.

41. The school has satisfactory systems in place for assessing pupils' attainment and progress, and the data obtained are used well to guide planning. This picture represents significant progress since the previous inspection, when assessment was identified in the key issues as an area for development. The school currently provides effective support and advice for its pupils, informed by the monitoring of their academic progress and personal development. Much useful assessment is carried out on a short-term, day-to-day basis, by teachers and, in the best cases, by learning support assistants, who make notes on pupils' responses during lessons. The school undertakes all required formal assessments of its pupils. Assessments are made when children join the school, at the beginning of the foundation stage, and at the end of the reception year. They are augmented by additional school-designed assessments to help obtain a comprehensive assessment of each pupil. In addition to the statutory end of key stage tests in English, mathematics and science at the ages of seven and eleven, pupils are given the 'optional' mid-key stage tests at the end of each year. There are also standardised intelligence tests at the beginning of each year, and half-termly assessment tests in mathematics and science. At the end of each school year, teachers work together in year groups to make forecasts of levels which are likely to be achieved at the end of the following year. For each pupil there is a 'tracking form' which tracks progress from the pupil's entry into the school and includes forecasts of attainment, actual attainment, and further projections as the pupil moves through the school.

42. Regular assessments take place to monitor progress towards targets of individual education plans. The co-ordinator for special educational needs assesses all pupils, using formal tests. The information is recorded in pupils' files and is used to identify pupils in need of support at an early stage. For example, children in the Reception class are placed on the school's register and benefit significantly from the additional support. Information from assessments, along with a system of individual targets for learning, helps the school to teach pupils in groups of similar ability for mathematics and English lessons at Key Stage 2. The school has begun to analyse the results of the end of key stage tests; subject co-ordinators look carefully at pupils' responses to the test questions, in order to identify common errors and weaknesses and to identify trends. Among the practical results of this analysis is that a greater emphasis has been placed on creative writing within English and on word problems in mathematics.

43. Procedures for monitoring and supporting academic progress are satisfactory. In the best lessons, pupils are made aware of the learning objectives for the lesson and pupils are given, and made aware of, individual targets for their learning. This practice is at an early stage of development, and at the time of inspection the targets were only for literacy.

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL WORK IN PARTNERSHIP WITH PARENTS?

44. Overall, parents have positive views, but the effectiveness of the links between home and school is not as strong as it was at the time of the last inspection; links are now satisfactory. A large majority of parents are pleased that their children like school, and they feel that members of staff are easy to approach should they have any concerns. However, a significant number of parents expressed negative views about various aspects of school life. Inspection evidence supports the

parents' perception that the school does not keep them well informed about how their child is getting on.

45. Parents' efforts to support the school make a good impact on learning. A large number of parents and helpers volunteer to offer support in lessons on a regular basis. In particular, helpers in Years 1 and 2 give regular and reliable support which enables teachers to plan lessons that provide a wider range of learning activities. The Parent Teacher and Friends Association (PTFA) organises fundraising events throughout the year. Over the last year its dedicated efforts secured a noteworthy amount of money for extra equipment. Recent purchases include the high quality outdoor play equipment, a wooden train in the quiet area, and the cushioned play surface for the youngest pupils. Many parents of pupils in Years 1 and 2 read to their children at home on a regular basis, and make good use of the home reading diary.

46. The quality of information provided for parents is unsatisfactory. The prospectus does not contain all the required information, such as the national test results for both key stages. Similarly, the governors' annual report to parents does not contain all the required information. The pupil progress reports for parents do not include sufficient detail about what pupils have learned and about their strengths and areas for improvement in each subject. Information communication technology is not reported as a separate subject. Information for parents about the curriculum needs to include guidance on the type of support which would most benefit their children whilst at home. The acting headteacher is beginning to address some of these shortcomings through regular newsletters, which are valued by parents.

HOW WELL IS THE SCHOOL LED AND MANAGED?

47. During the last inspection the school was found to have serious weaknesses, but this is no longer the case. The acting headteacher was appointed at the beginning of the academic year to lead and manage the school through a period of uncertainty and change. The deputy headteacher is also in an acting post. With the good support of staff and key governors, the acting headteacher is beginning to successfully address the levels of underachievement and overcome some of the problems caused by the challenging circumstances in which the school works. This has been achieved through some effective leadership strategies, and with sensitivity to the school's stage of development. For example, teaching has improved significantly since the previous inspection, and pupils make at least satisfactory progress in lessons, including those in Years 3 to 6. However, some inconsistencies remain in the planning and in the match of tasks to pupils' needs; these were weaknesses highlighted in a report following a recent visit by HMI.

48. Soon after the acting headteacher's appointment, the school development plan was reviewed and an action plan was drawn up to address a wide range of specific issues. For example, it was recognised that there was an urgent need to review some health and safety systems, though concerns still exist. Subject co-ordinators value the recent review of their work, which has given them a clearer understanding of their roles and responsibilities. A systematic approach to the monitoring of teaching was introduced, and this has helped lead to a more consistent approach to planning and levels of expectation. However, although the action plan includes a series of short-term priorities, there is no medium- or long-term improvement plan with a strategic view of the school which is

shared by staff and governors. Additionally, the current school improvement plan lacks a strategic overview and does not include a clear set of criteria against which the school's progress can be measured. The school has identified the need to strengthen the senior management team to include key staff to help the school in its development. Staff work as a cohesive and caring team, committed to the welfare of the pupils and the whole community. This creates a clear sense of purpose and, as a result, relationships are generally good throughout the school. The school's aims are reflected in its daily work. It is a friendly, supportive and purposeful community, and pupils are confident and respectful of one another. However, expectations have yet to be raised.

49. The acting headteacher delegates well, and staff have responded well to greater levels of responsibility. Subject co-ordinators are now responsible for their own resources. Some have developed their role well. For example, special educational needs and English are particularly well managed.

50. The co-ordinator for the Foundation Stage provides strong leadership, particularly as she is a very good practitioner. Some co-ordinators use time away from the classroom to work with staff on improving the quality of planning. The targets set by the school for English and mathematics have been raised and are achievable; they reflect the school's realistic commitment to raising levels of achievement.

51. The governing body has a clear view of the school's provision for special educational needs. The newly-appointed governor with responsibility for special educational needs is very keen to visit regularly to obtain first-hand knowledge and information. A policy is in place, and it is understood by all staff. The co-ordinator keeps accurate profiles of pupils, and their progress is closely monitored. Administrative arrangements for annual reviews are satisfactory. However, termly reviews of individual education plans lack suitable arrangements for parents' views to be noted and acted upon. The school fulfils its statutory responsibilities for special educational needs and complies with the official Code of Practice

52. Members of the governing body know the school well and visit it regularly. They bring a range of expertise to the work of the school, and are becoming more aware of the need to monitor achievement systematically through the use of assessment and other indicators. Key governors are active, conscientious, well informed, and supportive of the acting headteacher and the work of the school. Parents value the work of the current acting headteacher and the changes she is beginning to introduce. When account is taken of the circumstances in which the school is working, and the support given by the local education authority, the capacity for improvement is satisfactory. The school is meeting statutory requirements, with three exceptions: not all staff are aware of the school's Child Protection procedures; the provision for information communication technology is inadequate; and the prospectus, the governor's annual reports, and the pupil progress reports for parents do not contain all the required information.

