

INSPECTION REPORT

SOUTH MALLING CE PRIMARY SCHOOL

Lewes, East Sussex

LEA area: East Sussex County Council

Unique reference number: 114509

Headteacher: Mr. Bryan Meyer

Reporting inspector: Mrs. Shelagh Halley
8203

Dates of inspection: 6-10th November, 2000

Inspection number: 225024

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

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INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Type of school:	Primary
School category:	Voluntary Controlled
Age range of pupils:	4 - 11
Gender of pupils:	Mixed
School address:	Church Lane Lewes East Sussex
Postcode:	BN7 2HS
Telephone number:	01273 473016
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Appropriate authority: Name of chair of governors:	The Governing Body Mr. Steve Tomlin
Date of previous inspection:	January, 1998

INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Team members		Subject responsibilities	Aspect responsibilities
Shelagh Halley 8203	Registered inspector	Mathematics Religious Education Music Special Educational Needs Equal Opportunities	How high are standards? How well are pupils taught?
Raymond Orchard 9885	Lay inspector		Attitudes, values and personal development How well does the school care for pupils? How well does the school work in partnership with parents? Spiritual, moral, social and cultural development
Janet Sinclair 19824	Team inspector	English Geography History	Provision for foundation stage How good are curricular and other opportunities? Assessment, procedures and use
Christopher Shaw 18638	Team inspector	Science Information and Communication Technology Art Design Technology Physical Education	How well is the school led and managed?

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REPORT CONTENTS

	Page
PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT	7
Information about the school	
How good the school is	
What the school does well	
What could be improved	
How the school has improved since its last inspection	
Standards	
Pupils' attitudes and values	
Teaching and learning	
Other aspects of the school	
How well the school is led and managed	
Parents' and carers' views of the school	
PART B: COMMENTARY	
HOW HIGH ARE STANDARDS?	11
The school's results and achievements	
Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development	
HOW WELL ARE PUPILS TAUGHT?	13
HOW GOOD ARE THE CURRICULAR AND OTHER OPPORTUNITIES OFFERED TO PUPILS?	14
HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL CARE FOR ITS PUPILS?	16
HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL WORK IN PARTNERSHIP WITH PARENTS	17
HOW WELL IS THE SCHOOL LED AND MANAGED?	18
WHAT SHOULD THE SCHOOL DO TO IMPROVE FURTHER?	20
PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS	21
PART D: THE STANDARDS AND QUALITY OF TEACHING IN AREAS OF THE CURRICULUM, SUBJECTS AND COURSES	25

PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

South Malling Primary School is situated in the East Sussex county town of Lewes and draws its pupils from the local estate. It has close links with the parish church of St. Michael's and the area has a strong sense of community which impacts positively on the life of the school. The school had the opportunity during the recent floods to strengthen links with the local community by acting as a reception centre for flood victims. There are 208 pupils on roll, 118 boys and 90 girls, aged between 4 and 11. This is about the same as other schools of this kind. Few pupils come from ethnic minorities, and there are no children of travelling or refugee families. The percentage of pupils with special educational needs is 21% which is broadly in line with the national average. The needs covered are reading, emotional and behavioural, and speech and communication. One child has a statement of special educational need, and this is also broadly in line. Children enter the reception class in the year in which they become five. At the time of the inspection, there were 24 children in this class, 8 of them attending full-time. Children enter the school with a broad range of abilities but are generally below the county average, particularly in listening, reading and writing skills and in some aspects of mathematics.

HOW GOOD THE SCHOOL IS

South Malling is an improving school. From a standard of attainment which is below average on entry, pupils make sufficient progress to slightly exceed expected levels in mathematics, but test results show that standards are below the national average in science and English. The quality of teaching is good overall, with a significant proportion of very good teaching. The leadership and management of the school is good, and the school's strengths outweigh its weaknesses. Taking all these factors into account, the school gives satisfactory value for money.

What the school does well

- Improving standards in mathematics
- Provision for pupils' personal development
- Procedures for child protection and for ensuring pupils' welfare
- Assessment of pupils' progress and its use in planning future lessons
- Partnership with parents and the wider community
- Leadership and management of the head teacher, governors and senior staff
- Relationships between pupils and between pupils and staff

What could be improved

- Standards of attainment, especially in the core subjects of English and science
- Standards in information and communication technology in Key Stage 2
- The use of information and communication technology as an integral part of all lessons
- Time-keeping at the start and finish of lessons

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

HOW THE SCHOOL HAS IMPROVED SINCE ITS LAST INSPECTION

The school was last inspected in 1998 when it was found to have serious weaknesses. The issues identified for development were: the deficiencies in the delivery of the National Curriculum, raising the attainment and progress of all pupils, maintaining the momentum towards better value for money and governors meeting their statutory responsibilities. Since then, the curriculum has been thoroughly revised and overhauled with new policies and schemes of work which meet all requirements of the National Curriculum, standards in mathematics have been raised, assessment of pupils' progress has been greatly improved along with its use in teachers' planning to meet the needs of all pupils, the role of the co-ordinator has been developed although not yet fully, and governors now meet their statutory responsibilities in delivering the curriculum, reporting to parents about attainment and progress, and ensuring that teachers' performance is appraised and evaluated. There is still scope for improvement in the role of class teachers in meeting the particular needs of pupils with special educational needs. Overall, improvement since the previous inspection has been good.

STANDARDS

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

Performance in:	compared with			
	all schools			similar schools
	1998	1999	2000	2000
English	E	E	D	E
Mathematics	C	D	B	C
Science	D	E	D	D

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

Standards attained by pupils are below the national average in English and science and the school did not reach its projected targets in these subjects. In mathematics, standards are slightly above the national average and the expected target set by the school was slightly exceeded. In comparison with similar schools, standards are well below the average in English, below in science, but in line with the average in mathematics. This is because pupils admitted to South Malling have attainment on entry which is generally below the county average, with particular difficulties in language and literacy and in aspects of mathematics. Children in the reception class are likely to meet the national early learning goals in physical development, knowledge and understanding of the world, creative and aesthetic development, and in personal and social development. Although they make good progress overall, they are unlikely to meet the expected levels in literacy and mathematics by the end of the foundation stage. Trends in attainment show that standards are improving steadily and are rising particularly in mathematics. This is because the school has introduced many new initiatives to raise standards but these have not yet been in place long enough to have a more significantly positive effect. Good individual tracking and recording of individual progress results in the setting of realistic and achievable individual targets based on pupils' prior attainment. However, the targets set locally do not reflect the specific needs of children in this school. Standards in lessons seen were below the expected level for the end of each key stage in English and science, and in line with the national expectation in mathematics. Most pupils work hard and are keen to improve their performance.

PUPILS' ATTITUDES AND VALUES

Aspect	Comment
Attitudes to the school	Good overall. Most pupils are eager to learn.
Behaviour, in and out of classrooms	Generally good, but the standards of behaviour observed in lessons varies
Personal development and relationships	Good. Many teachers have established trusting and productive relationships
Attendance	Better than the national average. Pupils' enthusiasm for school is good. However, there is some unpunctuality in the start and end of lessons.

Pupils come to school prepared to work hard and generally do so. Occasionally, work set is insufficiently challenging and pupils become bored and restless. Recent traumatic events, when 40 per cent of the pupils' homes were affected by flooding, have had an unsettling effect on the behaviour of

some. The very good relationships between pupils and pupils, pupils and staff have gone a long way to ameliorate the effects but some are still experiencing difficulties in conforming to behavioural expectations. Although there are few instances of persistent lateness, there is a tendency for lessons to begin later than the stated time, and for some to finish early with a resultant loss of teaching time.

TEACHING AND LEARNING

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

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

The quality of teaching is very rarely less than satisfactory, and the majority of teaching in the lessons seen was good. This good teaching and several instances of very good teaching were seen in both key stages. Unsatisfactory teaching was seen on two occasions in the same class. Overall, teaching is good in English and mathematics and teachers have adapted the literacy and numeracy strategies well to suit the needs of their pupils, and the majority of pupils make satisfactory, sometimes good, progress. Pupils with special educational needs are well supported in withdrawal sessions by specialist teachers, and in class with learning support assistants. They make good progress towards the targets in their individual education plans. On occasion, when the necessary support is not available, pupils with special educational needs and those with prior higher attainment make less progress than they should because class teachers have not provided work which is appropriate to their particular needs. In the two unsatisfactory lessons seen, the focus of the lesson was unclear and the teacher's behavioural and academic expectations were too low to provide a good learning environment to enable pupils to make maximum progress. Teaching was satisfactory or better in three quarters of the lessons seen, and very good in the remaining quarter.

OTHER ASPECTS OF THE SCHOOL

Aspect	Comment
The quality and range of the curriculum	Good. The school provides a broad and balanced curriculum through a range of interesting and stimulating activities. Visits and visitors make a significant contribution to this.
Provision for pupils with special educational needs	Good. Their needs are identified early and generally support for their teaching and learning is good.
Provision for pupils' personal, including spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	Pupils' personal development is very well catered for. Social and moral development are very good, and spiritual and cultural development good.
How well the school cares for its pupils	The school supports the pupils well and the quality of care is good. Monitoring of academic progress is very good.

As part of the improvement since the previous inspection, the school now has policies and schemes of work in place for all National Curriculum subjects and makes good use of national guidance to align them with the new requirements. In this context, it is useful to note that, although the school is using national guidance alongside the locally Agreed Syllabus for religious education, care must be taken that this does not replace the syllabus, especially in terms of nationally recommended time allocation. The curriculum is enhanced by a wide variety of visits and visitors, residential journeys and additional events connected with topics under study. There is a satisfactory range of after-school clubs but these are

largely restricted to sporting activities for junior pupils. Parents appreciate the very good care taken of their children and the good pastoral care which has been so evident in recent weeks.

HOW WELL THE SCHOOL IS LED AND MANAGED

Aspect	Comment
Leadership and management by the headteacher and other key staff	Good. The headteacher ensures good teamwork and co-operation. There is an enthusiastic and committed management team who work hard to move the school forward.
How well the governors fulfil their responsibilities	Very good. The governing body is understanding, supportive and very effective in fulfilling its role and supporting the school.
The school's evaluation of its performance	Good. The school monitors and evaluates its own performance well and takes effective action to raise standards.
The strategic use of resources	Good. The school makes good strategic use of an appropriate range and quality of resources and uses its budget carefully to support learning.

There is an adequate number of suitably qualified teachers, ably supported by an experienced team of learning support assistants. Accommodation is good; classrooms are of a good size with ample space for practical activities. The library is rather small and unwelcoming and is not in the best location to encourage pupils to use it independently. Resources are generally adequate for the delivery of the curriculum, although there is a shortage of appropriate reading texts for older pupils with special educational needs. The headteacher provides thoughtful leadership and good management of the limited resources available. The governing body, along with the new head teacher and the senior management team, have done well to reduce the large budget deficit existing at the time of the previous inspection. This has made a major contribution to the improvements since that time and the school is now looking forward to increasing facilities and provision in order to help in the raising of standards. Financial procedures are sound and the governing body makes very prudent financial decisions, always applying the principles of best value to large purchases or when hiring expensive services.

