

INSPECTION REPORT

RED HILL PRIMARY SCHOOL

Chislehurst, Kent

LEA area: Bromley

Unique reference number: 101604

Headteacher: Mrs E Alford

Reporting inspector: Mr J Palk
23630

Dates of inspection: 9th – 12th October 2000

Inspection number: 225359

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:	Community
Age range of pupils:	5 – 11 years
Gender of pupils:	Mixed
School address:	Red Hill Chislehurst Kent
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Appropriate authority:	Bromley
Name of chair of governors:	Mr J Thorogood
Date of previous inspection:	4 th November 1996

INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Team members		Subject responsibilities	Aspect responsibilities
Mr J Palk 23630	Registered inspector	Geography	How high are standards? How well are pupils taught? What the school should do to improve further.
Ms B Price 8947	Lay inspector		Pupils' attitudes values and personal development. How well does the school care for its pupils? How well does the school work in partnership with parents?
Ms D Cinamon 27635	Team inspector	English Religious education English as an additional language	.
Mr P Crispin 25359	Team inspector	Science Art and design History	
Rob Pyner	Team inspector 14989	Mathematics Design and technology Equal opportunities	How good are the curricular and other opportunities offered to pupil?
Ms M McNaughton 1926	Team inspector 1926	Areas of learning for children in the foundation stage Special educational needs Music	
Mr D Clegg 4314	Team inspector 4314	Information and communication technology Physical education	How well is the school led and managed?

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PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Red Hill is a very large primary school with 618 pupils on roll. Thirty-one pupils are under five years old and their attainment on entry to school is average. Another group of pupils starts school in Year 3. Twenty-three pupils have entered Year 3 at the start of this term, from neighbouring infant schools, and their attainment is generally at or above average. There is significant movement of pupils in and out of the school during Key Stage 2. The twenty-two classes are organised into year groups. The pupils come from a wide range of social and ethnic backgrounds. There is an above average proportion with English as an additional language but very nearly all pupils speak English. Eight pupils have statements for their specific needs and twenty-three per cent of the pupils are on the register for special educational needs which is above average. Twenty-two per cent of pupils are entitled to free school meals which is average.

HOW GOOD THE SCHOOL IS

This is an improving school which is steadily and effectively dealing with the challenges it faces. The headteacher and governors show good leadership in creating a team spirit that supports continual improvement in the quality of education for the pupils. Standards are satisfactory and are rising at the older end of the school. The school provides a satisfactory education for its pupils. However the rate of progress varies between the years and classes. Teaching is satisfactory across the school with a good proportion of very good teaching in Year 6. Pupils have positive attitudes to work and are well behaved. The school is providing satisfactory value for money.

What the school does well

- High quality teaching in Years 4, 5 and 6 helps pupils reach their potential in most subjects.
- Pupils have positive attitudes and their personal development is good.
- Visits, clubs and links with the community strengthen the curriculum.
- The provision for special educational needs is good and pupils make good progress.
- The governors are knowledgeable and provide good support to the headteacher in raising standards.
- Relationships are very secure and there is good provision for pupils' personal and social development.

What could be improved

- The progress that pupils make, particularly in reception, Years 1, 2 and 3 because there is too much variation in the quality of teaching.
- Standards in English and science could be higher for seven-year-olds.
- Checks to see what pupils have learned and the progress they are making are inconsistent.
- The roles of some key members of staff need to be developed to help them raise standards and improve the quality of education further.
- There are weaknesses in the planning of activities for children in the reception classes.

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

HOW THE SCHOOL HAS IMPROVED SINCE ITS LAST INSPECTION

The school has successfully addressed most of the issues from the last inspection. The school development plan is addressing improvement systematically. The school is now on a secure financial footing and governors monitor the work of the school closely. Recent appointments and staff movements have strengthened the teaching team and the school knows what it is to teach pupils from year to year. However the pace of improvement has been slower in aspects relating to the role of managers and tracking pupils' progress. There is still more work to be done in ensuring that subject managers play a full part in reviewing the quality of teaching and standards. The school is well placed to further improve.

STANDARDS

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

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

Key

well above average A

above average B

average C

below average D

well below average E

The downward trend in performance of eleven-year-olds has been halted and the 2000 test results show a significant improvement in English and science. The school exceeded its targets in English but did not reach those set for mathematics. Inspection found standards in English and mathematics to be average and the school is on course to meet its targets in English and exceed those set this year in mathematics in 2001. In science much of the work is above average. Pupils make particularly good progress in Year 6 and are achieving as well as might be expected.

Performance results at Key Stage 1 in writing and mathematics have also risen but have fallen below average in reading. Inspection evidence found broadly average attainment in reading, writing, mathematics and science. However there is a lack of challenge in the work set for literacy and numeracy in Years 1 and 2 and attainment is not as high as it should be.

Children enter the school with average standards and most make satisfactory progress in language, literacy and mathematical skills. Progress in their knowledge and understanding of the world needs to be improved.

Standards in other subjects are broadly satisfactory. In Years 5 and 6 pupils achieved good standards in physical education, music and design and technology as a consequence of the very skilful teaching.

PUPILS' ATTITUDES AND VALUES

Aspect	Comment
Attitudes to the school	Pupils are keen to learn, interested and involved in their work. They concentrate well on their work.
Behaviour, in and out of classrooms	Good in the majority of lessons. Pupils move around the school sensibly.
Personal development and relationships	Very good. Pupils work and play well together. They respond very well to opportunities to take on responsibilities and to show initiative.
Attendance	Average and pupils are not often late.

There is an active school council that plays a useful part in school development. There have been some successful arrangements for managing playtimes and these make an effective contribution to attitudes, behaviour and personal development.

TEACHING AND LEARNING

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

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

Ninety-six per cent of the teaching is satisfactory or better with 44 per cent that is good, very good or excellent. Teaching varies across the school and four per cent of lessons are unsatisfactory. The most effective teaching is in Years 4, 5 and 6 with half of the lessons in Year 6 of very good quality. Teaching is weaker in the foundation stage where teachers are not planning effectively in all areas of learning.

Most teachers make effective use of guidance for teaching literacy and numeracy and this is helping raise standards. However, some lessons in Years 1 and 2 needed appropriate challenges for higher attaining pupils in reading, mathematics and writing. Teaching of literacy and numeracy is better in Years 4, 5 and 6.

Too many teachers still plan activities rather than planning for what pupils need to learn next. Some lessons lack challenge, particularly for the higher attainers, or the work set is too difficult and the pupils become restless and do not learn as well.

Pupils with special educational needs are taught well and the support is often of good quality. They make good progress in their lessons.

OTHER ASPECTS OF THE SCHOOL

Aspect	Comment
The quality and range of the curriculum	Broad and balanced in Years 1 to 6, but unsatisfactory in the foundation stage. Topic work contributes well to pupils' literacy skills.
Provision for pupils with special educational needs	Good. There is effective co-ordination, which ensures that pupils are well supported.
Provision for pupils with English as an additional language	Satisfactory. The specialist teaching is good.
Provision for pupils' personal, including spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	Very good provision for pupils' social development. Good emphasis on moral development and a satisfactory range of spiritual and cultural opportunities.
How well the school cares for its pupils	Satisfactory overall. Good pastoral support for all pupils. Teachers value pupils' ideas and opinions. Assessment procedures are not applied with equal rigour across the school.

The school has effectively introduced National Curriculum guidance in Key Stage 1 and 2 and has made a positive start in developing assessment procedures. However there is still not enough good quality information about what pupils can and cannot do to help teachers plan suitable work for all pupils. Regular lessons about personal, social and health education make a good contribution to attitudes and values. There is good provision for extra-curricular clubs. Teachers make sure pupils have plenty of opportunity to work and learn together. The school makes effective use of the local community to support topics and to promote high standards. Parents are involved well and make an important contribution through homework and helping in school.