53. Throughout a period of considerable change in the senior management team, the school has maintained effective and efficient working practices to plan, manage and monitor the finances. The acting headteacher and members of the governing body ensure that spending is carefully monitored and directed to the best needs of the pupils. Financial records are accurate. The headteacher and governing body ensure the prudent use of school funds and specific grants. The governors' finance

committee meets regularly and has access to appropriate statements of account. Day-to-day financial control is sound and efficient. The school secretary, in addition to many other responsibilities, carefully maintains records of

expenditure on the computer. The most recent audit found finances to be properly managed, and the school responded promptly to the minor recommendations made. The school fund account is well kept and is audited independently. In all aspects of expenditure a careful check is made to ensure that the school is receiving best value for money although this technique is not yet as sophisticated as it might be.

54. Staffing is satisfactory. The number, qualifications and experience of the staff provide a suitable balance between experienced teachers and those who have been in the profession for only a short time. Teachers are well deployed across the curriculum and are given very effective support by learning support assistants and parent volunteers. Members of the learning support staff have a suitable range of qualifications and experience and provide good support. Staff development is co-ordinated effectively by the acting deputy. A cohesive system, primarily based on the school improvement plan, provides a good balance of in-service courses to meet the needs both of the school and of individual members of staff. The school has a good policy for performance management. In line with the school policy, objectives and pupil targets have been set for all teachers. The school has a sound system for the induction of staff new to the school, including the provision of mentors for new teachers. Staff feel well supported by management.

55. Resources for learning are adequate, with good resources in mathematics but inadequate gymnastics equipment for physical education. The management of learning resources is sound and, with the exception of some computers, they are efficiently used. The funds available for pupils with special educational needs are especially well used. The English co-ordinator's action plan has received finances to improve the stock of reading books, which is depleted and outdated. However, the school makes good use of funds to buy into the local education authority library loan system to supplement both non-fiction topic books and reading books. The co-ordinator for personal, health and social education is planning an increase in resources for multi-cultural activities, which at present are barely adequate. The school has organised only a few visits to local places of interest recently, owing to the emphasis on raising standards in the core subjects. Several visitors to the school have enhanced pupils' knowledge and understanding in various areas of the curriculum, including a famous author and the local rector.

56. Accommodation is cramped but is used effectively. All classrooms are imaginatively furnished and teachers work hard to provide a stimulating work environment. The under-fives outdoor learning area makes for a stimulating and safe environment. The playground is adequate when playtimes are staggered, but small for the number of pupils at lunch time, when all pupils are outside together. The small size of the hall affects the progress that pupils are able to make in their gymnastics, particularly when working on large apparatus. The libraries require refurbishing to provide a welcoming environment to motivate pupils' learning and a love of books. The school has yet to receive additional funding for information communications technology to develop a dedicated space for computer lessons.

57. When account is taken of pupils' attainment and progress throughout the school and the quality of education provided, the school provides satisfactory value for money. This represents a significant improvement since the previous inspection.

WHAT SHOULD THE SCHOOL DO TO IMPROVE FURTHER?

58. To improve standards of work and pupils' learning, the governors, headteacher and staff should:

- Raise standards in English at Key Stage 2 by:
 - * using information from assessment procedures to help teach reading systematically;
 - * implementing a consistent handwriting policy;
 - * providing more opportunities for pupils to write in their own words within curriculum time;
 - * ensuring that the more able pupils are given consistently challenging work;
 - * introducing planned opportunities for pupils to improve their speaking and listening skills in all subjects.

- Raise standards in mathematics and science at Key Stage 2 by:
 - * giving pupils more opportunities to work by themselves during investigations;
 - * ensuring that all pupils are given more focused tasks which match their needs;
 - * raising expectations and pace in mental mathematics and during science lessons.

- Raise standards in information communications technology and meet statutory requirements at Key Stage 2 by:
 - * improving resources and equipment;
 - * increasing staff confidence and expertise through training;
 - * providing pupils with sufficient opportunities to in lessons to use and practise their skills.

- Improve unsatisfactory teaching, where it exists, by:
 - * sharing the good practice which exists in the school;
 - * improving teachers' subject knowledge;
 - * increasing the pace at which pupils are asked to work, particularly the higher attainers;
 - * giving pupils more opportunities to work independently and make their own choices.

- Improve strategic planning over the medium and long term with an school improvement plan which goes beyond the current year and includes:
 - * clear, measurable targets for improvement which take into account the school's changing circumstances;
 - * a set of criteria for judging the school's progress.

- Develop a systematic approach which ensures that Child Protection procedures are clear and known to all staff and other adults.

59. Other areas of improvement which the governors should consider for inclusion in the school's action plan are:

- * including all the required information in the school's brochure, the governors' annual report to parents, and the pupil progress reports;
- * a review of the health and safety policy, and the arrangements for the collection of children at the end of the school day;
- * the outdoor learning area for children in the Foundation Stage;
- * the school's library provision;
- * resources to support the effective teaching of gymnastics.

PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS

Summary of the sources of evidence for the inspection

Number of lessons observed	61
Number of discussions with staff, governors, other adults and pupils	36

Summary of teaching observed during the inspection

Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
0	9	32	52	7	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	YR – Y6
Number of pupils on the school's roll (FTE for part-time pupils)	N/A	284
Number of full-time pupils known to be eligible for free school meals	N/A	46

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Special educational needs	Nursery	YR – Y6
Number of pupils with statements of special educational needs	N/A	8
Number of pupils on the school's special educational needs register	N/A	111

English as an additional language	No of pupils
Number of pupils with English as an additional language	8

Pupil mobility in the last school year	No of pupils
Pupils who joined the school other than at the usual time of first admission	38
Pupils who left the school other than at the usual time of leaving	19

Attendance

Authorised absence	%
School data	5
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	18	20	38

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		Reading	Writing	Mathematics
Numbers of pupils at NC Level 2 and above	Boys	17	16	16
	Girls	19	19	19
	Total	36	35	35
Percentage of pupils at NC Level 2 or above	School	95 (93)	92 (93)	92 (98)
	National	84 (82)	85 (83)	90 (87)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC Level 2 and above	Boys	17	16	17
	Girls	18	19	18
	Total	35	35	35
Percentage of pupils at NC Level 2 or above	School	92 (87)	92 (96)	92 (98)
	National	84 (82)	88 (86)	88 (87)