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 make good progress • Behaviour is good • The teaching is good • They feel comfortable about approaching the school, because the school works closely with parents • The school is well led and managed 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • • • • •

Inspectors agree with parents' positive views and endorse their approval and appreciation of the pastoral care afforded to the community by the school during the recent floods.

PART B: COMMENTARY

HOW HIGH ARE STANDARDS?

The school's results and achievements

1. Standards of attainment at the end of both key stages are well below the national average in English, resulting in the fluctuations depending on the abilities of pupils entering the school which are generally below the county average. Standards in science are also below the national average. In mathematics, pupils' standards slightly exceed the national average. The proportion of pupils reaching the higher levels in English and science are also below the national average, but almost in line in mathematics. The trend in improvement in standards over the last three years is broadly the same as that of other schools. However, in comparison with similar schools, standards in English are well below the average, in science below, but in mathematics in line with the average. The school sets realistic and sufficiently challenging targets in relation to pupils' previous performance but targets set by the local authority are a little ambitious and do not reflect the abilities of these particular pupils.
2. Children under five are likely to achieve the national early learning goals in personal and social development, knowledge and understanding of the world, creative and aesthetic development, and physical development. They are unlikely to meet the expected goals in communication, language and literacy, and in mathematical development, by the end of the foundation stage. This is because children enter the reception class with a broad range of abilities which are generally below the national average, particularly in speaking, reading and writing, and some aspects of mathematics. Although they make satisfactory progress, the lack of these skills affects their standards throughout the school.
3. In lessons seen in English, standards in speaking are broadly in line with national expectations at the ages of seven and eleven. Reading standards are below expectations at the end of both key stages, although broadly in line in Years 4 and 5. Pupils with special educational needs make sufficient progress in reading to help them cope with the work they are set and to improve their vocabulary and methods of working out unfamiliar words. The more advanced skills of skimming, scanning, inference and deduction from the texts read are at an early stage of development and pupils make limited use of the library as a resource for personal research. Standards in writing are generally higher than those in reading, although still below national expectations. The school is aware of its shortcoming in this aspect and has made appropriate arrangements to provide pupils with more opportunities to practise and improve their skills. By the end of Key Stage 2, pupils' work is beginning to be organised into paragraphs, is usually punctuated correctly, and standards of handwriting and presentation are good. Many new initiatives have been put in place to improve standards in reading and writing and early indications are that they are having a positive impact on standards.
4. Pupils use their literacy skills effectively in other subjects of the curriculum. There is evidence of empathic writing in history, when pupils write home as Roman soldiers, and of reflective writing including poetry in work from the literacy hour and prayers in religious education.
5. In mathematics, the proportion of pupils likely to reach the national expectation by the age of eleven is broadly in line with the national average. This is due to an improvement in the quality of teaching since the previous inspection which results in a higher quality of learning. The numeracy strategy has improved pupils' attainment in their knowledge, understanding and skills of number and other aspects of mathematics. The use of these satisfactory numeracy skills is developed in other subjects of the curriculum, such as design and technology, geography and science. Many pupils also have a secure understanding of symmetry, proportion and ratio.
6. In the lessons observed, standards in science were below average at the end of Key Stage 1, but broadly in line at the end of Key Stage 2, showing good progress. Many pupils at the age of eleven have a secure knowledge and understanding of scientific methods of investigation and recording their findings in a variety of ways. However, relatively few younger pupils understand the concept of

a fair test or datahandling and how to research, using books and computers. By the end of Key Stage 2, pupils have made progress in their knowledge and understanding of how tests must be repeated to improve accuracy. They are curious and respond well to suggestions, instructions and clear learning intentions by the teachers. There is insufficient challenge for higher attaining pupils because teachers do not challenge them to devise their own experiments.

7. Standards in information and communication technology are in line with the national expectation at the end of Key Stage 1, but below at the end of Key Stage 2. This is, however, an improvement since the last inspection when standards were below at both key stages. Pupils in Key Stage 1, learn to use computers for word-processing their literacy work, painting programs for producing pictures and some language programs. In Key Stage 2, pupils learn to use spreadsheets to plot results of scientific experiments in graphs, but do not know how to use databases or desktop publishing or how to send e-mail. Although pupils use information and communication technology in their timetabled lessons to support their learning in all subjects of the curriculum, the use of computers is not yet an integral part of everyday lessons.
8. Standards in religious education are broadly in line with national recommendations, and those of the locally agreed syllabus, at the end of both key stages. Pupils have a satisfactory basic knowledge of Christianity, Hinduism, Judaism and Islam. There is a need to extend and deepen their knowledge and understanding of how the beliefs of major religions impact on the lives of believers and unbelievers alike.
9. Standards of attainment in art and design are above the national expectation at the end of both key stages. Pupils develop their skills, especially in drawing and painting, through the extensive use of a sketchbook throughout the school, taking all opportunities offered for sensitive and imaginative work. Their art work on display in classrooms and the public areas of the school celebrates their good achievements and enhances the learning environment for all who work and visit there. In geography, pupils have a satisfactory knowledge of their own immediate environment and know altogether too much about the impact of climate on rivers! In history, they have a satisfactory knowledge and understanding of several periods, including the Victorian, the Roman, the Ancient Greek, Egyptian and Tudor. Their investigations of artefacts are satisfactorily recorded. A very competent music specialist has extended pupils' skills to a satisfactory level in most aspects of the programme of study, including performing and composing simple pieces to accompany their singing. Pupils' knowledge and understanding of established musicians and their work, past and present, is less well-developed. Pupils reach satisfactory standards in physical education and take part in a variety of activities which extend and improve their fitness and skills. Pupils are particularly well aware of the effects of exercise on the human body. In all other subjects, standards are broadly in line with the national average.
10. The specific learning needs of pupils on the special educational needs register are varied. They include speech and communication disorders, physical disability and emotional and behaviour problems. Most have standards of attainment that are below those expected, especially in reading and writing. For some pupils, standards in mathematics are also below those expected. However, all are well supported when specialist help is available and most make good progress in developing their literacy and numeracy skills. Pupils with emotional and behavioural difficulties are given good levels of guidance and help to overcome their problems and they gain increasing powers of concentration and perseverance which has a good impact on their learning. In most areas of learning, pupils with special educational needs make good progress in comparison to their prior attainment.

Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development

11. Pupils' attitudes to school are good and most pupils are keen to learn and work hard. They show interest and have a positive attitude to their work, being keen to answer questions. A small minority have limited concentration and are easily distracted. Pupils work well together in groups, sharing ideas and collaborating purposefully.

12. Behaviour in lessons and around the school is good. The school functions as an orderly community and pupils are polite and respectful. Some good examples of a sensitive awareness to other people were witnessed, particularly in corridors, where holding open doors for others to pass through was a frequent occurrence. In lessons, while the overwhelming majority of pupils behave well, some isolated instances of poor and insensitive behaviour were observed. Sometimes this has a negative impact on the learning of other pupils. The behaviour policies work well with appropriate rewards and sanctions. Pupils and parents feel able to report instances of bullying and harassment. Where this happens, it is speedily and effectively dealt with. There have been no exclusions in the last reported year.
13. Relationships within the school community are very good and many teachers have established trusting and productive relationships with their pupils. Pupils themselves are courteous to each other, staff and visitors. Older pupils develop good relationships with the younger pupils. A good example is helping them with their reading.
14. Personal development is good and many older pupils behave responsibly and with maturity. The school works hard to extend opportunities for pupils to take responsibilities and to become more involved in the working of the school. Pupils' views are taken seriously through the school council and pupils carry out their responsibilities conscientiously. The many monitors contribute effectively to the smooth running of the school. Pupils regularly volunteer to become monitors.
15. Pupils with special educational needs respond well to the expectations of the Special Educational Needs Co-ordinator (SENCO) and their classroom support assistants. They relate well to other pupils and work effectively with their classmates in pairs or groups. The oldest pupils take on the same responsibilities as their peers and carry them out seriously and conscientiously.
16. Above average attendance has been maintained since the last inspection. Unauthorised absence is well below the national average. Most pupils are keen to come to school but a small minority are often late. The services of the education welfare officer are utilised when required. Not all lessons start and finish on time, resulting in the loss of some valuable teaching time. Registers are well presented and fully comply with legal requirements. Registrations are carried out efficiently and sensitively to ensure an orderly start to both morning and afternoon sessions.

HOW WELL ARE PUPILS TAUGHT?

17. The quality of teaching is good overall and this is an improvement since the previous inspection. Almost three-quarters of the lessons seen were good and a quarter of them very good. The teaching of under fives is consistently good, and the very good teaching was seen in Key Stage 2. It was here also that the only two instances of unsatisfactory teaching were seen, both in the same class.
18. The quality of teaching in English is good in both key stages and has a positive impact on pupils' learning, enabling them to make satisfactory progress. Teachers have a secure understanding of the national literacy strategy and use resources effectively to support and extend pupils' learning. They generally have appropriate expectations for pupils' attention and involvement in lessons and build very well upon work previously done and standards pupils have attained. Teachers plan their lessons carefully and prepare activities that are well matched to the learning needs of all pupils. However, not all pay sufficient attention to pupils with special educational needs when additional support is not available and, on these occasions, lower attaining pupils make less progress. The learning of higher attaining pupils is consolidated by the provision of activities that extend their understanding and skills but they are given insufficient opportunities to work independently.
19. The confidence and subject knowledge of teachers is used well in the good quality planning of their lessons. Most pupils respond enthusiastically to the brisk pace of lessons and display their new knowledge and learning well in response to teachers' effective questioning in the end of lesson reviews. Teachers are generally well skilled in including all the pupils in whole class activities and in matching the tasks that they set to the prior attainment of individual pupils. Most pupils of all abilities are able to explain the tasks they are working on though not all are confident enough to ask for help when they need it.

20. The teaching of mathematics is good in both key stages and pupils make good progress. It is occasionally very good in Key Stage 2. Teachers' good planning enables pupils to put their knowledge and skills into effective practice, for instance, in a Year 2 lesson, the teacher made addition into a hopping game, using alternate feet for two numbers. Their skilful questioning allows pupils to display the knowledge and understanding they have acquired and to explain the thinking which has led them to their conclusions, whether they are right or wrong. Very rarely, pupils in numeracy and literacy hours are unable to work independently and teachers do not check their unrelated chatter and ensure that they get on with their tasks.
21. The generally very effective management of pupils is based on the good relationships teachers have with their classes, which ensure a brisk pace to lessons and few problems with discipline, because pupils are well aware of, and are eager to live up to what is expected of them. Teachers generally make good use of resources, for instance, when they make curricular links between geography, history and art by insisting that pupils take sketchbooks with them for use on visits outside school. The setting of individual targets in English and mathematics improves pupils' knowledge of their own learning and urges them on to make greater improvements. All these factors make a significant contribution to the satisfactory progress made by pupils. However, the quality of written marking is inconsistent and some teachers neglect to point out the strengths and weaknesses in pupils' work, so that they can take their own learning forward.
22. Teaching in information and communication technology is good in both key stages. There are sufficient planned opportunities for pupils to use computers in regular lessons in the computer suite, but these opportunities are insufficiently extended to the use of computers as an integral part of everyday lessons. The quality of teaching in design technology is good in both key stages and in history in Key Stage 1 and pupils make good progress in these subjects. There was insufficient evidence to make a judgement on the quality of teaching in art and geography. Teachers' expectations are high and pupils respond well to the stimulus provided, particularly in the development of printing on fabric. In all other foundation subjects and in religious education, teaching is satisfactory.
23. The quality of teaching for pupils under five in the foundation stage is consistently good and is securely based in the teacher's very good knowledge and understanding of the curriculum requirements and of the children in her care.
24. The support given in withdrawal groups and in the classroom by the SENCO and her team of support assistants is good and increases pupils' access to the whole curriculum. The support given through the additional literacy strategy and the one-to-one reading tuition is good and increases the good progress pupils make. However, when the support is not available, classroom teachers do not always take sufficient account of their needs and ensure that work is set which is suitable to the targets in their individual education plans or that these pupils receive enough support in all subjects of the curriculum.