HOW WELL THE SCHOOL IS LED AND MANAGED

Aspect	Comment
Leadership and management by the headteacher and other key staff	Satisfactory overall. The headteacher is effective in establishing team working and a good climate for learning. Too many subject co-ordinators are not clear about what is needed to raise standards in their subjects and how to go about this.
How well the governors fulfil their responsibilities	They do this well. They fulfil their statutory responsibilities and play an active role in shaping the direction of the school.
The school's evaluation of its performance	Satisfactory in making use of information from standardised tests to support pupils and also to set targets to raise standards. The monitoring of teaching, planning and standards is variable and needs to have more impact on teaching.
The strategic use of resources	Satisfactory. Effective use made of additional staff to help raise pupils' achievements. Budget planning is efficient.

There is very good accommodation, ranging from designated rooms for design and technology and computing to well designed areas for outdoor play. There are good learning resources, which are used well. The school is much better at identifying what improvements need to be made to raise standards but some co-ordinators are not rigorous enough in managing the necessary action. The school is improving its procedures for monitoring and evaluating effectiveness.

PARENTS' AND CARERS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

What pleases parents most	What parents would like to see improved
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The focus on improving education at the school. Good attitudes, behaviour and personal development of the children. Very pleased with the improvements to the building. The school responds well to their concerns. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> More regular homework for their children and clearer guidance on what they are expected to do at home Less uncertainty over class sizes in Year 3

The inspection team agrees with parents positive comments. They found that homework is a regular feature but the instructions to pupils could be clearer in some cases. The uncertainty over admission numbers in Year 3 is a concern to governors and the staff. This is outside the school's control as the local education authority requires that pupils who do not get places at other local junior schools join Red Hill in Year 3.

PART B: COMMENTARY

HOW HIGH ARE STANDARDS?

The school's results and achievements

1. Year 2000 National Curriculum results for eleven-year-olds are broadly average in English, mathematics and science. This is an improvement on the results in previous years and shows that pupils are now reaching the standards of which they are capable. The consistently good teaching in Years 4, 5 and 6 and the effective use of the national strategies for literacy and numeracy is the main reason for this improvement. The significant improvement in science results is due to an improved scheme of work, effective subject management and improved teaching of investigative science. There is no significant difference in the attainment of boys and girls in test results, but pupils who enter the school in Years 5 and 6 do not achieve as well in the tests for eleven-year-olds. The targets in English for the proportion of pupils to achieve a Level 4 or above were exceeded. However the target for mathematics was not reached because of gaps in the pupils' numeracy skills. Given the improvement in teaching new targets for mathematics are not sufficiently challenging and the school now has the capacity to achieve higher targets.
2. Pupils' attainment in National Curriculum tests 2000 for seven-year-olds is average in writing and mathematics but below average in reading. Pupils' performance in mathematics tests has improved as a result of a better understanding of the national strategy. However reading scores have fallen. In this aspect of their learning pupils do not make enough progress. There is still some uncertainty in how to best use the literacy strategy in Years 1 and 2 to develop reading skills. Pupils continue to do better in writing than in reading.
3. The under five-year-old children enter school with attainments that are broadly average. Sufficient time and attention is given to developing children's' literacy and numeracy skills and for their personal and physical development. Overall pupils make satisfactory progress in these areas and are on course to reach the expected early learning goals by the end of the year. However more able children do not make the progress that could be expected in reading and writing. Children's knowledge and understanding of the world (an area that includes science, history and geography) is not properly planned and progress in these areas is unsatisfactory. Children are not expected to reach the early learning goals in this area of learning and are not achieving as well as they should.
4. Inspection found most pupils to be on course to reach average standards in reading, writing, mathematics and science by the end of Year 2. The work seen did not indicate much above average attainment in reading, writing or mathematics and standards are generally lower than they should be.
5. Older pupils are making the progress expected of them in English, mathematics and science and particularly in Years 5 and 6. Inspection found pupils to be on course to reach average standards in these subjects with a small proportion of pupils achieving above average standards in writing and mathematics. Effective teaching of literacy and numeracy is having a positive impact on standards and the effects are beginning to be seen in the work in Year 6. Pupils with special educational needs (SEN) make good progress throughout the school. The support for lower attaining pupils is appropriately targeted and they make good progress. Pupils who receive support for English as a second language make satisfactory progress.

6. Literacy skills are developed well in other subjects. Pupils demonstrate their knowledge of Victorian classrooms with short cameos and use many different styles of writing in their history and geography lessons. Design and technology and science lessons give pupils opportunities to write reports and evaluations. Pupils do not get enough practise in using their mathematical knowledge and number skills in subjects such as design and technology or science and this contributes to uncertainties amongst pupils in applying their number skills to new situations.
7. Pupils are on course to achieve the expected standards in other subjects by the age of seven and eleven. Standards are similar to those reported at the last inspection and have improved in information and communication technology (ICT) and music. However progress in all subjects is still uneven through the school as a consequence of the variable quality of teaching and planning. Pupils make the best progress in Years 5 and 6 where some particularly good work in writing and dance were seen.

Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development

8. Overall pupils' attitudes, values and personal development are good, and these have a positive impact on their learning. Pupils are keen to do their best and quickly settle to their work. In over half of lessons their attitudes are good or better. Particularly at the upper end of the school.
9. In most lessons pupils listen carefully to the teacher and to other pupils. They approach their work with enthusiasm and are very well motivated. Many hands quickly shoot up to answer questions and there is a buzz of eager activity in many classrooms. Pupils want to find things out, as in one Year 1 science lesson when they wanted to know why some apples have holes and bruises. They have good concentration and persevere with a task. For example, in a design and technology lesson pupils persevered even when techniques were difficult. Pupils co-operate with and support each other well when working in pairs or groups, for example during physical education. Pupils take pride in their work producing neat handwriting and clear labelling. A school aim is to foster a sense of self-worth, tolerance and respect for others in a caring community and this aim is well met.
10. Behaviour is good in lessons and around the school. It is impressive to see over six hundred pupils quietly entering the hall for the weekly whole-school assembly and listening attentively during the assembly. Pupils also behave well at playtime, encouraged by the thoughtful layout of the well provided play spaces. There has been only one fixed-term exclusion, which, with such a large number of pupils, indicates the high standards of behaviour which are achieved. There is little bullying or racial harassment, and any that occurs is dealt with speedily.
11. Pupils' personal development is very good. They respect the values and beliefs of other people and think about others' feelings. In one lesson, a pupil spontaneously said he felt sad at the death of his friend's hamster. Pupils enjoy undertaking responsibilities around the school, for example, Year 6 'Playground Pals' wear red caps in the playground to show that they will help others. At a meeting of the recently convened school council, pupils of all year groups displayed an impressive maturity in thinking about how their school could be improved. They enthusiastically raise funds for those less fortunate than themselves, as indicated by the large number of shoe boxes already packed for Romania. Pupils work well on their own and when they undertake research tasks use their initiative. For example, in one religious education lesson, two Year 1 pupils asked to sing a thank you song they had learned at home.

12. Relationships between pupils are very good and make a valuable contribution to pupils' personal development. Teachers are mostly seen as friendly, caring and willing to help.
13. Attendance is broadly in line with the national average. Pupils are keen to come to school and there is little lateness.

HOW WELL ARE PUPILS TAUGHT?