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

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	25	29	54

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC Level 4 and above	Boys	18	16	21
	Girls	21	20	24
	Total	39	36	45
Percentage of pupils at NC Level 4 or above	School	72 (60)	67 (63)	83 (85)
	National	75 (70)	72 (69)	85 (78)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC Level 4 and above	Boys	16	20	18
	Girls	21	22	23
	Total	37	42	41
Percentage of pupils at NC Level 4 or above	School	71 (63)	81 (70)	79 (88)
	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	0
Indian	0
Pakistani	0
Bangladeshi	0
Chinese	0
White	258
Any other minority ethnic group	7

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	3	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)	13.6
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	22.4
Average class size	25

Education support staff:

YR – Y6

Total number of education support staff	13
Total aggregate hours worked per week	254

Financial information

Financial year	1999/2000
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	£
Total income	536761.00
Total expenditure	523650.00
Expenditure per pupil	1689.00
Balance brought forward from previous year	33322.00
Balance carried forward to next year	46433.00

Results of the survey of parents and carers

Questionnaire return rate

Number of questionnaires sent out	284
Number of questionnaires returned	78

Percentage of responses in each category

	Strongly agree	Tend to agree	Tend to disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know
My child likes school.	33	40	2	1	1
My child is making good progress in school.	25	39	8	3	2
Behaviour in the school is good.	13	42	12	8	0
My child gets the right amount of work to do at home.	13	43	11	5	4
The teaching is good.	17	48	5	5	2
I am kept well informed about how my child is getting on.	16	35	18	8	0
I would feel comfortable about approaching the school with questions or a problem.	22	42	9	2	1
The school expects my child to work hard and achieve his or her best.	22	43	6	3	2
The school works closely with parents.	9	40	23	5	0
The school is well led and managed.	12	43	14	4	4
The school is helping my child become mature and responsible.	23	32	8	8	6
The school provides an interesting range of activities outside lessons.	12	39	13	6	7

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

AREAS OF LEARNING FOR CHILDREN IN THE FOUNDATION STAGE

60. Most children attend a nursery or playgroup prior to joining the school. Children are admitted to the Reception class in two stages during the school year, in September and in January. In consequence, at the time of inspection, one class consisted of children who had been in the school for one and a half terms and had made very good progress, and the other consisted of children who had been in school for only five weeks and were still settling into school routines. Initial assessments are carried out in the first two weeks of the children being in school. Information from these assessments indicates that attainment on entry is broadly average, though standards in speaking and listening are below expectations. Inspection findings confirm this; the large majority of children are on course to attain at least expected standards by the age of five

61. Teaching in the Foundation Stage was judged to be good overall. However, teaching and learning is very good in one class and satisfactory in the other.

Personal, social and emotional development

62. Standards are at the expected level and, in a significant number of cases, above that expected for children's ages. Children who have been in school since the beginning of the school year are confident in their surroundings and are able to concentrate for long periods. For example, they sat quietly and remained alert during whole-school assemblies and at the beginning of lessons. Children seek help when needed. They respond positively and confidently to a range of experiences, forming relationships, taking turns, sharing, and co-operating well. For example, children were seen collaborating particularly well in the 'Opticians' role-play area, where they became fully involved in their play. Children become involved in the classroom routines, such as clearing away after activities, and they demonstrate care, showing respect and affection for other children. The majority dress independently after physical education lessons. Teaching in this area of learning is good overall; it is very good in one class and satisfactory in the other. In the very good lessons, the class teacher and non-teaching assistant have developed a very good rapport with the children. They work well together, and organise an interesting and exciting variety of activities with a clear purpose. This leads to a high level of confidence and growing independence in the children.

Communication, language and literacy

63. Standards are at the expected level, and, in a significant minority of cases, above the expectations for the children's age. There is a clear difference in standards in the classes, because children who have been in school since the beginning of the school year have made good progress and are able to read a range of familiar words and sentences. They understand what makes a story and can talk about the main characters in their reading book. These children read regularly to the class teacher and other adults. They listen to a story attentively and respond appropriately, sitting still and looking at the story-teller, communicating their likes and dislikes in clear and easily understandable speech. Children understand that words and pictures carry meaning and are aware that print is read from left to right, and from top to bottom. They are beginning to read a range of

familiar words from the National Literacy Strategy's 'High Frequency Word List' for Reception pupils and are beginning to spell these phonetically, knowing, for example, that 't' + 'h' makes a 'th' sound. They are experimenting with words and sounds. For example, children were seen looking for words beginning with 'g' for the classroom display. A significant proportion of children understand the term 'non-fiction'. Most children in the newly-arrived cohort are beginning to associate sounds with patterns, words and letters. They are able to recognise some letters and can pronounce them and point them out on the page. Children enjoy marking and basic writing experiences, using a range of marking implements for drawing, marking, scribbling and writing. They are writing over the teacher's writing, beginning correct letter formation, and copying under their teacher's examples.

64. Teaching ranges from very good to unsatisfactory, and is satisfactory overall. Where it is very good, the teacher has a very good understanding of the learning needs of young children, and the teacher and the learning support assistant and other adult helpers work together very well to plan and organise activities. Adults have very good relationships with the children and value and encourage talk, with the result that the children make good progress in their speaking and listening skills. In the one lesson where teaching was judged to be unsatisfactory, the teacher failed to provide activities appropriate to the development or abilities of children. In addition, expectations of children were too high, given their very short time in school. In consequence, children became inattentive because they could not achieve what was expected of them.

Mathematical development

65. Standards are at the expected level. A significant minority of the children have an understanding which is above the expected level. Children are beginning to use their developing mathematical understanding to solve practical problems and know, for example, the sequence of numbers 1 to 10. They are able to 'add one more to' or 'make 1 less than' a given amount of coins, and know the days of the week in sequence. Children who have been in the school for less than half a term are learning and developing the vocabulary of shape and size. Using a balance scale, they look at which object is 'lightest' and 'heaviest', and when they are seeing who can build the tallest tower from building blocks they use the words 'taller' and 'tallest'.

66. Others are comparing the size of models in the class doll's house. In the mathematical sessions observed, the teaching was good overall. Children benefit significantly from well-planned activities, which include purposeful tasks which are matched to the pupils' needs.

Knowledge and understanding of the world

67. Standards are at the expected level. Children talk readily to adults and other children about day-to-day life and about events important to them. They show an appropriate understanding of basic scientific facts, understanding the importance of sight in everyday activities and recognising that shiny things reflect images. One group are investigating their own faces, using mirrors to draw their features in an outline face shape they have been given. Another group, with help, are designing and making 'spectacles'. Some children are working at the class computer, using a mouse and clicking and dragging to move features into a face shape, and others are learning how to use a programmable toy, a 'Roamer', seeing who can make it go the longest distance. Teaching was good overall in

these lessons. Where teaching was very good, the teacher had planned an interesting range of activities that moved children on with their understanding. There was a very good rapport with the pupils and the available classroom support was deployed very well.