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

25. The breadth, balance and relevance of the curriculum is good. It meets the needs of all pupils including those with special educational needs. This is a significant improvement since the last inspection when the curriculum was a serious weakness in the school's provision. The planned curriculum covers all subjects of the National Curriculum and religious education. The school has recently adopted national guidance for most subjects ensuring planned progression and the teaching of key skills in the teaching of the curriculum.
26. The planning for children under five covers progression towards the recently introduced early learning goals and prepares them well for the National Curriculum. The school fully implements the strategies for numeracy and literacy and both the scrutiny of work and lessons seen show that these are having a positive impact on standards, especially in mathematics. The time given to subjects is appropriate, however lessons do not always start promptly and tend to finish early.

27. The school meets statutory requirements for all subjects of the National Curriculum and for the provision of religious education, using a combination of national guidance and the locally agreed syllabus.
28. The school has identified correctly the most pressing educational need as that of language skills and has accordingly prioritised reading and writing as particular areas for development to improve the equality and access to the whole curriculum for pupils with special educational needs. Although pupils with special educational needs are withdrawn for short periods of time during other important lessons, the progress they make during their time with the SENCO or the learning support service teacher increases their social inclusion by improving their basic language skills so that they can be re-integrated into the full timetable of their peers. All extra-curricular activities, including clubs, visits and residential journey are open to all.
29. The provision for extra curricular activities is good. There is a residential visit to the Isle of Wight for Year 6 pupils, which gives them opportunities for social development and the pursuit of environmental studies. Key Stage 1 classes visit local places such as St. Michael's Church, the library and the post office, whilst at Key Stage 2, pupils visit Anne of Cleves' house, Preston Manor and Bignor Roman Villa as part of their history studies. They visit Lewes, Worthing and Barcombe Water Works for their geography topics. All after school activities are for sports such as football, netball and gymnastics. Visitors to the school include poets, storytellers and authors. These are a good stimulus to pupils' learning and make a significant contribution to the curriculum.
30. Provision for personal, social and health education is satisfactory. Each class has a planned programme of work for its implementation but it is not always regularly planned into the timetable, especially at Key Stage 2. Sex education, information on drug abuse and learning how to keep safe is all part of this programme. Opportunities to take responsibility, show initiative and develop an understanding of living in the community are satisfactory. There are good links with Ringmer Secondary School and a programme of visits, open evenings and visits from the secondary school staff ensures a smooth transition. Additionally plans are currently in place to enable Year 5 and 6 pupils to visit the school for science and information technology lessons.
31. Provision for spiritual education is good and pupils are able to reflect upon deeper meanings and about themselves. In particular, art, music and creative writing provide opportunities for self-expression and self-evaluation. Themes are well developed and explored in religious education and assemblies give appropriate opportunities for a period of quiet reflection, for example when the children thought about the meaning of Remembrance Sunday.
32. Provision for moral education is very good. Assemblies and circle times identify areas of moral choice and, through discussion, pupils are able to explore issues and develop a sound basis of moral precepts. Rules for the school and for individual classrooms are negotiated with the pupils, who often sign to show their approval and intention to conform.
33. Provision for social education is very good. As they pass through the school, pupils develop their personalities well, learning to respect and care for themselves as well as for others. The school had a spectacular opportunity to practise these attitudes in the recent floods, when the school welcomed pupils from other establishments which had to be closed for a time. Several parents particularly expressed their appreciation for the school's help and support during this traumatic event. Social awareness is also raised through fund-raising activities for charities, both at home and abroad, and the residential journey supports learning in social development.
34. Provision for cultural education is good. Speakers from different cultures and religions are welcomed into the school and their contribution towards common enrichment valued. In music, particularly, the cultural diversity of the world is explored through rhythm and song, for example, pupils' work with musicians of various nationalities for a concert organised by the Pestalozzi Children's Village. Through art, pupils discover the richness of Islamic geometric patterns. However, although they are generally well versed in the art, literature and music of their own culture, the contributions of non-European and non-white achievers is less well-celebrated.

35. The effective policy for equal opportunities drawn up by the school gives good guidance on how to assist pupils to become fully participating members of the community, regardless of race, gender, creed, wealth or disability. The school has satisfactory procedures in place for dealing with prejudices and misunderstandings, and the integration of pupils with special educational needs is good. Special care is taken to ensure that learning materials, including books and videos, do not contribute to stereotypes of any kind. The school analyses assessment results by gender and also individually, and was quick to realise the differences in achievement, particularly by higher attainers. They have begun to address this issue through additional learning support. There are mixed teams for football and cricket. There is equal opportunity for all pupils in the junior phase to join after school clubs, although these opportunities are usually for sporting activities and are not extended to Key Stage 1 pupils. Educational visits are open to all and pupils have the opportunity of taking up instrumental tuition, although very few do so. Festivals of other faiths are celebrated, for example the Chinese New Year, Sukkoth and Diwali and the school has some instruments from other cultural backgrounds, for instance, the African agogo. However, insufficient emphasis is placed upon positive images of non-white, non-European cultures and on their contribution to art, literature, music, science and technology. A choice of meals is provided to cater for vegetarian pupils.

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL CARE FOR ITS PUPILS?

36. The school is a very caring community which provides a happy, secure environment for its pupils and a safe place for all. Child protection and health and safety procedures are good, well documented and the school's policy has been fully implemented. Staff are well trained and sensitive in their application. The headteacher is the designated Child Protection Officer, and has received the appropriate training. All members of staff are aware of the measures to be taken and the procedures to be followed. Fire drills are conducted regularly and all the appropriate fire notices and apparatus are in place. The school is well maintained and kept very clean. Governors, staff and pupils conduct regular risk assessments around the school and deficiencies are remedied very quickly. The school is working hard to ensure the safety of its pupils.
37. Procedures for monitoring and improving attendance are very good. These include same day contact with the parents. The education welfare officer visits parents when appropriate.
38. Procedures for monitoring and promoting good behaviour are very good. Pupils are involved in setting the rules for good behaviour. Behaviour management is generally consistently applied, pupils feel they know where they stand and appreciate that bad behaviour by others should not impinge upon their desire to behave well and learn. The emphasis is on rewards rather than sanctions. For those unsettled by recent events, the school has arranged counselling to help them cope with the disruption to their lives. During the inspection there was no evidence of oppressive behaviour including all forms of harassment and bullying. Circle time in which pupils discuss issues and resolve problems among themselves in a structured and productive way has been successfully introduced.
39. The pupils and their families are well known, and all staff are sensitive to any problems or concerns, particularly when dealing with the results of the flooding. Parents work well in partnership with the school although many of them have work commitments which prevent them from helping in the school. Some do, however, help with after-school clubs and taking pupils to sporting fixtures. They generally support the school's homework policy and help their children at home, which has a positive effect on pupils' learning. Pupils' personal and social development is well monitored. Most class teachers keep comprehensive records of their progress and needs, which enables them to be fully aware of any difficulties and provide effective support and encouragement.
40. Procedures for assessing pupils' attainment and progress are very good. The school carries out regular and systematic assessment of pupils' learning and analyses this information to target specific groups of pupils for areas of learning need. The school keeps detailed records of pupils' progress over time in English and mathematics and this has enabled them to target specific support for groups and individuals. For example, as a result of an analysis of writing, year group writing targets have been set as well as individual targets for pupils which are reviewed half-termly. The school has very recently introduced assessments for the foundation subjects linked to national

subject guidelines. When fully in use they will provide a very effective tool for assessing pupils' performance in each unit of work and ensuring that future work is planned to accurately match pupils' needs.

41. Pupils' attainment is assessed on entry to the school and the information used well to identify pupils with special educational needs. The specific needs of those who have difficulties are effectively identified and clear, manageable targets for learning are provided to support their future development in their individual education plans. Targets set include academic, behavioural and social development. Pupils' progress towards these targets is regularly assessed and new targets are set to ensure steady progress is made. The support of outside agencies is appropriately engaged to ensure the best advice is obtained and the correct support provided. Pupils with statements of special educational needs are appropriately provided with the support identified in their statements and support staff are suitably experienced.

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL WORK IN PARTNERSHIP WITH PARENTS?

42. The school's partnership with parents is very good. Parents' views are very positive in support of the school's work. Most parents fully contribute to their children's learning by ensuring regular and punctual attendance. The 'Friends Association' raises considerable sums of money for equipment and for school projects. A good example is the recent chair replacement project.
43. The school is very open and always prepared to discuss matters with parents, who feel welcome in the school and help on a regular basis. They help with after school clubs and transporting children to sporting fixtures. They find the headteacher very accessible and approachable in the playground before and after school. The members of the teaching staff maintain good contact with the parents of their pupils. There are a few minor omissions from the governors' annual report to parents and in the school prospectus. The school is now aware of them and they will be rectified in the next editions.
44. The quality of information provided for the parents is good. There are regular numbered newsletters so that parents can check that they have not missed an issue. There are open evenings and consultation on some issues is through questionnaires. A recent example was the consultation on the anti-bullying policy. Pupils' annual reports for parents are good and show what the pupils know, understand and can do. Attendance is recorded. The pupils have a section to comment and the teacher sets targets for improvement. This fully meets legal requirements.
45. Parents make a satisfactory contribution to their children's learning, although many parents are unable to help in school, for example because of work commitments. The homework policy is clearly set out for parents to follow. Times are set for its return and it is embedded in the school curriculum. Parents and teachers sign reading records. There is good liaison with teachers on all aspects of reading.
46. Parents of pupils with special educational needs are consulted by the school in the early stages of the process of identification. As the need arises, they meet with the SENCO up to three times a year after reviews of individual education plans are made. They help to set new targets. The school appreciates the good response made by parents to the review process.
47. The community is very grateful for the pastoral care for both parents and pupils given by the school during the recent trauma caused by flooding. Single parent families with children in the school feel that the members of the teaching staff deal with their problems with sympathy and understanding.

HOW WELL IS THE SCHOOL LED AND MANAGED?

48. The leadership and management provided by the headteacher and key staff is good. The head teacher is thorough and effective, concentrating clearly on raising the pupils' attainment in line with the school's aims. Since he was appointed, shortly before the previous inspection, he has maintained the drive to raise standards and to reduce the considerable budget deficit which he inherited. The decision to reduce the budget deficit gradually, with the help of the local education

authority, coupled with the appointment of highly competent and professional staff has means that the impact of the inevitable cutbacks has been minimised. The trend in attainment, as measured by national and teacher tests over the last few years, is rising although overall, standards at the end of each key stage are below those seen in similar schools in science and English. All the serious weaknesses identified by the previous inspection have been tackled and eliminated. Even though the head teacher still teaches a class some of the time, this has been reduced since the last inspection. In addition, management responsibilities have been better delegated to senior staff and subject co-ordinators.