14. Teaching is satisfactory overall. In 44 per cent of lessons teaching is good or better. Teaching is best in Years 4, 5 and 6 and the very best teaching is in Year 6 where half the lessons are very good or excellent. Teachers in these classes have very good relationships with their pupils, match work well to their different needs and make good use of all the lesson time. Four per cent of lessons were unsatisfactory and pupils did not make enough progress. These lessons were generally spoilt by work that is too easy and was not demanding enough.
15. The teaching of the children under five-years-old is satisfactory. Teachers plan appropriately for literacy, numeracy and physical development and provide well for children's personal, social and emotional needs. The teachers are not planning sufficiently for the other areas of learning and children work largely undirected in some settings with little intervention by the teachers. For example, the hospital role play area, which is cheerful and inviting, lacks labels, messages and additional equipment to encourage children to develop their spoken language or to extend their knowledge and understanding of the world. There is a useful office for developing writing skills but teachers are not clear about how to use this effectively and this results in many missed opportunities to extend communication and creative skills. Teachers are secure in teaching the basic literacy, language and numeracy skills and focus well on letter sounds, handwriting and the language of number. There is an effective working relationship within the team and the nursery nurse is experienced and offers children good support.
16. Teachers in Years 1 to 6 are knowledgeable about the subjects that they teach and make satisfactory use of each others' expertise to help with lesson planning. For example, the gymnastics lessons in Year 2 followed a similar structure and effectively covered the same skills. The 'specialist' teacher provided good guidelines for the other teachers in the team ensuring that pupils in the three classes were taught effectively. However lesson planning does not always pay close enough attention to how learning objectives are to be met or whether these are appropriate for the pupils. Time spent colouring in pictures of long and short objects does not further the understanding of this concept for a group of pupils in Year 2. Not all Year 3 teachers adequately teach pupils how to identify direct speech and how to use speech marks correctly before setting them the task. In Year 2 pupils were without prompts to help them log on to the computers and spent too much time typing in the text which they were going on to process. These lessons are among a number that shows a lack of understanding about what pupils can and cannot do. This not only affects the progress they make, but time spent sorting out problems caused by inappropriate work means that pupils become unsettled and noise levels begin to distract others in the class. The good and very good lessons start with a bang. They are exciting and the teachers capture the interest of the pupils with well chosen questions and good demonstrations of what they want pupils to learn and what they expect at the end of the lesson. These teachers use their very good knowledge of the pupils to give praise for achievements and well-timed prompts. As in a Year 6 spelling assignment when the teacher prompts one pupil with "You should try a 'c' not a 'k' for scary". Later lots

of heartfelt praise for the pupil who answers *"I know its night time because it says moonlight freezes the shaggy world"*. The teacher replies with, *"It's parts like that, that send a shiver down my spine"*. The pace of most lessons move quickly and teachers kept a constant check on the pupils' understanding. For example, when a lower attaining Year 6 pupil gives 75 per cent of 40 the teacher quickly challenges some other pupils to explain their strategies. In this way the teacher monitors the progress individuals are making. In good art lessons in Year 2 pupils are encouraged to go back and *"have a really good look at it....how could you show"*

17. Pupils' behaviour is generally well managed. A teacher in Year 3 gave firm encouragement to some challenging pupils praising them for *"facing the board"* and *"putting their hands up"*. In this lesson, as in most others, the teacher was supported well by the support assistant who encouraged these strategies. Some teachers are not managing the boisterous pupils well enough. When combined with inappropriate worksheets or weak teaching, pupils become distracted and disturb each other. Very good relationships are encouraged by most teachers which means that pupils get on with their work and value their own and others' efforts. For example, in a Year 4 music lesson the class teacher had prepared a useful planning sheet to help the groups organise and complete the different elements on time. The teacher helped the group to solve problems, with *"Will it work? Try it and find out? How can it improve?"* and stayed with the group until a solution had been agreed.
18. Literacy and numeracy are taught well. Where literacy teaching is best there are very clear expectations about what is to be achieved are given, instructions are clear and the plenary session is used to develop points made in the lesson. In Year 6 three very suitable tasks to develop writing styles had been set for the different ability groups and the support staff given good guidance on how to develop pupils' language. Weaker lessons did not have the same good level of setting work to meet the needs of different abilities. Some pupils found the work unchallenging whilst others struggled to make sense of what they had to do. The development of pupils reading skills is not always well planned, especially in Years 1 and 2. Numeracy teaching is more consistent across the school, but the expectations of pupils are variable in quality in Years 1, 2 and 3. Some year groups are set for mathematics and this is working well. However the use of setting for both literacy and numeracy is not consistent through the school as different information is used to determine the groups in the different years.
19. The quality of teaching has improved since the last inspection. However, teachers use of assessment information is less rigorous in too many classes. Most teachers are conscientious about checking pupils work to find out what they have done and if this is correct but they do not evaluate the work sufficiently to establish what the pupils need to be learning next. This affects the quality of lesson planning and consequently the progress made in many lessons. The marking of pupils' work also varies in effectiveness. It is good in Year 5 where teachers pose questions that help pupils move on. In other year groups too much of the marking is not helpful as it raises too many targets for pupils to aim at, for example sometimes spelling, sometimes organisation of the work and at other times grammar. Praise, when it is given, is not explicit. Homework is set regularly, and some is of good quality. In Year 6 the monks' rules written on velum had motivated the pupils to find out and report accurately the monks' routines. There is not always sufficient guidance given to pupils and parents on what is to be completed, by when and what it is to be achieved.
20. There are particular strengths in the teaching of music and physical education and design and technology. The shared planning, guided by good subject expertise

ensures effective learning in these lessons. There are still variations in the teachers' confidence and knowledge in using computers and this affects the even development of pupils' skills and experiences and the standards they attain in some lessons.

21. The teaching of pupils with special educational needs is good. The school has made additional provision by increasing the number of learning support assistants and these are used well by teachers in lessons. Those support assistants that have received training have a noticeable effect on the overall standards and progress made by the pupils. The teaching of pupils with English as an additional language by the specialist teacher is good and class teachers conscientiously follow the programmes set for these pupils.

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

22. The breadth, balance and range of learning opportunities offered to the pupils are satisfactory in Key Stage 1 and Key Stage 2 but unsatisfactory at the foundation stage. The balance of the curriculum for children under five does not take enough account of the range of activities required for children of this age.
23. The curriculum has been substantially strengthened since the last inspection. Teachers plan together effectively for each year group using the Qualifications and Curriculum Authority (QCA) guidelines and the national strategies for literacy and numeracy. Teachers in Years 4, 5 and 6 understand how pupils' skills develop and this ensures that their planning is effective. Planning is weaker in Years 1, 2 and 3. The curriculum meets statutory requirements with the exception of some aspects of control and modelling within information and communication technology (ICT). The school is aware of this. There is a considerable commitment to personal, social and health education (PSHE), including drugs awareness and sex education which is benefiting pupils' personal development.
24. The curriculum has been developed well since the last inspection. The pupils are actively involved in a literacy and arts project and local community arts events. French lessons have been started for all pupils in Year 2 and 6 and there are good range of extra-curricular activities which are well attended. These include football, netball, singing, art, a samba band, using computers, dance, a French club and music lessons. Pupils regularly use the school grounds to study living things and they were actively involved in designing the Millennium Garden.
25. There are several good links with local secondary schools, including a French taster course in Year 2 and Year 6, and the school has improved its links with both main feeder infant schools. Pupils take part in many sporting and musical activities with other Bromley primary schools, such as "The Millennium Tales" at the Fairfield Hall. There are exchange visits between the school and playgroups and nurseries which contribute to the effective introduction of children to the reception classes.
26. The school's links with both the local and wider community are good and make a rich contribution to pupils' learning. The school has recognised the value of developing community links to provide real experiences. Pupils have, for example, visited a pizza restaurant and a nearby farm and used the information in their geography, English and mathematics lessons.
27. Equality of access to the curriculum is satisfactory throughout the school and the provision for pupils with special educational needs is good. The level of support that

they receive in withdrawal groups or through in-class support ensures they make good progress. The school has made additional provision by increasing the number of learning support assistants, a good proportion of these are appropriately trained.