Physical development

68. Standards are at the expected level. In a lesson observed in the hall, children showed a sound awareness of their own bodies and control of their own and others' space, and responded to the activities with enthusiasm, imagination and confidence. Teaching in this lesson was very good, with especially good encouragement of speaking and listening skills and reinforcement of appropriate behaviour. However, classroom space for role-play activities is limited, and opportunities for outdoor activities with large play equipment are restricted owing to limitations in the accommodation. Effective use is made of the school hall for large play-equipment activities.

Creative development

69. Children reach the expected levels in their creative skills. They enjoy role-play in the 'Hawkinge Opticians', for example, and imaginative games. In one activity linked to the class topic of 'Senses', they are making spectacles, 'designing' them by using two-dimensional shapes. They colour the frames, cut them out, and glue coloured cellophane for the lenses with appropriate dexterity. Children join in with songs, singing simple songs from memory, and respond to the moods and tempo of the music, joining in with actions. Teaching in these lessons was very good. Creative activities were included in a well-organised range of activities, with all resources readily at hand and available for the children to use.

70. Teachers base their lessons on national guidance, incorporating information about children's basic skills which was gained from the initial assessment when they joined the school. The teacher with responsibility for the Foundation Stage is experienced and has a very good knowledge of the needs of young children and the requirements of the Early Learning Goals. Learning support assistants work very well in co-operation with the class teachers, supporting the children very well. Provision for pupils with special educational needs is good, with early identification of children's learning needs. Accommodation is restricted; the classrooms are small, and this makes it difficult for the teachers to provide a wide range of interesting 'free choice' activities. Although provision for outdoor activities has recently been improved with 'safety matting', the enclosed 'outdoor' area is too small for the number of children, and access is difficult.

ENGLISH

71. Results of the national tests in summer 2000 for Year 6 pupils show that standards were below the average attained by all schools nationally.

72. The proportion of pupils attaining above the expected level was well below the national average. When compared to those of schools with a similar percentage of pupils known to be eligible for free school meals, the results were average. When the school's results are considered over a four-year period, they show an improving trend overall which follows the national picture. There has been satisfactory improvement since the last inspection, when standards were well below national average.

73. Results of the tests taken by pupils at the end of Year 2 in 2000 show that standards were well above the national average, and they were high when compared to those of schools with a similar percentage of pupils known to be eligible for free school meals. The proportion of pupils attaining above the expected level was substantially above the national average in reading and writing. The difference in the results of pupils aged seven and eleven is due largely to the high proportion (48 per cent) of pupils who joined the school during Key Stage 2, and the large proportion of pupils with special educational needs.

74. Evidence from the inspection shows that standards are below the national expectation by the end of Year 6. This picture matches the school's results in the 2000 national tests. The proportion of pupils expected to reach standards above those expected for pupils aged 11 is small. This is due largely to the lack of challenge for average-attaining pupils and a preponderance of pupils with special educational needs. Inspection evidence shows that standards match those expected nationally for pupils aged seven. This is a similar picture to the one reported in the previous inspection. The difference between the standards seen during the inspection and the results of the 2000 national tests is due to a slight decline in the quality of reading. This is because the more able pupils are not given reading material which stretches them. In addition, the more able pupils do not benefit from a systematic approach, including the use of assessment procedures, to the teaching of reading.

75. By Year 2, standards in speaking and listening are similar to the national expectation. Pupils listen attentively to class teachers, and to other pupils in discussions. By Year 6, standards are below those expected for pupils aged 11. Pupils talk and listen with confidence in a range of contexts, but only the more able pupils develop their ideas thoughtfully and convey their opinions clearly. Such an example was seen when pupils in Year 6 were trying to solve the Mystery of the Red-Haired League. The majority of pupils displayed their understanding clearly but used only short phrases, which hindered their ability to convey complex meanings.

76. Standards in reading match the national expectation by Years 2 and 6. Pupils in Years 1 and 2 read fluently and independently, and express opinions about the plot or characters in stories. However, average attainers and more able pupils do not read books which are sufficiently stimulating and interesting. In addition, the books do not introduce pupils to a wide enough vocabulary. Reading records are not used to note areas of weakness and to set pupils targets for improvement. Less able pupils develop a good range of phonic skills with effective support from learning support assistants. By Year 6, pupils of average and below average attainment read confidently, but do not have a good range of strategies to help them when faced with words they do not recognise. The more able pupils read independently and expressively. They make comparisons with other books, and talk confidently about the plot, including making

predictions. However, throughout the school, pupils do not have a wide range of good quality books from which to choose.

77. Standards in writing are above the national expectation by the end of Year 2. Handwriting and punctuation are particular strengths. Pupils write confidently, using a joined, legible script. They write for a range of purposes, with strengths in poetry and imaginative stories. Good examples were seen in pupils' written work, such as 'The Key Fits' and 'It Could Have Been Worse', where pupils wrote imaginatively and with sensitivity. By Year 6, standards are below those expected of pupils aged 11. The more able pupils write fluently, with a good range of punctuation, including speech marks, commas and paragraphs. Their use of vocabulary is imaginative and appropriate to the task, such as in their report writing on the solution of a mystery, in poems on Good Weather, and in Letter Poems. Pupils of average attainment apply spelling rules satisfactorily, but punctuation skills are weak, with incorrect use of full stops and capital letters to demarcate sentences. Several pupils with average attainment do not use joined script. The large majority of less able pupils have weaknesses in basic writing skills. There is no significant difference in the attainment of girls and boys.

78. There has been underachievement in the past in Year 6. However, the most recent national tests and inspection evidence indicate that this is being addressed through improved teaching and with better use of information from assessment procedures. Pupils now make good progress in lessons. The quality of teaching was judged to be good throughout the school. Nearly 75 per cent of the teaching was good, but one lesson was judged to be unsatisfactory. In good lessons, teachers present the text enthusiastically in shared-reading activities. In consequence, pupils have positive attitudes to learning through stimulating question and answer sessions. For example, pupils in Year 2 were keen to choose rhyming words and recognise a particular phoneme. The helpful use of examples on the overhead projector successfully promoted pupils' interest in a class with pupils in Years 3 and 4. For example, they made sensible guesses at the meaning of archaic words to be found in an excerpt from Chaucer. Listening skills are actively encouraged, but opportunities to promote speaking skills were not developed in several lessons because teachers did not insist on pupils organising their responses. Pupils made the most gains in their writing during lessons which were well organised and included carefully selected tasks. For example, pupils in Year 1 benefited from a range of well-matched tasks which focused on spelling and making use of adjacent consonants. Pupils enjoy reading and listening to well-read poems. Poetry is taught well, and good examples were seen in Years 3 and 4. In these lessons, pupils were encouraged to read poems with examples of rhyming couplets and interesting adjectives and similes.