49. The headteacher has instituted a good range of measures to monitor and evaluate the school's performance. Whole school trends, individual pupil performance, the performance of particular groups such as boys and girls, are all tracked from year to year and compared with schools locally and nationally. The school uses information provided by the local and national government to identify areas for development and to set targets for improvement. In some instances, targets can be unrealistic and not carefully matched to the capabilities of the school's pupils. The headteacher has provided the information needed to enable the senior management team and subject co-ordinators to write action plans for future development. These include targeting particular groups of pupils for extra help, for example in language and literacy, improving particular areas of the curriculum, buying better resources for teaching and learning, and providing training for teachers. These and other measures have been largely successful although some of the recent initiatives, such as those in reading and experimental science, have yet to make an impact. Nevertheless, there has been a clear improvement in the development process since the last inspection, when it was burdened by a top-heavy approach to the management of change. Staff are now more confident and competent to tackle this for themselves and there is a definite team spirit amongst the staff and governors.
50. The governing body is very effective and very good at fulfilling its responsibilities. The governors have an eminently clear understanding of the school and its needs and priorities. Along with a deeply caring approach, the governing body also incorporates the toughness needed to tackle demanding issues and make difficult decisions. The chair, vice-chair and various committees are closely involved with the life of the school. Daily visits are normal and there is almost always a governor on site. The governing body is part of the vital support structure that the adults provide for the children, no more so amidst the aftermath of the recent floods and threat of further flooding.
51. The governing body shares its responsibilities amongst its committees and individual members who undertake to monitor all aspects of the school and help the headteacher and staff take decisions. Its statutory duties are fulfilled effectively, a tight control is kept on finances and in ensuring that the school obtains best value for the money it spends. The school employs a specialist bursar who has helped move the school into computerised accounting. There are fail-safe systems and backup and the bursar ensures that up to date information on the state of the school's finance is always available. This has been essential in fine tuning the budget and making good use of all available grants and sponsorship. The school makes effective use of up to date technology for analysing data to help provide the information needed for decision taking. Everybody is involved in the production of the school improvement plan. All spending decisions are taken in accordance with this plan.
52. The headteacher enables the subject co-ordinators to take responsibility for evolving policy and making spending decisions whilst providing them with appropriate development opportunities. He observes all teachers regularly and provides individual and strategic feedback. However, as in the previous inspection, this process is not always clearly focussed and can sometimes miss key strengths and weaknesses in teaching which might improve the sharing of good practice. Appraisal is now firmly established and the school is prepared for the introduction of the performance management process.
53. The good commitment to improve is shared by all: headteacher, governors, staff and pupils.
54. The school's accommodation is good. The spacious buildings are set in a large, green site which allows pupils to work in pleasant and stimulating surroundings. The care of the accommodation is

good and staff enhance the pupils' learning with creative displays of instructional material and the pupils' latest work. The pupils respond to this with interest and respect and share the adults' commitment to the school community and its academic and spiritual development. The only disappointment is the library, which is tucked away and gives the appearance of a place to store books rather than a place to make exciting discoveries. Pupils report that they rarely go there outside lesson times. Resources for learning are appropriated and very well managed. Books for literacy for instance are plentiful and organised for easy access. The number of computers is good for a primary school and timetabling allows all pupils to use the computer suite for two periods a week. Each classroom has at least one other computer. The software is not yet up to the job that is planned for it but it is being developed. Each teacher uses computers, video and other technology regularly in the classroom. The school has improved its resources well since the last inspection.

55. There is an adequate number of qualified teaching staff, all of whom have had recent, relevant training in key areas of the curriculum, such as ICT, literacy and numeracy. The school has good provision for supporting newly qualified staff or unqualified staff undergoing training. The school's decision to ensure a teacher for each year group has meant that one or two classes are quite large but these are supported by a good number of learning support assistants and other classroom helpers.
56. The SENCO is shared with another school but this system works well. She has a secure knowledge and understanding of the role and is looking forward to exercising the management function of monitoring and evaluating provision and classroom practice. Having recently attended training in how to ensure social inclusion, she has devised a programme of support for pupils to give them the greatest possible boost in language skills so that they can join in all the activities required by the full curriculum. The governors' policy for SEN fully complies with the national Code of Practice and the school is aware of the need for revision once the new Code is in place. The SENCO organises training for special needs assistants, both at South Malling and in another school. She, ably supported by an experienced team of support assistants, makes a valuable contribution to the learning of these pupils. The school makes good use of external agencies, such as the educational psychologist, the speech therapist and the learning support service, as and when the need arises. Resources are generally adequate, except that there are shortages of pictures and reading books suitable for older pupils with special educational needs.
57. Taking into account the improvements in management, staffing and resources, the recent improvements in attainment, the overwhelming support of the parents and the enthusiastic commitment of staff, governors and pupils, the school has a good capacity for further improvement.

WHAT SHOULD THE SCHOOL DO TO IMPROVE FURTHER?

In order to maintain the current improving picture, the head teacher, Governing Body and senior staff should:

1. Raise standards in English by:
 - Continuing to develop and improve measures for reading and writing already in place
 - Clearer identification of learning intentions for group reading and clearer analysis of the strategies needed for reading as it develops
 - Better match of tasks suited to the abilities of all children in some classes. *** (*Paras. 1, 3, 61-62, 67-77*)

2. Raise standards in science by:
 - Continuing to monitor and improve the scheme of work to ensure a clearer focus in teaching
 - Ensuring that work is provided which is sufficiently challenging for all pupils (*Paras. 6, 83-88*)

3. Raise standards in information and communication technology in Key Stage 2 by:
 - Increasing the range and depth of work at all levels (*Paras. 7, 22, 74, 80, 82, 87, 90, 93, 97, 100-104, 107, 115*)

4. Make better use of the teaching time available by:
 - More rigorously adhering to the timetable set (*Paras. 26, 81*)

*** This issue has already been identified by the school and is prioritised in the school development plan.

In addition, the head teacher, governing body and senior staff, should consider and rectify the omissions in the governors' annual report to parents and in the prospectus. (*Para. 43*)

PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS

Summary of the sources of evidence for the inspection

Number of lessons observed	47
Number of discussions with staff, governors, other adults and pupils	24

Summary of teaching observed during the inspection

Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
0	14	58	23	5	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)	0	208
Number of full-time pupils eligible for free school meals	0	18

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Special educational needs

	Nursery	YR – Y6
Number of pupils with statements of special educational needs	0	1
Number of pupils on the school's special educational needs register	0	38

English as an additional language

	No of pupils
Number of pupils with English as an additional language	3

Pupil mobility in the last school year

	No of pupils
Pupils who joined the school other than at the usual time of first admission	6
Pupils who left the school other than at the usual time of leaving	5

Attendance

Authorised absence

	%
School data	5.6
National comparative data	

Unauthorised absence

	%
School data	0.05
National comparative data	

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

Attainment at the end of Key Stage 1

Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 1 for the latest reporting year	Year	Boys	Girls	Total
	2000	10	10	20

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		Reading	Writing	Mathematics
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	7	7	9
	Girls	9	9	10
	Total	16	16	19
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	80 (77)	80 (86)	95 (92)
	National	83 (82)	83 (84)	72 (71)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	7	9	9
	Girls	9	10	10
	Total	16	19	19
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	80 (92)	95 (91)	95 (92)
	National	83 (82)	90 (87)	71 (72)

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	19	13	32

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys	11	14	14
	Girls	9	11	12
	Total	20	25	26
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	63 (66)	78 (69)	81 (71)
	National	75 (71)	72 (69)	85 (78)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys	12	13	14
	Girls	10	11	12
	Total	22	24	26
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	69 (66)	75 (70)	81 (72)
	National	75 (71)	72 (69)	85 (78)

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

Ethnic background of pupils

	No of pupils
Black – Caribbean heritage	1
Black – African heritage	0
Black – other	0
Indian	0
Pakistani	0
Bangladeshi	0
Chinese	3
White	203
Any other minority ethnic group	1

This table refers to pupils of compulsory school age only.

Exclusions in the last school year

	Fixed period	Permanent
Black – Caribbean heritage	0	0
Black – African heritage	0	0
Black – other	0	0
Indian	0	0
Pakistani	0	0
Bangladeshi	0	0
Chinese	0	0
White	0	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)	8.5
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	27.7
Average class size	29.7

Education support staff: YR – Y6

Total number of education support staff	9
Total aggregate hours worked per week	138

Financial information

Financial year	2000
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	£
Total income	403739
Total expenditure	385269
Expenditure per pupil	1824
Balance brought forward from previous year	-18560
Balance carried forward to next year	-90

Results of the survey of parents and carers

Questionnaire return rate

Number of questionnaires sent out	144
Number of questionnaires returned	28

Percentage of responses in each category

	Strongly agree	Tend to agree	Tend to disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know
My child likes school.	64	36	0	0	0
My child is making good progress in school.	54	43	4	0	0
Behaviour in the school is good.	30	67	0	0	4
My child gets the right amount of work to do at home.	39	46	14	0	0
The teaching is good.	64	32	4	0	0
I am kept well informed about how my child is getting on.	32	54	11	0	4
I would feel comfortable about approaching the school with questions or a problem.	68	32	0	0	0
The school expects my child to work hard and achieve his or her best.	61	36	4	0	0
The school works closely with parents.	36	54	11	0	0
The school is well led and managed.	64	36	0	0	0
The school is helping my child become mature and responsible.	57	36	4	0	4
The school provides an interesting range of activities outside lessons.	33	44	11	0	11

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

58. Provision for children in the foundation stage continues to be as good as reported in the last inspection. The reception class provides a bright and stimulating learning environment for the children, although the outdoor area is insufficiently large to provide effectively for physical activity. The teaching in the reception class is consistently good and a particular strength is the very good understanding the teacher has of the needs of this age group. This has a positive impact on children's learning and behaviour.
59. Most children begin in the reception class with poorly developed skills in listening, reading and writing and in some aspects of mathematics and personal and social skills. This is confirmed by the initial assessments conducted with these young children. By the time they are ready to start in Year 1, the majority of the children have made good progress. They are likely to achieve the early learning goals in personal, social and emotional development, physical and creative development and knowledge and understanding of the world. However, in spite of good teaching children are less likely to meet the early learning goals in all aspects of mathematical development and communication, language and literacy.

PERSONAL, SOCIAL AND EMOTIONAL DEVELOPMENT

60. Children enter the reception class with weaknesses in their ability to select activities and lacking in confidence in their own ideas. They make good gains in both of these aspects, and overall in their personal, social and emotional development, and are likely to achieve the early learning goals by the end of the foundation stage. This reflects the sensitive and thoughtful handling of the children by the reception teacher. She provides an environment where children are praised for their efforts and encouraged to have confidence in what they can achieve. Children play well together, show consideration of each other and are willing to help around the classroom. They are enthusiastic about their learning, for example when retelling the story of 'Goldilocks and the Three Bears', or counting as they march around the class. The class teacher and all other adults provide good role models for the children, treating them with courtesy and respect. Relationships are very good and the empathic understanding of the class teacher enables children to participate fully in all activities. Children concentrate well in lessons, dress and undress for physical activity fairly independently and play their part in maintaining a tidy environment.