28. Provision is effective for pupils with English as an additional language. Where other specific learning difficulties have been identified, support is well targeted and effective especially for those pupils with emotional and behavioural difficulties.
29. Overall the provision for pupils' personal development is good. Parents feel that the general ethos of the school encourages good behaviour and promotes pupils' personal development. Provision for spiritual development is satisfactory and has improved since the previous inspection. Acts of worship are broadly Christian in nature, but the programme also recognises and celebrates festivals of other faiths, such as using the Festival of *Sukkot* in Harvest Festival. The theme for the inspection week was being a good neighbour, and this was carried through each assembly seen and into some PSHE and religious education lessons.
30. The school promotes pupils' moral development well. There is a children's code of conduct which outlines the teachers' expectations of behaviour and these expectations are met. Pupils are eager to earn the house points that are given for good behaviour. The PSHE programme provides a clear structure for discussing issues of right and wrong and how to make the right choices.
31. Provision for pupils' social development is very good, and is a strength of the school. The recently introduced school council enables pupils from all year groups to understand how to get their views heard, and how to seek the views of others. This was well demonstrated at the school council meeting during inspection week when pupils discussed how the few pupils who do not behave well at lunchtime might be disciplined. This is a very worthwhile preparation for citizenship.
32. Promotion of pupils' cultural development is satisfactory. There are some displays and activities that show the diversity and richness of other cultures, but generally there is less evidence of the written language of the different countries represented in the school. Pupils have many opportunities to appreciate local cultural traditions through visiting places of interest, such as The Dome, Rochester Cathedral and a museum of British Life. Many pupils have taken part in musical activities in the community, for example, when the choir sang at a senior citizens' party and other musical activities. Traditional games such as cats cradle and hoops are successfully encouraged in the playground.

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL CARE FOR ITS PUPILS?

33. The educational and personal support and guidance for pupils is satisfactory overall and supports their learning. Despite its size, the school provides a caring environment in which the individual needs of pupils, including those with special educational needs, are well met. Most teachers and support staff know pupils well and this knowledge is further developed through the extra-curricular activities provided by some staff. Personal development is satisfactorily monitored through the reports kept in teachers' classroom records, and through the homework diaries. The school has good links with agencies such as social services and a local families' project to support vulnerable pupils.
34. Procedures for monitoring and improving attendance are satisfactory. The education welfare officer gives a very good service to the school, including advice about keeping registers correctly. Registers are now marked in accordance with national and local guidelines. Individual pupil absence is usually followed-up well. In a worthwhile attempt to reduce unauthorised absences, the school gives clear guidance to parents about what will be authorised by the school.
35. The school has good procedures for monitoring and promoting good behaviour. The behaviour policy is applied consistently and staff and pupils are clear about rewards and sanctions. There is good and appropriate use of praise to encourage good behaviour and academic progress in most classes. Behaviour is well monitored through individual records, exemplary behaviour certificates, and the "Caring Cup". There is an effective bullying policy and a range of strategies to deal swiftly with any that occurs.
36. The arrangements for child protection are generally satisfactory and additional training in identification, referral and other matters relating to child protection is planned for this term. The school has good arrangements for providing first aid but does not always comply with its policy of giving only prescribed medicines. There is a clear health and safety policy and staff carry out regular safety checks.
37. The school has been developing its procedures for monitoring and supporting academic progress, particularly over the last two years. A positive start has been made but not enough has yet been done to ensure a rigorous approach to gathering the information and ensuring it is used to help pupil make effective progress in lessons. The teachers in the foundation stage observe and note children's responses to activities. However these observations are not used to full effect in planning activities and matching work that is sufficiently demanding for all pupils. A whole-school priority has been the evaluation of pupils' writing and numeracy work and the introduction of record sheets for other subjects to note pupils' responses. These are being used to set termly personal targets for pupils. However these procedures are not consistently applied across the year groups. Teachers do not have enough examples to support their own assessments of pupils' progress or to help them identify what it is pupils should be learning next.
38. The individual education plans (IEPs) for pupils with special educational needs are appropriate. The monitoring and recording of progress for pupils with special educational need against these targets is regular and systematic but parents are not always as fully involved as they could be. There are effective procedures in place for the early identification and assessment of pupils who speak English as an additional language.

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL WORK IN PARTNERSHIP WITH PARENTS?

39. Parents generally have a positive view of the school and the school tries hard, with some success, to involve parents fully in the life of the school. Links with parents are satisfactory and make an important contribution to pupils' learning at school and at home. Parents are mainly satisfied with all aspects of school life and the only significant concern was about homework. There is a recently introduced homework policy but as yet there is insufficient rigour in checking that homework is set and that it is appropriate. Teachers do not always make it clear to parents when the homework should be brought back to school.
40. Parental involvement in the work of the school has a good impact on pupils' learning. A considerable number of parents help in classrooms, particularly in Years 1 and 2. Other parents willingly help on school visits and residential trips. The parents' association has raised significant funds to improve facilities for pupils in the school grounds, including the "Trim Trail". Parents appreciate the school performances and there is a very good turnout for these activities as well as the recent Harvest Festival. Parents felt that the school is parent friendly and responds well to their concerns.
41. The quality of information provided for parents is satisfactory. The prospectus is clear and provides most of the statutory information required but the paragraph on curriculum complaints is not clearly set out. The governors' annual report to parents is well presented. There is a regular newsletter with good information about the life of the school. The pupils also publish the 'Red Hill Times' which keep parents and visitors well informed of the achievements of the school. In addition a curriculum newsletter gives parents an overview of what their child will be doing. There has been a good response to this with parents helping their child to find information in advance of the topic. The annual written reports to parents on their child's work give parents appropriate information about their child's progress, and usually includes what is needed to be done next.

HOW WELL IS THE SCHOOL LED AND MANAGED?

42. There have been significant improvements in the way the school is managed and led since the last inspection, although some weaknesses remain. The headteacher and governors give the school a clear sense of purpose and direction and are concerned to seek constant and sustained improvement. However, not all key members of staff make a sufficient contribution to the raising of standards and improving the quality of teaching. The unevenness of the contributions made by different senior managers is hindering the rate of improvement.
43. The governing body makes a much greater contribution to the school than it did at the time of the last inspection and the weaknesses in the financial procedures identified in the last report have been rigorously tackled and rectified. The governors have good levels of expertise and are appropriately trained for their roles. They are kept well informed by the headteacher and in turn are accountable to parents. Resources are generally well used and brought to bear on the priorities identified in the school's plans for improvement. The funds allocated for special educational needs are particularly effective in enabling these pupils to achieve well. Management of special educational needs is efficient and effective. There are regular briefing meetings on the effectiveness of the support provided and the special needs co-ordinator provides valuable help to teachers in lesson planning.
44. The school is getting much better at identifying areas of strength and weakness and is beginning to analyse information about the standards achieved and identify what

needs to be done to improve further. However, this information is not always seen as a spur to improvement and is not used in a sufficiently rigorous manner by all those teachers with responsibilities across the school or within year groups. The school has set realistic and challenging targets for raising standards in English but not in mathematics.

45. The school is improving its approach to performance management following training. Teaching is more regularly monitored by the headteacher and deputy headteacher but the feedback to teachers is not sufficiently evaluative and does not focus enough on what needs to be done to improve. Subject managers do not yet monitor the quality of teaching or the standards in their subjects with enough regularity to judge the impact of recent changes to the curriculum and staff training programmes.
46. The school has very good procedures for supporting new teachers. They are given clear guidance and know where to find information. They have full access to a training programme and have opportunities to observe other teachers and discuss their work with them.
47. The accommodation is good. The computer suite is a valuable resource and so is the food technology room. The halls provide good access to open spaces that promote PE and dance. The school has improved the outdoor play area, a weakness in the last inspection, which now provides a safe secure environment to support children's physical development. The school building is used for community activities including a computer club, jazz and modern dancing and a fitness club and the school benefits both financially and socially from these arrangements.