79. Pupils are particularly responsive when teaching is challenging. They settle quickly and work quickly and industriously. For example, a class of more able pupils from Years 5 and 6 were seen to collaborate well to discuss a solution to a mystery. As a result, they made very good progress. However, pupils make little progress when teachers use closed questions which do not encourage pupils to think for themselves. In these lessons, pupils do not fully develop their knowledge and understanding. Behaviour is good in the majority of lessons, owing to good management skills and an atmosphere of mutual respect which successfully promotes learning. The quality of marking is inconsistent because not all teachers provide helpful comments. Pupils with special educational needs make good progress as a result of the well-focused individual education plans and effective support from learning support assistants. Some support to pupils' literary skills is given through

written work in Years 1 and 2, and in lessons in history and religious education throughout the school. Word-processing skills are used to support work in some classes but the provision is patchy.

80. Management of English is good. The co-ordinator has put into place, or developed, a range of strategies to improve teaching and learning, though they have yet to have a full impact on learning and achievement levels. A careful analysis of information from improved assessment procedures has resulted in target setting for individuals and groups of pupils. Combined with an improvement in monitoring of teaching and learning, this development enables the school to monitor the progress being made by pupils and the standards they achieve. The school places a strong emphasis on reading activities, which include Book Club, Book Week, visiting authors, and poetry competitions. However, many book corners do not provide pupils with an interesting learning environment. Resources, such as fiction and non-fiction books, are inadequate and do not support the teaching of the more able pupils.

MATHEMATICS

81. Results of the tests taken by pupils at the end of Year 2 in 2000 show that standards were well above the national average and those of schools with a similar percentage of pupils known to eligible for free school meals. The proportion of pupils attaining above the expected level was also above the national average. Results over the past four years have been consistently above the national average and the trend is sharply rising. The inspection findings confirm the test results. By Year 2, the large majority of pupils attain the national standard and a significant proportion attain above it.

82. The picture at the end of Key Stage 2, when pupils are aged eleven, is less favourable, although in the last three years results have shown a marked rise in the proportion of pupils attaining the national standard. The trend is upward. The results of the national tests taken in 2000 show that more than two-thirds attain the national standard, though the proportion attaining the higher level falls short of the national average. Overall, pupils' attainment is below the national average but in line with the performance of similar schools. The inspection findings confirm the test results. By Year 6, most pupils attain the national average and a significant minority attain above it.

83. By Year 2, pupils are fluent in the use of number. They count sets of objects reliably and use mental recall of addition and subtraction facts to at least 20. They know the multiplication tables for 2, 5 and 10. Pupils apply their knowledge of number to simplify problems. They know about coins and correctly calculate the change from twenty and fifty pence. Pupils know the difference between odd and even numbers; they investigate whether odd numbers when added together will always make an even number. Pupils are quick to spot patterns in number and can name the next number in a simple sequence. They know about two- and three-dimensional shapes. Pupils count corners and sides and investigate symmetry by folding paper shapes. Pupils acquire good basic skills and begin to use the language of mathematics. However, most written work is on worksheets and these do not provide a sufficiently clear and accessible record of what pupils know, understand and can do.

84. Basic skills develop further in Years 3 to 6 and, by Year 6, standards are higher than those reported in the previous inspection. Most pupils have a secure grasp of place value and the four

operations of number. They understand and use factors and multiples. Most understand fractions and percentages and how to convert one to the other. Pupils find the

areas and perimeters of regular shapes by counting squares and find out that the same result can be obtained by easier methods. Pupils know about angles, which they construct and measure accurately. Pupils collect data in a traffic census and illustrate it on a pictogram and bar chart. Pupils' skills in problem solving are better developed than at the previous inspection. For example, they investigate the total number of handshakes if everyone in the class shakes hands with everyone else.

85. Pupils make at least sound progress in Years 1 to 2, and good progress in knowledge and understanding of number. The curriculum in Year 3 to Year 6 is wider than it was at the previous inspection, and pupils now make sound progress in developing problem-solving skills. Pupils' progress is enhanced by daily practice in mental calculation but the pace is sometimes too slow and lacking in urgency. Pupils with special educational needs are given good support in learning basic skills. The more able pupils, while making better progress than at the previous inspection, are not consistently given challenging work that they can complete independently. There is too little opportunity to confirm and extend learning by the use of computer programmes.

86. Numeracy skills are satisfactorily used in other areas of the curriculum, though there is no specific planning to ensure this. For example, in history pupils place historical events on a time line; in geography pupils use their knowledge of co-ordinates to read maps. In music, pupils clap simple rhythms and in physical education they measure pulse rates. In science pupils correctly measure quantities when conducting experiments.

87. Overall, the quality of teaching throughout the school is satisfactory, and at both key stages there are examples of good teaching. This is characterised by a bright, stimulating approach, good planning and a fund of enterprising ideas. For example, in one lesson pupils' knowledge of the multiples of 3 and 4 was tested in a bingo game and confirmed in an investigation of odd and even numbers. In Years 3 to 6, teaching is significantly better than at the previous inspection, though expectations of the more able pupils are sometimes too low. Pupils are well managed throughout the school. Teachers expect the pupils to behave well and to work hard. Relationships are good and based upon mutual respect. Teachers and learning support assistants work very well together and respond well to the needs of individual pupils. Pupils benefit from being taught in groups of similar ability at Key Stage 2 because it ensures that they work at the level most suited to them. In all classrooms there is a good working atmosphere although occasionally noise levels are too high. Lessons are planned satisfactorily and the progress of pupils is carefully checked. Teachers share the lesson objectives with the class and check to see what pupils have learnt.

88. The management of the subject has improved since the previous inspection. Assessment is better. It is used consistently throughout the school to inform lesson planning and to set group and individual targets. Time is provided for the subject co-ordinator to monitor and evaluate the work of colleagues; consequently, good practice is shared and teachers new to the school are well supported. Resources to support learning are good and in evidence in all classes. The school recognises that the priority for future development is to further raise standards by Year 6.

SCIENCE

89. Results of the national tests in summer 2000 for Year 6 pupils show that standards were well below those of all schools nationally. The proportion of pupils attaining above the expected level was also well below the national average. When compared to those of schools with a similar percentage of pupils known to be eligible for free school meals, the results were below average. When the school's results are considered over a four-year period, they show fluctuations but an improving trend overall which mirrors the national picture. Teachers' assessments of pupils at the end of Year 2 in 2000 show that standards were close to the national average when compared to those of other schools nationally. However, the proportion of pupils attaining above the expected level was well above the national average.

90. The difference in the results of pupils aged seven and eleven is largely due to the high proportion of pupils who joined the school at a time other than at the usual time of admission during Key Stage 2. For example, 48 percent of the pupils who left in the summer of 2000 at the end of Year 6 joined the school during Key Stage 2, with over 20 per cent joining the school in their final year. In addition, 46 per cent of pupils had special educational needs. In the current Year 6, 44 per cent joined the school during Key Stage 2 and 50 per cent have special educational needs; 38 per cent of these pupils are given additional support and targets for progress are set within their individual education plans.