COMMUNICATION, LANGUAGE AND LITERACY

61. The children enjoy listening to stories and happily take books home to share with their parents. The teacher uses every opportunity to communicate effectively with the children and listens well to their contributions. They are well supported in their developing reading and writing skills and make steady gains in these aspects of their learning. However, while some pupils will exceed the early learning goals in other areas, many are unlikely to achieve them in reading and writing. They are currently demonstrating few negotiating skills, preferring to play alongside each other rather than together. For example, in the castle, which is their role-play area, children played alongside each other rather than engaging in interactive play. Speaking skills used were at a basic short phrase or single word level. Their ability to play imaginatively is limited.
62. Some of the higher attaining children recognise a good number of initial sounds and some words, but very few can read even simple books. Most average and lower attaining children know how to turn the pages of a book, recognise some simple letter sounds and make simple comments on the illustrations in books. They enjoy listening to taped stories. Children are helped to develop their reading and phonic skills through a good focus in the literacy hour on word, sentence and text level work. For example, their current work on 'The Monster Party' gives children opportunities to discuss the detail in the pictures, initial sounds and some common words. Most children are at a very early stage in their writing development using squiggles, circles and, occasionally, letters. A few higher

attaining children are using strings of letters with occasional known words in their independent writing. Children are encouraged to write independently in the role play area and are learning some of the purposes of writing but this is insufficiently promoted in a developmental manner to ensure good progress. The teaching of literacy is good. Good use is made of praise and encouragement to build confidence and lessons are well planned to ensure pupils make progress. All adults listen well to the children, however, sometimes insufficient attention is given to ensuring children develop and extend their own responses beyond words and short phrases.

MATHEMATICAL DEVELOPMENT

63. This area of learning is well taught and children make good progress towards the early learning goals. However, not all are likely to achieve them by the end of the reception year. Within class sessions, most children can recite to 10 and back and some recognise the numerals. The teacher makes good use of number songs and counting activities to develop children's counting skills. Higher attaining children are learning to use terms such as longer and shorter and are gaining some understanding of the concept of 'more than' through the activities taking place in the classroom, for example, by adding one more to a collection of objects. They are, however, not using mathematical language confidently because the majority of them have only been in school for a few weeks. Good use is made of the numeracy strategy to help children learn and the children concentrate and apply themselves well. They are beginning to recognise some common two-dimensional shapes and higher attaining children can name them while lower attaining children use terms such as 'rounds.' Some children use a variety of shapes to create pictures such as fire engines. There is limited evidence that they use developing mathematical ideas to solve problems or that they are able to recognise and recreate patterns.

KNOWLEDGE AND UNDERSTANDING OF THE WORLD

64. Children enter the reception class with a basic general knowledge. They build on this knowledge in the classroom to understand more about their world. For example, they investigate pumpkins using all their senses and discover that they smell like cucumbers and are fluffy inside. They explore their rough texture and look carefully at the seeds. They discuss vegetables in general and know that some grow under ground whilst others, such as pumpkins, grow above. Most know that plants require soil and water to grow. The children use the computer confidently, controlling the mouse effectively to move the three bears across the screen when creating the bedroom for Goldilocks and the three bears. They have some idea of what the term 'icon' means and have used computer programs such as 'Dazzle' to make patterns on screen. Children are encouraged to bring objects from home to support their learning and many have brought in items for the 'shiny' table as part of their exploration of pattern and colour. They know about events which are celebrated each year, such as Guy Fawkes' Night. Many use resources carefully and effectively to construct and build. For example, some children constructed aeroplanes with moving parts using construction kits. Most demonstrate good control and safe handling of resources. The teacher makes good use of a variety of resources and situations to stimulate children's interest including visits to the library, walks around the school grounds and visits from the police, fire and ambulance services.

PHYSICAL DEVELOPMENT

65. Children make good progress in the development of their physical skills and are likely to achieve or exceed the early learning goals. However, they have limited space outside in which to develop their physical skills. During physical education lessons in the hall, children roll and catch balls with increasing accuracy, understand and follow the rules of simple games with good attention to space and respond well to teacher instruction. They show good levels of maturity when organising themselves into groups of two or three. Most can pedal, cycle and control wheeled vehicles competently. The teacher manages lessons well using praise and encouragement to enable children to improve their performance and remain focussed on tasks. She ensures skills such as cutting are taught effectively to enable children to gain safe control of finer movements, such as pencil control and the dexterous use of paintbrushes and glue spreaders.

CREATIVE DEVELOPMENT

66. Children make good progress in this area of learning and are likely to achieve the early learning goals by the end of the foundation stage with many exceeding them in their musical expertise. The teacher provides a good range of activities for music and most children already know the names of many percussion instruments and recognise the different sounds they make. They know how to use the instruments correctly and enjoy using them. Many can clap their names with a good sense of rhythm. They sing known songs such as 'Mrs. Bear is in her Cave' quietly but quite tunefully, in contrast to their performance in assemblies. The children use paints and paintbrushes effectively to create imaginative pictures such as monsters and have practised weaving with a variety of materials. They have mixed their own colours for painting and have looked at the work of artists such as Kandinsky. Most have learned techniques such as dribbling, spattering and dabbing in paint.

ENGLISH

67. Standards in English are generally well below expectation and this is a slight deterioration since the last inspection. However, attainment on entry to the reception class is below the county average, particularly in listening, reading and writing. The school is working extremely hard to improve standards through a series of initiatives aimed at supporting the less able and targeting all pupils' learning needs more accurately. These initiatives, along with the well-planned and enthusiastic delivery of the literacy hour, are beginning to have an impact on standards throughout the school but as yet have not impacted on end of key stage standards. The location of the fairly new, privately run nursery on the school site and the good links between it and the reception class are also beginning to have positive outcomes for learning in English.
68. In the year 2000 national tests for seven year olds, the percentage reaching the expected levels was below the national average and well below that of schools with similar backgrounds. In writing, pupils' performance was in line with the national average at expected levels and below the national average at the higher level. When compared with similar schools, the results are well below average.
69. In the national tests for 11 year olds, the percentage reaching the expected level was below the national average and well below that of other similar schools. Over the last three years, the level of attainment in English has been broadly similar and the trend in results broadly in line with national figures. The local education authority has set targets for future improvements in both key stages but these are overly ambitious, particularly for the current cohort of pupils. In lessons seen, overall attainment was below average in both key stages.
70. Pupils' attainment in speaking is broadly in line with expectations in both key stages. Pupils demonstrate good levels of listening in subjects such as English and mathematics. However, they do not listen well in all lessons, particularly in the afternoons. Some of this inability to listen is attributable to the recent trauma of flooding which has left many pupils without homes. Pupils listen well during assemblies and 'Circle Time.' In Year 2, pupils are keen to ask and answer questions on their shared reading text such as 'What does that word mean?' Generally pupils make clear and relevant comments. Most pupils in Years 4 and 5 speak clearly and confidently. They name important features of newspaper writing, for example 'headlines' and 'by-lines'. Many also display good listening skills in answering questions and contributing to discussions. In Year 6, the more able pupils give thoughtful, considered responses to issues under discussion whereas less able pupils find it more difficult to articulate a clear response. Although the school gives time and opportunities for pupils to speak and listen in a variety of contexts it does not as yet have planning in place to ensure pupils develop their skills in a progressive and systematic manner. They do not specifically report on projects, make presentations or engage in drama. The school is aware of this weakness and proposes to address it through the English action plan.
71. Attainment in reading is below expectations at the end of both key stages. Pupils in Years 4 and 5 however attain standards broadly in line with expectations. Good use is made of the literacy hour to

support reading, but in group-reading sessions, teachers do not always share the specific learning intentions to help pupils understand the purpose of their reading and make better progress.

72. Average and below average attaining pupils in Year 1 have difficulty in coming to terms with the mechanics of reading and make little use of phonic skills preferring to be prompted by an adult. The higher attaining pupils read accurately and with understanding but with limited enjoyment. However, by Year 2, most pupils enjoy reading, have gained fluency and are using a variety of strategies to help work out unfamiliar words. All are keen to talk about their books and the characters, some quite spontaneously launching into descriptions of the story. Even the lower attaining pupils reading simple texts enjoy the humour in their stories. Pupils in Year 5 have generally good reading skills. They confidently describe the plot of their stories, talk about their favourite authors and read unfamiliar text well. By the end of Key Stage 2, higher and average attaining pupils read accurately and with a good level of fluency. They summarise the contents of their books well and compare and contrast the work of their favourite authors, but at a fairly simple level. For example, one pupil enjoys the books of Dick King-Smith because 'they are exciting and easy to read.' Another enjoys books by Roald Dahl as he tends to 'poke fun at adults.' Their skills in skimming and scanning are not well developed. They make limited use of the library as a resource or to find information quickly. Skills in inference and deduction and looking for meaning beyond the literal are at a fairly early stage of development. The current Year 6 class has a fair number of lower attaining pupils whose reading is at a low level. However, they enjoy what they are reading and read with reasonable fluency and accuracy.
73. Attainment in writing is generally better than in reading but is still overall below expectations. Standards of presentation and handwriting, however, are satisfactory and sometimes good. By the end of Key Stage 1, higher attaining pupils achieve standards in writing that are in line with national expectations and, in some aspects, above. They use capital letters and full stops fairly consistently and join sentences with conjunctions such as 'and.' Spelling of simple words is usually correct. Sometimes good use is made of adjectives, for example, 'enormous pudding.' Handwriting is joined and well formed. In their current literacy work, some are using speech and exclamation marks correctly in sentences. Among average and lower attaining pupils handwriting is mostly correctly shaped but inconsistent in size and there is some confusion between capital and lower case letters. Writing is a series of statements which generally make sense. It is often a mixture of known words and letter strings.
74. By the end of Key Stage 2, writing is of an average standard among higher attaining pupils. There is some use of punctuation in sentences and when reminded, some use of paragraphs. Writing is sometimes lively and thoughtful with some good use of description and vocabulary, for example, 'a most curious sight' and 'a feeling of dread.' Handwriting is joined and fluent. There is, however, little evidence of extended sentences in writing or of extended writing as part of class work. Among pupils of average and below average attainment, spelling of common and some polysyllabic words is generally accurate. Sentence stops are usually marked although there are inconsistencies. In structured work, pupils are able to maintain writing conventions but when involved in unaided work they tend to lapse into simple sentence structures, which reflect spoken English and often ignore punctuation. Pupils use their literacy skills to a satisfactory level across other subjects of the curriculum particularly in history, design technology and religious education. Insufficient use is made of computers for improving presentation or for desktop publishing.
75. Progress of all pupils, including those with special educational needs, is satisfactory and sometimes good as pupils move across the school and most pupils enjoy their literacy sessions. They show pride in their work and their behaviour is good. They stay on task well during whole class and group work and most are keen to contribute to their lessons.
76. Teaching and learning in both key stages is good. It is consistently good at Key Stage 1 and varies between satisfactory and good at Key Stage 2. No unsatisfactory teaching was seen in English. In most cases, teachers' subject knowledge is good and is used well to inform and improve knowledge and understanding. At the start of most lessons teachers share the learning intentions with pupils so that they are clear about what they are expected to learn. Questioning is used effectively to focus pupils on important aspects of literacy. Pupils are challenged and encouraged to

contribute ideas. In almost all lessons, pupils are well managed and are effectively engaged by the teachers' enthusiastic approach to the subject. The literacy hour has been effectively adopted and new arrangements in place mean that there is extra support both for prior lower and higher attainers, with the older pupils being set by ability. All elements of the literacy hour are taught according to the national framework and each contains the appropriate components of word and sentence work, guided reading and writing. The main weaknesses in the teaching of English in some classes are introductions which are overlong so that pupils become restless, insufficient attention to pupils' differing prior attainment in group work so that all are not appropriately challenged, and insufficiently focused learning intentions for group reading activities so appropriate learning is not clearly targeted. For example, pupils are not always aware that the learning intention requires them to look for the way in which the author uses dialogue to move the story along.