WHAT SHOULD THE SCHOOL DO TO IMPROVE FURTHER?

- (1) Ensure greater consistency in the progress pupils make across the school by making better use of information about pupils' achievements when planning work for groups of pupils of different abilities.
(Paragraphs: 18, 19, 23, 64, 85, 86, 100)
- (2) Raise standards in Key Stage 1 by improving the quality of teaching and learning; providing more challenge for higher attaining pupils in reading, writing and science.
(Paragraphs: 4, 16, 64, 69, 77, 84, 100)
- (3) Improve assessment procedures across the school by; ensuring regular and accurate assessment of pupils' achievements; establishing clear, realistic and measurable targets for pupils' improvement; using data from standardised tests to track the progress of individuals and groups of pupils; ensuring consistent practice in setting pupils for literacy and numeracy.
(Paragraphs: 71, 78, 85, 100)
- (4) Ensure that key members of staff are given regular opportunity to monitor and evaluate standards across the school, identify the action to remedy weaknesses and have clear timescales in which to achieve these targets.
(Paragraphs: 43, 45, 73, 82, 90, 97, 118)
- (5) Improve the quality of planning in the early years by; further developing teachers' knowledge and understanding of the curriculum for the foundation stage. (Paragraphs: 3, 15, 25, 51, 53, 56)

Minor issues

- setting arrangements (*Paragraph: 18*),
- marking (*Paragraph: 65*),
- homework (*Paragraphs: 19,40*),
- use of the library (*Paragraph: 66*), and
- recognition of heritage languages (*Paragraph: 32*).

PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS

Summary of the sources of evidence for the inspection

Number of lessons observed	109
Number of discussions with staff, governors, other adults and pupils	73

Summary of teaching observed during the inspection

Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
1	12	31	52	4	0	0

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

Information about the school's pupils

Pupils on the school's roll	YR- Y6
Number of pupils on the school's roll (FTE for part-time pupils)	618
Number of full-time pupils eligible for free school meals	130
Special educational needs	YR-Y6
Number of pupils with statements of special educational needs	8
Number of pupils on the school's special educational needs register	152
English as an additional language	No of pupils
Number of pupils with English as an additional language	20
Pupil mobility in the last school year	No of pupils
Pupils who joined the school other than at the usual time of first admission	198
Pupils who left the school other than at the usual time of leaving	39

Attendance

Authorised absence

	%
School data	4.8
National comparative data	5.4

Unauthorised absence

	%
School data	1.1
National comparative data	0.5

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

Attainment at the end of Key Stage 1

	Year	Boys	Girls	Total
Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 1 for the latest reporting year	2000	45	25	70

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		Reading	Writing	Mathematics
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	34	34	43
	Girls	18	22	24
	Total	52	56	67
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	75 (79)	83 (80)	96 (90)
	National	83 (82)	84 (83)	90 (87)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	34	42	45
	Girls	22	24	23
	Total	56	66	68
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	80 (82)	94 (86)	97 (87)
	National	84 (82)	88 (86)	88 (87)

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

Attainment at the end of Key Stage 2

	Year	Boys	Girls	Total
Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 2 for the latest reporting year	2000	57	37	94

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys	42	39	49
	Girls	29	24	30
	Total	71	63	79
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	76 (64)	67 (64)	84 (69)
	National	75 (71)	72 (69)	85 (78)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys	31	40	37
	Girls	27	23	27
	Total	58	63	64
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	62 (65)	67 (63)	68 (69)
	National	70 (68)	72 (69)	79 (75)

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

Ethnic background of pupils

	No of pupils
Black – Caribbean heritage	10
Black – African heritage	6
Black – other	14
Indian	17
Pakistani	4
Bangladeshi	1
Chinese	1
White	550
Any other minority ethnic group	13

This table refers to pupils of compulsory school age only.

Exclusions in the last school year

	Fixed period	Permanent
Black – Caribbean heritage		
Black – African heritage		
Black – other		
Indian		
Pakistani		
Bangladeshi		
Chinese		
White	1	
Other minority ethnic groups		

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)	26
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	24
Average class size	28

Education support staff: YR – Y6

Total number of education support staff	14
Total aggregate hours worked per week	219

Financial information

Financial year	1999/2000
	£
Total income	1,141,911
Total expenditure	1,160,213
Expenditure per pupil	1,816
Balance brought forward from previous year	23,115
Balance carried forward to next year	4,813

Results of the survey of parents and carers

Questionnaire return rate

Number of questionnaires sent out

654

Number of questionnaires returned

115

Percentage of responses in each category

	Strongly agree	Tend to agree	Tend to disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know
My child likes school.	57	40	2	1	0
My child is making good progress in school.	43	50	5	0	2
Behaviour in the school is good.	30	64	4	1	0
My child gets the right amount of work to do at home.	23	51	23	1	2
The teaching is good.	37	57	2	0	4
I am kept well informed about how my child is getting on.	26	53	17	0	3
I would feel comfortable about approaching the school with questions or a problem.	57	37	3	1	2
The school expects my child to work hard and achieve his or her best.	48	48	2	0	3
The school works closely with parents.	28	53	12	3	4
The school is well led and managed.	44	49	3	0	4
The school is helping my child become mature and responsible.	44	51	3	0	1
The school provides an interesting range of activities outside lessons.	37	48	10	0	5

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

48. By the time they are ready to start Year 1 the majority of children are likely to have achieved or exceeded the early learning goals expected for five-year-olds except in knowledge and understanding of the world. The progress children make is satisfactory overall but uneven. This is due to weaknesses in the teachers' planning and their understanding of what children need to learn next. As a result more able children do not make the progress that could be expected of them in reading and writing and most children do not make satisfactory progress in their knowledge and understanding of the world.
49. At the time of the inspection there were two mixed ability reception classes in a newly refurbished three base classroom unit. This is much better accommodation than that reported at the last inspection and the additional space available this term is used well by the nursery nurse. There is an effective working relationship within the foundation stage team that contributes to the safe secure atmosphere. The high expectation for good behaviour helps the children to concentrate well on their learning.
50. There are still weaknesses in the organisation and planning to meet the needs of young children. Most time is given to teaching literacy and numeracy but the remaining time is not rigorously planned to address other areas of learning. Low levels of challenge in some activities and a lack of teacher involvement to improve children's skills and knowledge reduces the rate of progress that can be expected. Some improvement has been made to the systems for observing, assessing and recording achievement but it is not having enough impact on planning for different abilities.

Personal and social development

51. The quality of teaching is good. The children make good progress in this area of learning. They have quickly and confidently settled to school routines, made friends and show particular care for others who occasionally are distressed. This is because of the high expectation and good example set by all the staff. The children are very well behaved and sit with concentration for quite long periods of time. They listen to and follow instructions carefully when moving from room to room or when directed to an activity. They are developing independent skills particularly in the speed with which they can change for a small apparatus games lesson in the hall. The children were transfixed in the celebration and story of "Alfie" during the birthday assembly, which helped them to understand emotions, gain a sense of right and wrong and see the consequences of their actions. Their keenness and excitement about school helps them to make good progress.