91. Inspection evidence shows that standards attained by pupils currently in Year 2 match those expected for their age. However, pupils in Year 6 are working at levels below those expected for their age, and this is due largely to the high proportion of pupils with special educational needs and the significant numbers of pupils who have left or joined the class during Key Stage 2. In addition, pupils, and particularly the more able, are not sufficiently challenged by investigative work and scientific enquiry. This was a weakness identified in the previous report. Pupils become familiar with life processes and living things, materials and their properties, and physical processes, and they acquire a sound understanding of them. Pupils in Year 6 lack skills in conducting the whole process of independently planning and carrying out experiments, largely because they are not given sufficient opportunities. In addition, much of the work is copied and pupils are given few opportunities to write independently. The school is aware of these weaknesses. Some staff lack confidence in the subject and the acting subject co-ordinator has identified the need to provide staff training.

92. The quality of teaching and learning throughout the school is satisfactory, with elements of good practice in almost all lessons. Good teaching was seen in Year 2, where pupils were enthralled by the practical work in their study of plants; this allowed them to find out for themselves, using excellent resources. The most successful lessons allowed pupils to benefit from a good balance of direct teaching and opportunities for them to apply their enquiry skills to find things out for themselves. In lessons where pupils are challenged by the teaching, pupils behave well, concentrate on what they are doing, and work hard to overcome difficulties. These good attitudes make a significant contribution to pupils' learning. Another good example of investigative work was seen in a Year 5 lesson where pupils were measuring their heart rate before and after different types of exercise. Some pupils, particularly the more able, went on to gain a sound understanding of the body's response to exercise. In lessons which are otherwise judged to be satisfactory, pupils do not spend enough time finding things out for themselves.

93. Results show that there has been underachievement in the past, but currently pupils are making satisfactory progress in lessons and over time. Until recently, the influence of teaching on learning has been weakened because pupils' investigative skills have not been systematically developed year on year. This remains a weakness, particularly in Year 6, where activities are too directed. However, pupils in Years 3, 4 and 5 are making satisfactory progress in scientific enquiry because of the increased emphasis on this area of their learning. In Years 3 and 4, for example, pupils were fully involved in making a wormery to increase their knowledge and understanding of different habitats.

94. Learning intentions are generally clear in teachers' planning and are shared with pupils so that they are aware of what they are to learn. However, some of the learning intentions are too general and pupils' progress can not easily be measured during lessons. The good quality provision made for pupils with special educational needs ensures them full and equal access to the curriculum. As a result, these pupils make progress that is comparable to that of other pupils of similar abilities. Apart from the weakness already mentioned, all aspects of science are given appropriate consideration. Opportunities for pupils to record their work independently, as seen in a Year 5 lesson, and the teaching of the correct scientific vocabulary, as seen in a Year 2 lesson, help the subject makes a sound contribution to pupils' literacy skills, although there are inconsistencies. The development of pupils' numeracy skills is well supported as pupils measure heart rates, forces and record their findings graphically.

95. The acting headteacher oversees the subject. An action plan was developed in response to the findings of the previous inspection, but it has yet to be fully implemented. The subject would benefit from a review and additional support to help continue its development in the school, for example in the use of assessment information to plan work for individual groups of pupils. The needs of the more able pupils are not always considered during practical investigations, and pupils are not given enough opportunities are to write independently.

96. During the inspection, it was not possible to see enough lessons taught in all subjects to be able to make valid judgements about all aspects. In some subjects, for example, it is not possible to make an overall judgement about the quality of teaching, although some conclusions are drawn from the few lessons and the scrutiny of previously completed work. In other subjects, it is not possible to make a judgement about attainment and progress because of the limited amount of pupils' work made available by the school.

ART AND DESIGN

97. By Years 2 and 6, attainment is at the expected levels for pupils aged seven and eleven. Pupils benefit from a curriculum which gives them experience in working in a variety of media. Pupils have good opportunities to undertake a variety of two- and three-dimensional art, printing, making of collages, and painting and drawing in the style of different artists. Evidence of this creative and rich variety of work was seen around the school in displays which enhanced the learning environment.

98. During the inspection, pupils in Year 1 were seen painting in the style of a Russian abstract painter, Wassily Kandinsky, after studying his work on 'Circles' or 'Ring' paintings. In addition, pupils continued with their weaving project; a small number of more able pupils were able to recall 'weft' and 'warp' from a previous lesson. By Year 2, pupils produce collages and work with charcoal in the style of another artist, Henrick Avercamp, with the drawings of water scenes. The standards of the small proportion of more able pupils is above that expected for their age because of the detail in the drawings and the good use of shading. Through Years 3 to 6, pupils continue to work in the style of different artists, such as Seurat. Information and communication technology is used to support some of this work by simulating the effect of 'Pointillism', using the 'spray tool'. In Year 5, pupils develop their knowledge and understanding further through studying the work of Matisse and Picasso before producing figure drawings, using charcoal pencils, and painting in 'flat colour' in the style of Picasso's 'Blue Period'. By Year 6, pupils have developed a good understanding of different styles and experienced a range of media, such as those used for printing repeated patterns and producing two- and three-dimensional pieces of work.

99. Pupils were seen to respond well in lessons, and particularly in Years 3 to 6, where response was good overall. Pupils enjoy their art activities and, in the majority of cases, they respond well to practical guidelines and show pride in their work. The quality of learning in lessons was judged to be satisfactory in Years 1 and 2, and good in Years 3 to 6. This picture reflects the quality of teaching. Where teaching is good, pupils are highly motivated, and work together well without the need for constant intervention by the teacher. In consequence, they achieve well and make good progress. Pupils benefited most from teaching which was well paced and where resources were used imaginatively and effectively to support the learning. Teachers with good subject knowledge provided pupils with well-focused support which encouraged them to evaluate and refine their work.

DESIGN AND TECHNOLOGY

100. The teaching of design and technology is blocked against the teaching of art. During the inspection, no teaching was seen and there was little evidence of pupils' work on which to base a judgement about standards. Aspects of design and technology are integrated into other parts of the curriculum and enhance pupils' understanding in several subjects, including history and art. Evidence from the small number of displays shows that pupils' skills in designing, making and evaluating are developed with the use of a range of materials. The subject is without a co-ordinator or a policy, although curriculum planning shows that the subject is taught throughout the school.

GEOGRAPHY

101. By Years 2 and 6, attainment is at the expected levels for pupils aged seven and eleven. This picture reflects the findings of the previous inspection. By Year 2, pupils are able to contrast some of the features of their lives, including houses, food and schools, with those of children in Struay. Pupils in Year 1 are at the early stages of understanding the relationship of maps to the 'real world'. They can make simple plans of their classroom and plot a pathway through it. This knowledge and understanding is developed further in Year 2, where pupils are able to attempt their own maps on a larger scale. By Year 6, pupils learn adequately about the lives of people in several other countries.