77. English is well managed by a thoughtful co-ordinator. She knows the school well and she and the head teacher have been very involved in identifying the areas of weakness in English through a careful analysis of test results. As a result an action plan has been drawn up and a series of very good initiatives put in place to raise standards both in reading and writing. Additional support for less able pupils, and those with special educational needs, is provided on a regular basis. In most classes, individual pupils now have reading writing targets which are reviewed half-termly and new targets set. Analysis of reading strategies used by pupils is now being undertaken and, when complete, will provide useful information for individual and group reading. Each year group has specific writing targets for their class to achieve and most pupils are expected to achieve them. These are all good initiatives and the early indications are that they are impacting positively on standards. Although resources are generally good, there is a shortage of appropriate reading texts for older pupils with special educational needs.

MATHEMATICS

78. Standards of attainment in the most recent national assessment tests are in line with the national average for pupils at the ages of seven and eleven. Almost all pupils reached the expected level at the end of Key Stage 1, but the proportion of those attaining the higher levels was below the national average. At the end of Key Stage 2, pupils' results were above the national average at the expected level and close to the national average at the higher level. The school exceeded its projected target at the age of eleven and it is likely that targets for 2001 will also be exceeded. This is a good improvement on the attainment at the time of the previous inspection when standards were average at the end of both key stages. The trend in improvement over the last four years is broadly in line with that nationally. In comparison with similar schools, standards are in line with the average.
79. Standards achieved in the lessons seen are in line at the end of both key stages. At Key Stage 1, reception children add one to number less than 5, using objects to count. Higher attaining pupils work with numbers to 20, knowing more than and less than, and add and subtract 1, with the help of a classroom assistant and a number line. Year 1 pupils are developing an understanding of tens and units with some able to say that 10 and 5 equal 15 and that 15 and 5 make 20. Lower attaining pupils know some addition facts to 13. Pupils have a working knowledge of ordering and comparing numbers, seeking patterns and making sums of money using 1p, 5p and 10p coins, applying these skills successfully in the role-play shop. By the end of the key stage, most pupils calculate mentally, quickly and accurately, number facts in addition and subtraction to 10. They know how to double figures, and their mathematical language is developing well as they use accurately terms such as total, same as, more than, difference. Pupils confidently use a multiplication grid for investigating patterns. Their investigations on favourite colours leads to successfully completed column graphs. Higher attaining pupils correctly find small differences, for example 38 minus 35, without a number line or square and lower attainers and those with special educational needs successfully complete addition worksheets at a lower level. Most have a simple knowledge of fractions such as one quarter and one half. They sort shapes by numbers of sides and vertices, measure correctly time, weight and distance, and successfully reconcile words with figures. They accurately measure right angles and have good knowledge of mirror symmetry. Although pupils use information and communication technology to present simple graphs and produce basic shapes, they do not use computers in the course of their everyday lessons. Some lower attaining pupils, not

supported by a classroom assistant, watch for others' answers before trying their own because they are frequently slower in the mental mathematics session at the beginning of the numeracy hour and their progress is commensurately slower. After practice, most understand how a pattern is established, for example, by counting on and back. Most seek, recognise and add to the mathematical pattern.

80. At Key Stage 2, many pupils in Year 3 are very hazy about doubling and halving numbers as inverse operations and most completed the worksheet incorrectly. The majority have a good recall of multiplication and division facts using 2, 5 and 10 times tables. Lower attainers and those with special educational needs, working with the class teacher and a number square, successfully find missing figures in simple addition problems. Higher attaining pupils are very articulate, explaining their reasoning even if they arrive at the wrong answer. By Year 4, pupils accurately use isosceles and equilateral triangles in order to create a pattern, and discover that the side of an isosceles matches up with the bottom line of the equilateral triangle in order to tessellate fully. Lower attaining pupils have difficulty naming equilateral triangles but know that they all have sides the same length. They know that a tessellated pattern is when shapes fit together without leaving spaces. Most Year 5 pupils easily add two-digit numbers or multiply by 10, although lower attaining pupils work more slowly and need help to get the correct answer. By the end of the key stage, the majority of pupils understand that decimals can be divided and multiplied by 10 by moving the decimal point and the majority accurately apply the principle to money, observing and remarking on the patterns found. More than half accurately read and plotted single figure co-ordinates. Examination of past work shows how higher attaining pupils develop their informal linear notation into traditional layouts for the four rules of number. They progress from multiplying number and money by a single digit to using a similar method for multiplying decimals. They record clearly their conclusions from investigations in equivalent, mixed and improper fractions and there is evidence of the skill of prediction developing in work on probability and ratio. Again, although there is evidence of the use of information and communication technology in the production of a variety of graphs as pupils accurately record their datahandling, the use of computers is not an integral part of everyday lessons. Although pupils use their numeracy skills effectively in design technology and science, there are not enough opportunities to exercise them in other subjects such as in the use of timelines in history.
81. The quality of teaching and learning is never less than satisfactory and was good in almost half the lessons seen. There were also instances of very good teaching in the top two years. Teachers' good knowledge and understanding of the subject are well applied to helping pupils to make progress, for example, introducing fresh vocabulary into a Year 1 lesson to extend pupils' understanding and mathematical development. Teachers at the end of the key stage understand their pupils well and give an appropriate period of 'thinking time' before asking for an answer in the mental mathematics sessions. They ensure the active participation of all pupils by skilfully directing questions to all abilities, allowing pupils to display their knowledge and understanding, and to explain their thinking processes and methods of arriving at answers. In the majority of lessons, teachers use assessments of pupils' previous work to adapt the current lesson, for instance, allowing for the reinforcement of knowledge of triangles in Year 4. Their introductions to lessons are brisk and challenging and all pupils have to work hard to keep up. The best lessons were those in which the teacher ensured that all pupils completed some work. In these lessons, teachers have high expectations of performance, attention and behaviour. They manage children well to enable them to make satisfactory, and often good progress, for instance in the knowledge and understanding of pattern-seeking. Pupils in Year 2 tested this out by hopping, the right foot for one number and the left foot for the second number, and then recording this on the board. At the end of the key stage, the teacher related the existing knowledge and understanding of percentages to that of fractions and decimals, sharing with the pupils a learning concern which arose during her absence on sick leave. Pupils' errors are used to take learning forward and they are reminded of their individual targets, for example, greater involvement in class discussion. All pupils are very interested in the games used to reinforce and extend their mathematical understanding, working well together and taking turns. Pupils with special educational needs are well integrated into the lessons, taking their turns at the board to work out examples. Occasionally, pupils in the lower juniors are very noisy and fussy moving to activities, slow to settle and with much noisy chatter unrelated to the tasks in hand. The teacher focuses on the lower attainers and appears

unconcerned that the level of noise in groups working independently is slowing pupils' pace of working and productivity, and thus restricting progress. In this lesson, some average pupils were working apparently quite well on their own, but they were filling in the wrong answers on the worksheet and were unable to explain how they had arrived at them. Lessons do not always start promptly and teaching time is lost.

82. Teachers have adapted the numeracy strategy very effectively for the needs of their pupils. Planning follows the national framework closely, but there are insufficient planned opportunities for the use of information and communication technology as an integral part of lessons. Numeracy hours begin with a brisk mental mathematics session and end with a good plenary session in which pupils' learning is checked and extended. There are very good procedures for assessment and the data obtained is used very effectively for setting individual targets for pupils. However, written comment in pupils' workbooks is minimal, and does not always give sufficient help to the pupils on how to improve their work. The co-ordinator has a good knowledge and understanding of the role, which has been effectively exercised in the past. However, a lack of release time due to financial constraints means that the role is currently underdeveloped.

SCIENCE

83. At the end of Key Stage 1, nearly all pupils reach the nationally expected level. However in the tests this year, no pupils reached the higher level and this was below the average, both nationally and in comparison with other similar schools. At the end of Key Stage 2, the percentage of pupils reaching the nationally expected level was slightly below average whereas the percentage of pupils achieving the higher level was well below the national figure. This is a decline since the last inspection, when results at both key stages were slightly higher than the national average. However, these Key Stage 2 figures are an improvement on the previous years tests and reflect the school's attempts to raise attainment in science. The inspection confirms that most of the pupils' understanding of science is in line with the national expectation for pupils aged seven and eleven. The scrutiny of pupils' work and discussions with pupils in Years 2 and 3 show that whilst most pupils record their observations by means of pictures or words, relatively few pupils understand the concept of a fair test, collect and record data satisfactorily or are able to find things out from books or a computer. There has been improvement at the end of Key Stage 2; pupils in the current Year 6 are beginning to understand how scientists develop hypotheses that they can test, for example, Newton's explanation of gravity. They also understand how tests must be repeated to improve accuracy.
84. Pupils enjoy science and are keen to learn although during the week of the inspection they presented some noisy and challenging behaviour in several classes. On the other hand, they are curious and respond well to suggestions, instructions and clear learning intentions by the teachers. Science teaching is satisfactory overall at both key stages although there are some important strengths and weaknesses that affect pupils' learning. The pupils' achievements are generally closely linked to the quality of the teaching. In one lesson the good teaching was not matched by good progress because pupils seemed distracted and did not rise to the challenges that the teacher gave them. Teachers have a good understanding of the science curriculum and can conduct useful whole class sessions at both key stages. In these lessons the teachers have a clear intention to improve pupils' understanding; they share these intentions with the pupils and evaluate them at the end of the lesson. In this way, pupils gain knowledge and understanding. However, during the inspection, although pupils made notes about what they had learned, they did not use books or computers to find things out for themselves
85. Pupils join Year 1 with a below average knowledge and understanding of the world. Their relative weakness at this key stage in language and writing also hampers their achievement. In the best lessons, the teachers stimulate the pupils with imaginative visual resources, focus their questions carefully and build on pupils' previous understanding. Pupils learn to disassemble torches and make observations, noting the differences between power supplied by mains electricity and by batteries. Higher attaining pupils know that batteries produce electricity which can travel through wires, but the lower attaining pupils do not understand the connection between electricity and a battery. Also vital to improving achievement is the way that the best teaching incorporates language

and number development in line with the teaching in literacy and numeracy and also develops scientific vocabulary. At Key Stage 2, teachers are not challenging the higher attaining pupils by getting them to devise their own experiments and learn by trial and error. Pupils are, however, fully aware of the conditions required for the germination and growth of plants. Teachers are aware of the need to ensure that pupils develop independence in their learning and provide opportunities for pupils to conduct their own experiments and interpret the results. However only in one lesson did the teacher specifically provide work for pupils of differing levels of attainment. Teachers generally manage pupils and organise the classroom well but in one lesson, at Key Stage 2, the teacher had given insufficient thought to what the pupils ought to achieve. The pupils were unsure of the task, were not grouped well and the lack of appropriate challenge meant they became restless and noisy and there were several interruptions as pupils came and went from additional literacy support. In this case their progress was, understandably, unsatisfactory. The way that teachers group pupils in science lessons is based on dogma rather than professional experience or a clear rationale. In a Year 6 class, this hindered progress as it made it difficult for the teacher to organise the tasks in a way which would have extended the higher attaining pupils.