Communication, language and literacy

52. The quality of teaching is satisfactory. Overall the children make satisfactory progress and are developing an interest in books. Most join in class reading together and some anticipate repeated phrases and rhyming. They are successfully learning their letter sounds and copy write simple words. Some children write their own names and words such as "mummy" and "daddy" unaided. An office role-play gives opportunities for children to practise writing but the teachers have not resourced it sufficiently to show examples of different styles of writing for children to copy and use. The planned

activities do not always cater for what the children have already learnt. The same reading activity is completed by all, which is appropriate for children at the early stages of reading but not for those who already know their letter sounds. For those children who already have well-developed independent writing skills the work is too easy.

53. The majority of children are confident speakers. Children who have speech difficulties or who speak English as an additional language are nurtured appropriately in their language development. The nursery nurse provides effective additional support in communication language and literacy activities to a smaller group of children. They initiate conversations, for example by asking what will happen next in the story. The more confident children imaginatively predict the possible outcome. However teachers miss opportunities for all children to explain their ideas and thinking on too many occasions and this affects the rate at which they learn from the activities.

Mathematical development

54. The teaching is satisfactory with some good features. Teachers' knowledge is secure and this shows in the planning that is well matched so that children achieve well. The children enjoy learning through games such as "Incey Wincey Spider", computer games and activities, including model-making. Children learn about capacity and volume through regular play tasks with sand and water and are successfully using words such as empty, half full and full. Plenty of well-chosen opportunities to count and order numbers, for example by counting teddy-bears, introduce basic numeracy skills and more than half of the children are working within Level 1 of the National Curriculum.

Knowledge and understanding of the world

55. The quality of teaching is unsatisfactory and children are not on line to meet expectations. The teachers' planning is weak. Limited activities are provided and almost all learning happens incidentally. The activities do not encourage exploration, problem-solving or critical thinking and this affects the foundation of skills for later work in history, geography, science and design and technology. The planned focus on investigating and exploring materials linked to the story of the Three Little Pigs was limited to drawing and painting. There was no first-hand experience of the properties and texture of wood, brick and straw. Learning was passive and children had no opportunity to ask their own questions of why? what if...? or how does...? This does not adequately build upon the children's previous knowledge or experiences.
56. The children successfully join and separate various parts of construction kits to build models and enjoy this part of their work. They name different parts of the body when thinking about their play in the hospital role play area. Some know where they live, their birthdays and the kind of houses they live in. They are aware of the different home languages used by the children in class. Some are able to use the computer independently and can move the "mouse" and "click on and off" as they choose.

Physical development

57. Teaching is satisfactory. The teaching of skills to develop and use fine movements and co-ordination is good. Progress in physical development is satisfactory. Children gain the skills of pencil control, holding paint-brushes and using scissors. They have good hand-eye co-ordination when using balls, beanbags, bats and hoops to throw, catch, balance and roll during indoor hall activities. One group of three children developed their own method for rolling the ball between them. By using their activity as a good example, the teacher promoted a higher skill level from others. The well-resourced outdoor environment, used at playtime and lunchtime, makes an important contribution to children's physical development and all children have a good awareness of space and control themselves safely.

Creative development

58. The quality of teaching is satisfactory but there are some shortcomings. Generally, satisfactory progress is made. Activities such as making vehicles lacked the appropriate intervention to challenge and inspire children to develop their ideas. A radio programme for teaching music skills provided an appropriate structure but was too long and in parts not matched to the children's stage of development. Independence and experiment, for instance in colour mixing with paint, is restricted by the methods and organisation used by the teachers. There are satisfactory opportunities for children to paint, draw, use collage materials and construct models. They sing songs and rhymes and play percussion instruments to accompany their songs. Their rhythm is good, they sing tunefully and know the name of the instruments. They follow the musical accompaniment to the grand old Duke of York in time with their teacher. Personal experiences are sometimes imaginatively re-enacted in the home corner and hospital

English

60. The improvement in standards in recent test results for eleven-year-olds is secure and being maintained. By the end of this year pupils can be expected to reach national averages by the age of seven and eleven. Standards achieved by seven-year-old pupils are not high enough. The national literacy strategy has been successfully implemented and is having a positive impact on pupils' achievement, particularly in Years 4, 5 and 6.
61. Pupils with special educational needs make good progress and their requirements are well met in withdrawal groups and in the majority of class lessons. Pupils speaking English as an additional language who have specialist teaching in the classroom are well supported. Additional support for literacy is provided for pupils in Year 4 but the groups are currently too large for pupils to benefit fully from this programme.
62. Throughout the school pupils have good speaking skills, they are articulate and express themselves well when answering questions, providing relevant detail and giving reasons for opinions. Teachers provide plenty of opportunities for pupils to work in pairs so that they can talk through a task. They ask probing questions to enable pupils to develop what they think. In one Year 4 class the strategy of two minutes 'time out' to talk with a partner before answering a question was particularly effective in helping pupils sort out their ideas.
63. Listening skills are mostly good in Years 4, 5 and 6 where pupils behave well and

listen to their teachers and to each other. Sometimes the task requires specific listening skills, such as the Year 5 lesson when pupils were asked to take notes and as a result the listening was very acute. However, pupil management is not consistently good in some Year 3 classes and in too many Year 1 and 2 lessons, so that pupils do not listen as well as they should. This has a negative impact on their learning.

64. By the end of Year 2 many average pupils will barely reach their expected level and attainment is inconsistent between classes. Some have a sound approach and read with understanding while others are still quite hesitant when reading on their own. In some classes pupils do not read well together while in another, all pupils follow a text closely and read character parts accurately. When reading independently higher attaining pupils read fluently and with understanding and are expected to have a good level of achievement by the end of Year 2. They talk about plot and character and summarise a story they have read. They enjoy books and use a library. However, in some classes the teacher's expectations are too low so that good readers read at a lower level at school than at home. Home-school reading diaries and school records are up-to-date and used to track progress through books of increasing difficulty, but the comments are rarely diagnostic even for below average readers which does not contribute towards their progress. Pupils' knowledge of non-fiction and how to use contents and indexes is more varied between classes.
65. In general, older pupils make sound progress in reading and by the time they reach the top of the school a good proportion reach higher levels although many average readers are not wholly fluent. Above average readers use inference and deduction to explain meanings and messages in the text and scan pages of books quickly to gauge the content. Some pupils are clear about their preferences and articulate what they think about Harry Potter for example, while others seem less used to talking about books. Library skills are limited to selecting books from the shelves and not all pupils are using the reference library to develop their research skills.
66. Higher attaining pupils in Year 1 classes write several lines of news and sometimes use capital letters and full stops but other pupils are at an early stage in writing. They are beginning to put letters together and to space words or merely copy under teachers' writing. Higher attaining Year 2 pupils write good accounts of stories or events and are achieving as well as they should. For instance, one retells a story including dialogue with speech marks and another writes in some detail about his Grandpa fighting in the war, explaining why he got a medal. Independent readers put instructions into a logical order, write well-constructed sentences and use dictionaries to find words such as hibernate. A number of pupils retell the story of the Gingerbread Man in simple sentences, sequencing the story and spelling most common words correctly. For many pupils basic punctuation is not secure and a significant number find it difficult to write a sentence to express a simple idea. In this aspect they are not making the progress they should.
67. In general, pupils in Years 3, 4, 5 and 6 make steady progress in writing and in their understanding of grammar. For example, they begin to learn the structure of direct speech. Year 4 pupils work on adverbs and how these make instructions more precise. Year 5 pupils are learning note-taking skills and are able to select the main points and organise these neatly into bullet points. By the time they get to Year 6, most pupils write well in a range of styles. They express ideas, use interesting vocabulary, write in paragraphs, punctuate effectively and present work in neat joined handwriting. Above average pupils have good control of style, for example effectively conveying the atmosphere of the school described in Nicholas Nickleby, using dialect to imitate the speech of the school master and standard English for the narrative. A

number of pupils give opinions about the different features of the Dome, while others present this information as a brochure. A few pupils successfully follow the metre of a poem read to them creating a feeling of immediacy by writing in the present tense with short phrases.