They have an appropriate understanding of maps and are able to identify and locate features on them, using six figure grid references. In their study of the 'Water Cycle' pupils become familiar with the features of rivers. Pupils in Years 3 to 6 have made studies of the lives of people in some countries in Africa, as well as in Malaysia and Sri Lanka. The school has made use of the local environment to help pupils understand how places develop, and the problems associated with this growth. For example, pupils in Year 6 have considered the problems of pollution caused by the rapid growth of their own village. Pupils have an appropriate knowledge of the environment and have studied the conservation of the rainforest and the problems associated with trying to achieve this.

102. Pupils benefit from a wide range of resources. For example, pupils made good use of atlases, maps and aerial photographs to identify towns and other features in Egypt. However, the school does not place sufficient emphasis on the practising of geographical skills; pupils do not have enough opportunity to learn at first hand, collect and record evidence, and draw conclusions from what they have found.

103. Curriculum planning is underpinned by national guidance. However, the teaching of geography is not systematic and the subject guidance needs to be amended to ensure that pupils in the mixed-age classes are given appropriate work.

HISTORY

104. By Year 2, standards are above the national expectation for pupils aged seven, and they match them for pupils aged eleven in Year 6. This picture is similar to that reported in the previous inspection. The difference between standards is largely due to the limited opportunities given to pupils at Key Stage 2 to communicate rather than recall knowledge. Pupils in Years 1 and 2 are consistently challenged to demonstrate their knowledge by producing extended pieces of written work. However, pupils in Years 3 to 6 are not given enough opportunities to write independently because a great deal of their work is copied or is in the form of work sheets.

105. By Year 2, pupils develop a sense of chronology by completing personal time lines and using terms which are concerned with the passing of time. For example, pupils appreciate that it was a very long time ago when creatures fell to the bottom of the sea to become fossils. Pupils have a good recall of events in the lives of famous people, such as Louis Braille and the archaeologist Mary Anning. They organise historical information successfully in when they place events in the life of Florence Nightingale in chronological order.

106. During the inspection, pupils in Years 3 and 4 used a video-recording effectively to increase their knowledge of how historical events are remembered. Pupils in Year 5 were suitably challenged to discover more about Henry the Eighth and to place the Tudor period in a historical context, in a wall display. By Year 6, pupils develop a good factual knowledge of areas of study such as rationing in World War Two, or the names and events in Tudor and Stuart times. However, pupils are less confident when making links between events and

giving reasons for changes. Pupils study artefacts as a source of information and give interesting opinions as to their use, for example, in Tudor times. However, pupils lack experience in using a range of information, such as documents, CD-Roms and printed sources, on which to base their opinions, and they are not encouraged enough to think for themselves.

107. Pupils have positive attitudes toward history and enjoy lessons, particularly those involving the use of artefacts or practical work. For example, pupils in Year 2 were fascinated by practical work to help them understand the difficulties encountered by archaeologists. Pupils collaborated well when working in groups to reassemble a wooden replica of a dinosaur skeleton. When given the opportunity, they concentrate well and show independence when not directly supervised by the teacher. For example, pupils in Years 3/4 applied themselves conscientiously and worked quietly when studying King Alfred's life during a question and answer session.

108. Pupils benefit significantly from a well-planned curriculum and good use of resources to support teaching. The subject co-ordinator has carried out an audit of the subject and plans to supplement the national guidance with the school's own planning. Teaching would benefit from the sharing of good practice which exists in the school.

INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATIONS TECHNOLOGY (ICT)

109. By Year 2, pupils make satisfactory progress and achieve national expectations for pupils aged seven. However, by Year 6, standards are below national expectations for pupils aged 11. Pupils reach the expected level in communicating and handling information, but standards are below the expected levels in controlling, monitoring and modelling. The school does not comply with statutory requirements. This is due largely to the limited opportunities given to pupils to develop their skills and understanding. In addition, there is little evidence to indicate that ICT is used to support pupils' work in other subjects.

110. By Year 2, pupils understand how information exists in different forms. For example, pupils in Year 1 were seen exploring the use of different fonts, and discussing the storage of information and how it is communicated. In Year 2, pupils successfully copy text from a story book 'The Gingerbread Man' on to a word-processor. They continue to develop their keyboard skills with the help of good guidance and the use of spreadsheets. By Year 6, pupils produce graphs using information about their pets and favourite foods. They make posters of nursery rhymes, inserting 'clip art' into their work, and choosing an appropriate font, size and colour. Most pupils understand how to switch the computers on but a significant minority need guidance in how to find a program. Pupils' word-processing skills match the national expectation, though at present there are limited opportunities for pupils to develop their skills in controlling, monitoring and modelling. During the inspection, pupils in Year 5 were seen using data collected from a science lesson on pulse rates before and after exercise. This information was used to produce a bar graph or pie graph of their results. However, ICT was not seen to be supporting pupils' work in other subjects nor is it evident from pupils' written work.

111. Pupils' attitudes and behaviour in the lessons seen were satisfactory. Most pupils enjoy the opportunity to work at the computers and work together with their partners, taking turns and sharing resources. The quality of pupils' learning in all lessons seen was sound; most pupils respond well to the opportunities for direct 'hands on' experience in the ICT suite, although a small minority of pupils need constant intervention by the teacher to keep them focused on the task.

112. The quality of teaching in both key stages is satisfactory; teachers give clear instructions and guidance to pupils, use appropriate subject vocabulary, use questioning well to probe pupils' learning and understanding, and provide good support for pupils with special needs.

113. At the beginning of the current year, an ICT area was developed within a part of the new building. The improved provision gives each class a weekly lesson in the use of computers. However, resources were withdrawn from classrooms to support this development, and pupils lost the benefit of the day-to-day use of ICT to support their work in other subjects. Once the school has received its share of national funding it plans to develop the overall provision to meet to comply fully with statutory requirements. The school is aware of the need to provide in-service training for staff.

MUSIC

114. By Years 2 and 6, standards match those expected of pupils aged seven and eleven. Pupils make satisfactory progress in all elements of the curriculum. Progress in singing is good. Pupils sing well in assembly and in hymn practice, and demonstrate sensitivity to the words of the hymn. They phrase well and their diction is clear. Pupils enjoy singing and perform action songs with enthusiasm, particularly in the assembly taken by the local clergy.

115. By Year 2, pupils explore and create long and short sounds on percussion instruments and voice. Pupils know that different notes have different lengths and clap a three-bar rhythm including quavers, crotchets and minims. They enjoy clapping the rhythm of each other's names. Pupils learn to emphasise the first beat of the bar in singing *One, two, buckle my shoe*. In their singing of *John Brown's Baby* and the rap on *Kentucky Fried Chicken* pupils demonstrate their awareness that music creates different moods.