86. Most teachers attempt to ensure that low attainers and pupils with special educational needs receive extra help either from themselves or from an assistant, which ensures that they make satisfactory progress. In only a few instances do teachers provide special resources or simpler tasks. There are no major differences in the progress made by pupils of differing, sex, colour or background. However, higher attaining pupils do less well in science classes in general.
87. Teachers employ the school policy well in assessing the progress that pupils make, both on a day to day basis and over time. These very good assessments are used to provide appropriate reports to parents and to give pupils an idea of how they can improve. The informative way that teachers mark pupils' books also helps this process. Targets for attainment in national assessment tests set by the local authority for science are not necessarily in line with the school's needs; national data may be more appropriate. With the help of the headteacher, staff have used these data to identify areas of weakness. They have sought to improve attainment by adapting strategies, such as a clearly identifiable structure to lessons and to the conduct of experiments. The co-ordinator has ensured that all teachers use a national scheme of work in planning the lessons. She has not yet had sufficient time to monitor the effect of this or to share any emerging good practice. At present, the teachers' planning is too isolated and places undue reliance on the national scheme to provide progression in learning. Information and communication technology is not well used, for instance in exploring databases, producing graphs of tables or exploring the Internet. Some pupils have successfully explored science on CD-ROMs to extend their scientific understanding.
88. Although the school has made sound progress in developing the curriculum, teaching and resources, so that all strands of the National Curriculum programme of study are covered, the pupils' results in national tests have not kept pace with those nationally. Further developments in teaching, particularly the provision of an appropriate challenge for the more able pupils, will be necessary to raise attainment further. The school has begun to address this issue with the help of an advanced skills teacher from a local technical college who works in both key stages for a limited period of time each term.

ART AND DESIGN

89. The pupils' attainment in art and design is above national expectations at the end of both key stages. From an early age, drawing from life is encouraged, pupils keep a sketchbook and learn about the work of other artists and designers. This helps raise their expectations. Drawing and painting is sensitive and imaginative and these are often used as a starting point for skilled prints and fabric designs. Most impressive is the development of skills in block or texture printing from Key Stage 1 to Key Stage 2.
90. It was not possible to observe any teaching in art and design in either key stage during the inspection, as it was design and technology's turn on the timetable. However, it is clear from the care taken in displaying and preserving pupils' work that teachers really value the contribution that art and design brings to the pupils' creative and cultural development. It is evidently taught well. All

pupils, including those with special educational needs, make good progress. The quality and range of work on display, stored or photographed shows that learning opportunities are very good. The co-coordinator has made sure that a wide range of stimuli informs the pupils' understanding of art and design. These range from the work of our ancient ancestors on cave walls to the work of land-artists like Richard Long, from Greek pottery, Islamic tiles, Holbein, Escher or Mondrian. Three-dimensional work seen included Chinese dragons, decorative masks and clay sculptured. Pupils take their sketchbooks on visits to a variety of historical sites, field trips and outdoor centres. Their drawings are valuable across a range of curriculum subjects. Although some use is made of information and communication technology, pupils have insufficient opportunities to use computers during lessons.

91. The co-ordinator for art is enthusiastic and knowledgeable. She has build on the status of art and design, despite the recent emphasis on the core subjects, to the extent that expectations and, consequently, standards have been raised since the previous inspection. There are no formal procedures for assessment, but teachers make notes of significant strengths and weaknesses to assist in the writing of pupils' annual reports. Resources are good.

DESIGN AND TECHNOLOGY

92. Standards of attainment are in line with national expectations at the end of both key stages. This is a good improvement since the last inspection. By the time they are 7, pupils have learned to design and make a finger puppet in felt. Higher attaining pupils label their diagrams and show how they will stitch it together. Most pupils make drawings of common artefacts or types of vehicles to show their understanding of how they work. By the time they leave the school, pupils have learned to cut and shape accurately an appropriate range of materials, basing their design on research. Higher attaining pupils test their designs and modify them if they do not work as planned. Prior lower attainers and those with special educational needs make good progress in all elements of the subject. In a Year 6 class, pupils examined a variety of types of shoes or slippers, learned the skills of pattern-making, and then designed their own. The best pupils produced very good three-dimensional drawings with enough detail to show their construction. The work on display is of a high quality, from exuberant weaving in the reception class to well-made artefacts in Year 6.
93. Teaching in design and technology is good and the pupils enjoy a good range of interesting activities. This is a big improvement since the last inspection when it was unsatisfactory. The teachers have high expectations. They use good models or visual references as well as emphasising the vocabulary, and explain carefully what they expect the pupils do. In a Year 1 class, pupils learned quickly about the principles of pivots and levers, found many examples of them around the classroom and recorded their findings in pictures and words. The pupils were involved and excited and used phonetic spellings if they did not know the correct one. Teachers are generally knowledgeable and enthusiastic and this inspires the pupils. Boys and girls make equally good progress and take pride in their achievements. There is scope for greater use of information and communication technology.
94. The co-ordinator for design and technology has done a good job in maintaining standards and enthusiasm for the subject despite the recent emphasis on literacy and numeracy. Alternating with art and design on a half-termly rota enables the school to make best use of the reduced time allowed. The syllabus is broad and balanced and work in textiles is particularly well-developed. Since the last inspection, the number and range of activities has improved and range of tools available has increased. Older pupils enjoy large and well equipped working spaces. The school has established good connections with a local secondary school, which is aspiring to Technology College status. Apart from already working on joint planning initiatives and benefiting from the secondary school's expertise, the primary school is set to gain further assistance from the sharing of enhanced facilities. In addition, the school has benefited from the input of local authority advisers and visits to local museums and field study centres.

GEOGRAPHY and HISTORY

95. From the lessons seen, the scrutiny of work, teachers' planning and discussions with pupils, attainment at the end of both key stages is in line with that expected of pupils of a similar age. This is a similar finding to the previous inspection.
96. In Key Stage 1, pupils know that history is what we learn about the past. They know that the Great Fire of London was a long time ago and that it spread rapidly because houses were made of wood then and they were very close together. They know that we find out about events like this because people such as Samuel Pepys kept diaries. By the end of Key Stage 2, pupils have a sound knowledge and understanding of the Victorian era, the Romans, the Ancient Greeks, Egyptians and Tudors. They know about the way of life of people from different sections of society and use a range of resources such as photographs, artefacts and documents to help them with their work.
97. In geography at Key Stage 1, pupils name the countries of Britain and use the four points of the compass with a fair degree of accuracy. They think Lewes is an old town because it has a castle and they know it is in the south of England. They know the river is called the Ouse and that, as a result of flooding, bigger flood barriers will have to be built. As part of their work they have mapped out their route to school, and the journey of the Jolly Postman. In Year 3, pupils use world maps and globes to chart weather conditions across the world. They know how to make an appropriate key. In Year 4, they study the village of Chembakoli and compare use of land there with that in Lewes. By the end of Key Stage 2, they have a clear understanding of the physical features of rivers and the effects on the landscape. Pupils use appropriate geographical vocabulary to describe the different stages and developments of a river. Insufficient use is made of information and communication technology during lessons.
98. Only one lesson was seen in geography and two in history, all at Key Stage 2. All were at least satisfactory and the teaching in history was good. The teachers made very good use of resources to add interest to the lessons and planned them well to ensure pupils gained new knowledge and understanding. There are good procedures for assessment and teachers use the information obtained well in planning for what has gone before and what is to follow. Effective links are made between the two subjects to ensure the satisfactory progress of all pupils, including those with special educational needs. For example, maps of Ancient Greece and Egypt are used to locate information such as the most densely populated areas, the site of the Pyramids and the River Nile.
99. Good use is made of visits to support both of these subjects. For example, pupils visit Anne of Cleves' house as part of their work on Tudors, and Wakehurst Place and the landfill site for their work in geography. Pupils use their literacy skills effectively in history and geography, for example in Year 3, they have written postcards describing life on Hadrian's Wall and in Year 6, they have described the River Ouse's journey.

INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY

100. Pupils' attainment in information and communication technology (ICT) is in line with national expectations at the end of Key Stage 1 and below national expectations at the end of Key Stage 2. This is an improvement since the previous inspection when standards were below expectations at both key stages. During Key stage 1, pupils learn to use a computer for a variety of tasks and develop skills in using the keyboard, Windows and mouse. They make pictures and print them out, write simple text and save it and use some simple simulation programs to expand language and understanding. At Key Stage 2, pupils learn to use spreadsheets to organise and explore data, word processors to write in a range of styles, and graphing programs to plot the results of experiments in science. However, in discussion, pupils revealed that they do not know how to build or use a simple database or send e-mail. Whilst most pupils can save and retrieve files, higher attaining pupils do not learn how to organise and combine different forms of information, for example in desktop publishing. These shortcomings are due to the fact that the use of computers is not yet an integral part of lessons across the curriculum.