68. The quality of teaching in English ranges from unsatisfactory to very good; much is good or better. There is some very good teaching in Year 2 but in general teaching is weaker at this stage and in Year 3 which is affecting standards. Most of the better teaching is concentrated in the upper part of the school which results in higher achievement. The best teaching in Years 5 and 6 is characterised by high expectations, lively pace, clear instructions and good management that keeps pupils interested and on task. This approach enables pupils to work independently of the teacher and make very good progress in the lesson. In a good lesson Year 6 pupils were clear about the pattern of the lesson and what they are to learn. Lively reading of a passage from Nicholas Nickleby and effective use of questions by the teacher helped all pupils to analyse the text. Higher attaining pupils were able to reflect relevant features in their own writing while pupils with lower attainment were helped by the teacher to improve their descriptive language.
69. In weaker lessons in both key stages learning objectives are not made clear to pupils. Teachers do not give pupils clear instructions or demonstrate what is to be learned at the beginning of the lesson so that pupils do not know what to do and teachers have to keep intervening which wastes time and prevents them teaching a group. The learning potential is reduced, as there is insufficient difference in the activities planned to take into account the various levels of attainment. Many tasks lack challenge and too much time is spent on activities such as copying or word work where learning objectives are not clear. Although pupils are keen to learn, the level of noise often inhibits this.
70. Overall planning for English is good. The requirement to teach grammar and language work sometimes takes priority over the understanding and appreciation of literary texts. One result of this is that many authors may be studied in one week so there is only time for a superficial introduction to an author such as Dickens. On the few occasions pupils used computers this was suitably planned.
71. The leadership of English is satisfactory. However the subject managers have not evaluated the effectiveness of setting arrangements to ensure that the needs of different groups of pupils are met. The current arrangements vary from year to year with setting for different ability groups in some years but not in others. Assessment procedures also vary to some extent. In addition to statutory tests, the pupils do end of year tests but the school does not have a consistent way to track progress in reading to ensure that all pupils are reading at an appropriate level. At present the school does not collect data on the progress of bilingual pupils so any possible underachievement in this group of pupils is not recorded.

MATHEMATICS

72. Results in National Curriculum tests in 2000 have improved on previous years but were still below the targets that had been set. Inspection evidence shows that the standard of work seen is broadly average for pupils aged seven and eleven with older pupils making significant progress and achieving well.
73. A crucial factor in the generally positive development of mathematics has been the successful introduction of the national numeracy strategy with clear planning and

focused teaching and learning, particularly in Years 5 and 6. The targets for pupils in the 2001 tests are not now high enough. The three part lesson was in evidence in all lessons observed although some elements are less secure, for example the review session at the end of the lesson, which is sometimes rushed.

74. Pupils in Year 2 are on line to achieve average standards. They count, read, write and order up to 100. They understand what each digit represents and are beginning to use important markers such as 50 to help them decide where to place a number on a 0 – 100 number line. Pupils measure length using whole centimetres with an acceptable degree of accuracy. They recognise common two and three-dimensional shapes. Pupils are very articulate and can use their own words to describe shapes. For example, a Year 1 pupil explained that the surface of a sphere “goes on forever”. Practical mathematics reinforces learning. For example in a Year 1 class a group were discussing and classifying three-dimensional shapes using models placed on large sheets of paper. Pupils’ response to mental calculations is improving in quality and speed as a result of mental mathematics sessions at the beginning of each lesson.
75. Pupils in Year 6 have made good progress in extending their understanding of number, measurement and shape. These pupils add, subtract, multiply and divide accurately and have a good understanding of the relationships between these operations. Most pupils have a good understanding of multiplication tables. They find simple percentages of small whole number quantities and explain the strategies for these calculations clearly. Higher attaining pupils explain the relationship between decimals and fractions and use their understanding of place value to multiply and divide whole numbers and decimals by 10.
76. The quality of teaching is satisfactory overall with a high proportion good and very good teaching in Year 6. The best teaching involves a brisk introduction, which quickly engages pupils’ interest capitalising on the positive attitudes of the pupils. For example, in a Year 1 class a pupil counted forwards and backwards to and from 20 as he descended and ascended the stairs adjacent to the classroom. The rest of the class listened intently for errors. The teacher’s good knowledge of pupils in Year 4 led to effective questioning about the attributes of three-dimensional shapes. Pupils with special educational needs receive appropriate support.
77. Lessons are well planned and basic skills effectively taught. This generally ensures that work is well matched to the needs of all pupils and has a positive effect on learning. However, in Years 1 and 2 the expectations of pupils, particularly average and higher attainers, are not high enough. For example, during a lesson on measuring some more able Year 2 pupils quickly completed their worksheet and lost interest in the lesson. The use of sets for teaching mathematics in Year 6 is effective but in Year 3 teachers do not plan sufficiently for the different abilities within the set.
78. The homework set is of a satisfactory standard but the quality of teachers’ assessment is variable across the school. In part this is a consequence of teachers’ inexperience as well as a lack of agreement about what to use as benchmarks for assessing pupils’ work. The best marking is in Year 5. Here the comments in pupils’ books focus on what pupils know and understand and the comments pose questions for the pupils to think about.
79. The school analyses year tests and national test results to set targets for eleven-year-olds. This process is at an early stage of development in terms of providing appropriate challenge and support for year groups, classes or individual pupils.

80. The leadership of mathematics is satisfactory. Two curriculum managers share responsibility for the development of the subject across the whole school. These teachers have a satisfactory understanding of their role but have not had the time to implement aspects of this effectively, particularly the monitoring of standards and teaching.

SCIENCE

81. Pupils performance in the tests for eleven-year-olds in 2000, show a marked improvement on previous results which had been in decline. The revised scheme of work is now firmly in place and the quality of teaching in Years 4, 5 and 6 has improved. There are good quality opportunities for pupils to carry out and learn from investigations and this too has helped raise standards.
82. Inspection evidence shows that pupils achieve average standards by the age of seven. There is an appropriate focus on scientific enquiry. Pupils studying life processes and living things successfully describe the basic conditions that animals and plants need to survive, while younger pupils accurately classify living and non-living things. Having collected leaves from the school grounds, skilful questioning by the teacher in a Year 1 class led to an effective discussion about leaf identification which increased the pupils' knowledge and understanding.
83. Pupils' attainment in Years 3 and 4 meets the standard expected, and much of the work in Years 5 and 6 is above average. The teaching in these classes is good. The teachers have good understanding of the subject and lively, enthusiastic presentations ensured that pupils made good progress. One class was fascinated by observing decay in an extracted tooth, whilst other classes made effective use of the school grounds to look for signs of decay in plant life. The lessons are well organised and objectives clear. For example a Year 4 class investigating the properties of materials discovered the most suitable insulators by recording the time it took for ice cubes to melt when wrapped by different materials. They predicted the outcomes, providing reasons for their views, for example *'the cotton wool is all fluffy and traps air'*, and learned scientific terms such as thermal insulator.
84. Progress is variable throughout the school and best in Years 5 and 6 and for pupils with special educational needs. Too often all pupils in Years 1 and 2 are expected to produce the same work and this means that higher attainers do not achieve as well as they should. Lower attaining pupils often receive enough support to complete the work and hence are achieving well. When they are not supported the work is left unfinished. Where expectations are high, near the top of Key Stage 2, pupils make good progress.
85. Teaching is satisfactory overall, with some good teaching. Where teaching is good, teachers have good subject knowledge and introduce specific scientific vocabulary. A particular feature of good practice is the use of questions that really make the children think, for example when asked to make a prediction a Year 4 pupil is challenged to explain why she thinks such an event will happen. Where teaching is effective pupils respond eagerly and take a lively and thoughtful interest in the work. In a Year 6 lesson on micro-organisms, quick-fire questioning produced a keen response, while the teacher reproduced the answers diagrammatically to reinforce understanding. When the work is not matched to pupils' needs and abilities a significant minority becomes bored and disinterested, for instance when too much time is spent listening or writing notes. Although most work is marked regularly, the quality of marking is

inconsistent and targets for improvement are rarely identified. In a Year 2 class, regular informative and encouraging comments in pupils' books showed high expectations from the teacher. Some teachers make effective use of assessment to help plan what is taught next, but the picture is inconsistent.