116. By Year 6, pupils become more adventurous in their singing lessons. They learn a new song in a single lesson and sing it as a three-part round. They learn to appreciate the contribution of others and the value of working together to achieve an effect. They also demonstrate a good awareness of rhythm and tempo. During the inspection, pupils in Year 6 sang the songs of the Second World War and reflected on the historical period and social context. The lesson concluded with a spirited version of *Kiss me goodnight, sergeant major*. Pupils were observed listening to music from around the world in class and assembly. They were particularly attracted to the music of the Andes and showed a good appreciation of its rhythms. Composition was not observed, but it is included in the planning.

117. The quality of teaching is satisfactory overall and it has a number of good features. Pupils are managed well and teachers find the right balance between creativity and control. The creative spirit is encouraged and all pupils are given the chance to make music. Pupils with special educational needs are given good support. Relationships are good and built on friendliness and respect. Teachers have good knowledge of the subject and ably demonstrate what they want pupils to do. Effective use is made of the resources available, especially the percussion instruments.

118. Music is well organised and pupils are given many opportunities to perform. There are two percussion bands, a choir, and a recorder group, which gave its first public performance during the inspection week. There are concerts at Christmas and at the end of the summer term, and these are well supported by parents. The school takes part in the local music festival and, from time-to-time, joins forces with the village band. Although music is not quite as strong as it was reported to be in the previous inspection, the subject has a firm place in the curriculum and contributes well to the cultural life of the school.

PHYSICAL EDUCATION

119. By Years 2 and 6, standards in physical education, including dance and swimming, are at the expected level for pupils aged seven and eleven, though the more able pupils do not achieve as well as they should. This is due largely to the lack of challenging tasks, particularly in gymnastics and games skills. However, in swimming, where pupils benefit from being taught in groups of similar ability, the well-matched tasks give pupils challenging work which encourages them to achieve well. In consequence, they make good progress in lessons and over time. Standards seen during the current inspection are not as good as those described in the previous report.

120. In Years 1 and 2, the majority of pupils move with confidence and link skills to make a sequence in gymnastics and dance. Pupils show some imaginative ideas, although the overall quality of pupils' movement skills in gymnastics is underdeveloped. Pupils are unable to reproduce simple skills with consistency and to explore imaginatively with confidence. A particular weakness in Years 1 and 2, and one which is mirrored in work in Years 3 to 6, is the inability of pupils to evaluate their own work and that of others, to help with the improvement of skills and understanding. However, in dance, pupils move with much confidence, particularly girls, and they reproduce some complex skills with consistency.

121. In Years 3 to 6, the small number of more able pupils show good levels of co-ordination and move with confidence in gymnastics and in their games skills. For example, pupils in Years 3 and 4 controlled the ball well during skittle ball and passed the ball with accuracy and pace. These pupils also showed positional awareness by moving into an appropriate space to support members of their team.

122. By Year 6, pupils develop their co-ordination and an ability to interpret music through dance; they develop a good awareness of traditional dances from several countries. In swimming, pupils in Years 5 and 6 develop their confidence in and around water, and learn several strokes. The large majority of pupils meet the expected standard. However, all pupils in Years 3 to 6, including higher attainers, would benefit both from more challenging activities to improve their skills and from further opportunities to plan and evaluate their work. Although the large majority of pupils make satisfactory progress in lessons and over time, the small proportion of higher attainers in Years 1 to 6 are underachieving in physical education, and particularly in gymnastics and games skills. This is because they are not given enough opportunities to strengthen control and fluency in their practical work, and to develop an ability to compare their own work with that of others.

123. The quality of teaching is satisfactory overall. All but two lessons were judged to be satisfactory or better; the one good lesson was taken by outside specialists. Pupils are keen to participate, and they make the most gains in their development and understanding of skills when teaching includes well-paced practical activities, clear demonstrations and opportunities to practise their skills. Some aspects of good teaching were seen in several lessons, and pupils are well managed. Good relationships are used to help pupils organise themselves and work successfully in groups. Unsatisfactory teaching was slowly paced and included little guidance for pupils to help them develop skills and improve their understanding. Poor use was made of the available space in the hall. Overall weaknesses in otherwise satisfactory teaching included a lack of in-depth knowledge of the subject, particularly with regard to gymnastics, and the absence of challenging tasks to stretch all pupils. Pupils made satisfactory progress in lessons, though they are capable of achieving more. Throughout the school, pupils with special educational needs are well integrated, and they make similar gains to other pupils in the lessons. The recently appointed subject co-ordinator would benefit from support in managing the subject. The school does not have sufficient equipment or adequate facilities to successfully support the teaching of gymnastics in Years 3 to 6.

RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

124. Owing to the timetabling, just a small number of lessons were observed during the inspection, and these were seen in classes between Years 3 and 6. However, evidence from a range of evidence, including displays and examples of pupils' work, shows that pupils aged seven and eleven reach the objectives of the locally Agreed Syllabus. Standards seen during the current inspection are not as good as those described in the previous report. Weekly religious education lessons are well supported by daily acts of collective worship.

125. By Year 2, pupils develop a sound understanding of a range of Bible stories such as 'The Good Samaritan' and 'The Loaves and the Fishes', and of events surrounding the birth of Jesus. Their moral understanding is developed through the study of friendship and 'people who help us'. In Years 3 to 6, pupils extend their knowledge and understanding of Christianity and other major world religions. For example, pupils in Year 3/4 study 'Changes in my life' and Bible stories such as 'David and Goliath'. In their study of Hinduism, pupils in Year 3/4 wrote a short play script for the story of Ram and Sita, based on the story 'Rama and the Demon King'. As they progress through the key stage, pupils describe some of the key features of religions and know the names of some important religious figures and key events. By Year 5, pupils are familiar with the stories of the

prophet Muhammad and some Islamic patterns. In their attempts to retell stories of Muhammad such as 'The Woman at the Gate of Mecca', 'Ibrahim and the Idols' and 'The Thirsty Camel' by placing them in a modern day setting, pupils relate religious ideas to the world around them. By Year 6, pupils study a wide range of faiths and world religions. In their study of Sikhism, pupils look at Guru Nanak, the Sikh initiation ceremony, and Sikh traditional dress. However, most of the written work is copied material, and pupils have little opportunity to research and record their own findings.

126. The quality of teaching and learning was satisfactory in the small number of lessons seen. Teachers demonstrate sound knowledge of the subject and use questioning appropriately to test pupils' understanding and recollection. Pupils benefited most when encouraged to think for themselves and when given the opportunities to contribute to discussions. Pupils' attitudes in the lessons seen were satisfactory. The subject co-ordinator has good subject knowledge and monitors pupils' books on a termly basis. Class teachers are generally well supported by a sufficient range of artefacts and other resources.