101. The teaching of ICT is usually good at both key stages. Pupils enjoy the subject, look forward eagerly to lessons in the computer room and respond well to the teachers and other adults. They are keen to learn and show considerable perseverance, even with technical constraints, because teachers explain the usefulness of the tasks. In the best lessons, pupils work well together, taking turns and helping each other. Improvements in attainment have been fairly recent. There is not much difference in the attainment of Year 5 and Year 6 pupils, for instance. Teachers take this into account and lessons are pitched appropriately, producing some impressive progress. In a Year 5 lesson, pupils were eager to produce a computer graph for the first time. They listened well to the teacher, learned from each other's successes and failures and waited patiently for technical problems to be sorted out. In a Year 1 lesson, the teacher's very good knowledge of the technology enabled him to calm pupils' fears and to challenge them to do better. He set a brisk pace and used very effective strategies for managing the pupils' excited behaviour. Good relationships ensured that there were no problems and pupils achieved very good progress in their knowledge and understanding. There are no separate arrangements for pupils with special educational needs, except for the laptop provided for a statemented child, but they are catered for satisfactorily by means of extra support from the teacher or an assistant. Few teachers are yet planning work that is matched to pupils of differing attainment. As the general level of attainment is raised, more care will be needed, especially in challenging the more able pupils, if they are to achieve the higher levels.
102. The ICT co-ordinator is enthusiastic and knowledgeable. In line with school policy, he has introduced some simple assessment arrangements that allow pupils and teachers to gain an understanding of achievement. Although these are not yet linked to national attainment levels they enable the planned curriculum and lessons to be modified according to revised targets. All teachers plan to a national scheme that ensures coverage of the National Curriculum. This is a good improvement since the last inspection. All classes are timetabled in the computer room for two periods during the week. Most teachers use this opportunity to develop pupils' understanding of ICT, using projects taken from different curriculum areas, for instance history or geography. In Key Stage 1, for example, pupils develop skills in the use of a painting program and see this as a natural extension of work in art lessons about the painter Mondrian. Unfortunately, the computers in classrooms are not used as effectively. Teachers are not yet confident that pupils can transfer the skills learned on personal computers to the older computers in classrooms. It is partly for this reason that work on databases and desktop publishing is undeveloped. Also, teachers miss many opportunities for using ICT to enhance learning in mathematics and science.
103. The school has established good connections with a local secondary school, which is hoping to become a Technology College. Apart from already working on joint planning initiatives and benefiting from the secondary school's expertise, the primary school is set to gain further assistance from the sharing of enhanced facilities.
104. The school has suffered some setbacks, due to the floods, which has meant that pupils have not yet begun to use the Internet. The ICT technician is invaluable in making sure that the above average number of networked computers and classroom computers work properly. Teachers make good use of his skills during lessons in showing pupils how to use the software. As the school begins to take advantage of the new computers, the national scheme of work and the recent training undergone by teachers, the provision for ICT is steadily improving. This will help raise standards.

MUSIC

105. Standards of attainment have been maintained since the previous inspection and are broadly in line with the national expectation at the end of both key stages. Key Stage 1 pupils are very enthusiastic and sing tunefully, carefully following the instructions of the conductor. They are learning how to inhale and exhale, how the diaphragm works and how sound vibrates through the air to make music. Most successfully learn the lines of songs, particularly the new ones being prepared for the Christmas concert. They accompany their singing with simple compositions played on percussion instruments. About half of the Year 2 pupils accurately clap out rhythms using crotchets and quavers. Pupils in Key Stage 2 have some difficulties with basic rhythm but most clap in time, adapting to changing patterns. When the specialist music teacher takes older pupils,

they listen critically to others' performance and are honest and open about their own. They sing tunefully and enthusiastically, clapping and clicking their fingers accurately on the beat, with good attention to rhythm. The majority follow written notation accurately, but some have difficulty distinguishing between loud and soft sounds. The only shortcoming is that not enough attention is paid to listening critically to the music of famous composers, past and present.

106. The quality of teaching is satisfactory overall, although when the specialist music teacher takes lessons, it is very good. She visits the school once a week and takes each class in turn for a short session, usually singing with percussion accompaniment provided by the pupils and with very good guidance on the correct posture and breathing techniques. Her lessons are very lively and entertaining presentations which make for really enjoyable sessions to which the pupils look forward. Pupils enjoy their warm-up activities very much, trying hard to satisfy the teacher's rigorous demands and high expectations as she weaves singing and conducting techniques tightly together, drawing their attention to variations in pitched. She gives very good individual guidance to pupils having difficulty playing a short sequence together, and makes very effective use of sign language to impress the idea of silence on classes when sitting them down. Teachers attend these sessions and work well as a team, all using praise and encouragement judiciously, raising confidence so that pupils make good progress. When music lessons are given during the rest of the week by class teachers, the quality of teaching is satisfactory, although several lack sufficient knowledge and understanding of music which reduces their effectiveness. For example, teachers occasionally have difficulty beating the correct rhythm in a complex pattern of dotted crotchets and quavers, when the pupils are working on simple crotchet beats. Lessons are generally well planned with a clear focus and sufficient repetition to reinforce the learning objective. Pupils make sound progress, as teachers assess performance and gradually increase challenge, asking pupils to evaluate their own performance.

107. Singing in assembly is enthusiastic and tuneful, and reception children are particularly exuberant, even if they do only know one verse and the chorus. The headteacher makes sensitive attempts to encourage them to learn more verses or to sing more quietly so that they do not drown the rest of the school in subsequent verses. Although some taped music is used when pupils enter the hall for assemblies, there are too few opportunities for them to listen critically and for teachers to talk to them about the work and the composer. There are insufficient opportunities for pupils to use computers during lessons.

108. Since the specialist teacher has such a limited time in the school, the headteacher acts as co-ordinator for the subject. The scheme of work is based on national guidance and gives clear indications for teachers to plan lessons which take account of what has gone before and what is to follow. Procedures for assessment are very good, and the data obtained is used effectively when planning lessons and when adapting teaching during lessons. Pupils are given opportunities for performing in public when they take part in school concerts, the annual Christmas schools' concert at the Dome in Brighton, and when they work with musicians from many nationalities in a concert organised by the Pestalozzi Children's Village. The subject makes a good contribution to pupils' spiritual and cultural development.

PHYSICAL EDUCATION

109. Pupils attain standards in physical education (PE) which are in line with national expectations at the end of both key stages. By the end of Key Stage 1, pupils can control and develop a range of movements on the mat or over apparatus. Pupils in Year 6 work with a partner to develop and refine sequences of stretching and balancing movements, evaluate and comment on their own performance and that of others. They explain the changes happening in their body when they exercise and say how physical activity improves health.

110. It was only possible to observe two lessons during the inspection. These were satisfactorily taught by teachers who had a good understanding of the PE curriculum and were able to plan and manage lessons that challenged pupils appropriately. They assessed individual progress and were able to offer instruction and tasks that developed pupils of differing fitness and ability. They applied appropriate procedures for warming up and stretching and made pupils fully aware of all the health

and safety issues involved. The pupils enjoy PE and are well behaved and co-operative. They work well together and take care of each other, applying what they have learned in earlier lessons to make satisfactory progress.

111. Since the last inspection, the school has improved the curriculum, now providing dance and swimming to meet the national requirements. The school is proud of the range of team games that it offers. Both boys and girls enjoy football, netball, stoolball, cricket and rugby. Parents and other adults help with a good range of after school activities. The school's cricket team enjoys considerable success in the county. Each year a trip is provided to the Isle of Wight which offers a range of outdoor activities such as windsurfing. There are good connections with the local community secondary school, which enables the Year 6 pupils to prepare for transfer.
112. In common with other foundation subjects, the school bases its assessments in physical education on national guidance. In addition, teachers keep informal notes each term, which enable them to write a report at the end of the year. The co-ordinator has introduced the national scheme of work for PE but has not yet had an opportunity to monitor the teaching of planning to see if it is meeting the school's needs. However, she has a good understanding of the other teachers' skills and is confident in their ability to deliver the programme of study. The school's facilities for PE are good, with a good sized hall and a very good (and well-drained, in contrast to other areas in Lewes) field.

RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

113. Standards of attainment are broadly in line with national recommendations by the end of both key stages. Pupils in Key Stage 1 study the topic of celebrating harvest with special emphasis on the Christian festival and also Jewish Sukkoth. They reflect on actions which are kind or not and some produce extended writing on the story of Joseph. They write simple pieces on the life of Jesus. In Key Stage 2, pupils from faith background explain how the Bible is used in church and how it differs from the one in use in the classroom, for example, one pupil explaining that the Bible is kept on a 'golden eagle' in church. Most know that it contains stories of Jesus and that the Bible must be shown great respect because it is a 'special' book. They develop an understanding of time before and after Christ, and know that the millennium and the Common Era date from the birth of Jesus. In the quiz activity, 'Who am I?', many recognised Moses from the clues given but not Abraham. Most recognised Jesus from the description given. They show good comprehension when they work on a guided tour of a mosque, in response to the teacher's questioning. Higher attaining pupils understand that Islamic art does not represent animals or humans because of the danger of idolatry. Examination of past work shows pupils have a satisfactory understanding of the main features of Christian worship and that they reflect on their knowledge and experience in writing their own thoughtful prayers. Pupils understand the role of the minister of religion in their considered writing about the teaching of Jesus on love for others. They have a satisfactory knowledge and understanding of the life of Mohammed. They understand and explain the significance of the Christingle. There is some satisfactory reflective writing in pupils' 'Millennium Prayers' and on feelings of rejection. Pupils have too few opportunities to reflect upon, and discuss, how religious beliefs impact on the lives of believers and unbelievers alike.
114. The quality of teaching is satisfactory overall, although there was one instance of unsatisfactory teaching in the lower juniors. Teachers have a satisfactory knowledge and understanding of the subject, although not all are quite comfortable teaching it. They share learning intentions with pupils so that they understand the purpose of the lessons. In Year 2, the teacher made good use of Georgia O'Keefe's 'Poppies' as a visual aid in a lesson on remembrance, which reflected that day's assembly theme. Good links were made with history, and pupils were fascinated and very attentive to artefacts such as a tin hat from World War Two. They listen carefully for the most part, although there was the occasional little rumble of unconnected chat from a small section of the class. They were very interested to learn that all fighting men are given a copy of the New Testament and the teacher was not reluctant to point out that many people are afraid of death or injury, that many did die in the war and that the Remembrance ceremonies provide an opportunity for thanksgiving.
115. In Year 5, the teacher related secular archaeology to the study of the background to the Bible, and pupils understood that the material existed before the written text. Her good subject knowledge and

understanding succeeded in engaging pupils' interest in the story of the discovery of the Dead Sea Scrolls. Pupils were intrigued by the quiz activity, listening well and very pleased when they got the answers right. The teacher set homework challenges for pupils in finding out when the Common Era started and the lesson was a satisfactory preparation for further written work at another time. At the end of Key Stage 2, the information sheet produced by the teacher, although the same for all abilities, was accessible to most and many volunteered to read out loud. She gave clear guidance on planning the different areas of a poster on a mosque and reminded pupils of the need for a quiet classroom environment to do their best work. She was, however, a little careless when showing a prayer-mat as inspiration and did not handle it with sufficient respect. Nor did she comment upon some boys showing a lack of respect when they sniggered at the sound of a muezzin's call on a video. The one unsatisfactory lesson was seen in a lower junior class, when the teacher failed to catch the attention and interest of pupils and almost half were distracted and restless. The growing undercurrent of chatter indicated a lack of respect in not listening to their teacher or each other. She questioned well to allow pupils to display their knowledge and understanding of sacred books but did not check them when several talked at once. Throughout the school, little use is made of information technology during everyday lessons.

116. The scheme of work is satisfactory and is currently being used alongside national guidance, not the local Agreed Syllabus. The school acknowledges the need to ensure that this national guidance does not replace the Agreed Syllabus, because it only gives ideas and suggestions and is not in itself a scheme of work. The use of this guidance, which is very recently introduced into the school, does not ensure the nationally recommended time allocation for the subject and, although the recommended times are given across the year, regular teaching does not always take place. The curriculum is enhanced with a range of visits and visitors, mostly Christian but there are visiting Hindu, Moslem and Jewish speakers who work with junior pupils. There are close links with St. Michael's Church and local nonconformist chapels and pupils visit a Hindu temple. Some parents are reluctant to tolerate other religions and complain when the school celebrates Diwali. The co-ordinator has a clear knowledge and understanding of the role, but is unable to exercise it effectively in terms of monitoring and evaluating provision and classroom practice because of a lack of non-contact time.