86. The curriculum managers have successfully introduced a whole-school scheme of work for science that provides broad coverage of the requirements of the National Curriculum. They have also developed the use of the grounds as an educational resource which is being used well for study. Work is now beginning on comparing the work of pupils of the same age to strengthen the lesson planning. There has been no opportunity for the managers to monitor the impact of these initiatives on planning. Some of this activity has usefully involved liaison with other local schools.

ART AND DESIGN

87. A range of work seen in lessons, in pupils' sketch books and on display indicates that standards are meeting expectations for seven and eleven-year-olds. There are still a limited range of experiences in art and design for pupils and this effects achievement in aspects of the subject. The best standards are achieved in drawing and painting in Years 5 and 6. The regular use of sketchbooks helps all pupils practise techniques and experiment with colour, shape, pattern and texture. Teaching is satisfactory overall.
88. Where teaching is good and pupils are challenged to refine their work, they are interested and enthusiastic about art. For example, when studying the work of famous artists as diverse as Degas and Picasso the pupils make thoughtful comments when comparing artistic styles, and successfully justify their views. They show pride in the well planned collaborative achievements, such as the Millennium and Chislehurst tapestries. In a Year 2 lesson teaching was effective and ensured that by the end of the lesson pupils predicted the result of mixing two colours together and achieved successful autumnal tones. The pupils in this lesson painted with increasing confidence, using fine brush strokes to pick out the different shades of the leaf.
89. Teachers are consistent in ensuring pupils keep a record of their skills and techniques in the sketchbooks, but work in many of these books is not dated and the opportunity to evaluate the work is missed. As a result pupils lack opportunities to refine their work.
90. Leadership is weak. There is no consistent evaluation of standards or of teaching, and consequently the subject has not developed significantly since the last inspection. Pupils still do not have enough experience in three-dimensional work or opportunities to work with clay or other materials. Art is used to support other subjects in the curriculum, but links with the art of non-European cultures are rare. Work is not assessed systematically so that staff shares a view about standards. For example, there are few photographic records of work, and there is no record of pupils' work over a period of time. The co-ordinator has yet to fully implement the scheme across the school to ensure pupils achieve as well as they could in all aspects of the subject.

DESIGN AND TECHNOLOGY

91. Standards meet expectations for pupils aged seven and eleven. The teaching is good, this is an improvement on the last inspection findings.
92. Teachers in Year 1 and 2 are successfully using fiction books as the impetus for

solving problems and developing design and technology skills. Year 1 pupils have designed an appropriate house for Max, a character in "Where the Wild Things Are" whilst "The Gingerbread Man" provides Year 2 pupils with worthwhile opportunities to develop and use their design and evaluation skills. The pupils successfully set out how they are to prepare Gingerbread Men biscuits and go on to compare the taste and texture of these with biscuits bought from local stores.

93. Lessons in Years 4, 5 and 6 are well prepared and the teaching is good overall. Teachers' explained clearly the purpose of lessons and challenged pupils to evaluate their designs of Victorian toys to ensure that they reflect that time period. In Year 6 pupils designed a Victorian toy which will operate using cams and a camshaft. They explained how this will work using appropriate vocabulary and a model to demonstrate the action of a cam. They produce well-prepared design booklets to note in detail the process of the production of their toy. They are encouraged to use the design and evaluation process at each stage of the production and to record it carefully. This made a good contribution to the progress made in lessons. The Year 4 pupils behave very well with the parents who come to help them learn how to sew running stitches and back stitches and they make good progress.
94. In July, two pupils won a national design and construction competition. This has lifted the profile of the subject in the school. The subject is managed effectively. The current timetabling arrangements for the well-resourced design and technology room mean that lessons with tools and components are too short to give pupils enough time produce the work that they are capable of. The subject manager is looking at ways to address this problem.

GEOGRAPHY

95. The work seen and discussions with pupils show that pupils knowledge of places and geographical themes are as expected by the age of eleven. There was insufficient evidence to form a judgement on standards by the age of seven. The school has improved the schemes of work and the quality of resources since the last inspection and this has improved teachers' planning. The pupils have a good range of visits and experiences which develop well their investigative skills and understanding of the local area.
96. The teaching of geography skills is satisfactory with some good features. A teacher in Year 2 had brought in an exciting collection of clothing that helped pupils appreciate differences and similarities between France and England. This lesson linked well to the French language teaching the pupils receive. The trips to Lullingstone Villa and Rochester Cathedral are planned well and the teachers successfully extended pupils mapping skills. The proximity of the visits to the school meant that all pupils added to their knowledge of the local area and local road networks. The lessons in Year 4 built on pupils' previous work studying the local woods and high street. They were encouraged to pose questions about why the Roman villas had been built where they had and to consider the growth of the surrounding villages. Higher attaining pupils were appropriately challenged to calculate the distances using the scale. Pupils in Year 4 carefully studied large scale maps to identify other places of interest that could be visited on the same day. Most pupils quickly appreciated that symbols convey information about features and went on to create their own on a map. In one lesson the teacher was uncertain about how much the pupils already understood about keys and did not take sufficient steps to address this before pupils started their investigation. As a consequence lower attaining pupils took a while to settle and the first part of the lesson was not effective for them. Teachers encourage pupils to

express their ideas and pupils respond well to this. In Year 5 there were lively debates on global environmental issues. The pupils were asked probing questions about the action to be taken and most had a good grasp of how people's need impact on the environment. The teacher enthusiastically seized on the opportunity offered by one pupil to write letters to councillors and the Prime Minister, outlining their solutions to pollution.

97. The recently appointed co-ordinator does not yet have enough of a view of the current provision in the school. Consequently most year groups are using the new national guidance to set clear objectives for the lessons whilst others plan from the established school scheme of work. This affects the capacity of the school to track the experiences of pupils and check on the progress they are making in geographical skills.

HISTORY

98. Lessons seen in Year 4 and Year 6 together with scrutiny of pupils' work, review of teachers' plans and discussion with pupils and staff, confirm that pupils achieve the standards expected by the age of eleven. There was insufficient evidence to form a secure judgement about the standards achieved by seven-year-olds. Resources for history have been improved since the last inspection and pupils now make more use of computer programmes for research purposes.
99. Teaching is satisfactory. The teachers successfully use local places such as Lullingstone Roman Villa and the Dickens Centre in Rochester to give pupils a practical insight into life in the past. In one of the lessons pupils quickly and purposefully used the dramatic qualities of a Victorian classroom to develop their understanding. Photographic evidence was analysed to ensure the accuracy of the presentations. In another class pupils examined what Roman sources said about Queen Boudicca, and considered whether these accounts were factual or were biased. These lessons make a good contribution to teaching pupils the need to look at evidence critically when interpreting historical situations.
100. The subject makes a satisfactory contribution to pupils' literacy skills. There are good opportunities in Key Stage 2 to write for different purposes particularly to analyse and explain. However the reading and writing set for higher attaining pupils in Year 2 does not challenge them to read critically or explain more concisely. For example, the contents of the history folders of pupils of different abilities were virtually identical and the knowledge teachers had of the pupils' abilities had not influenced their planning. Across all classes written history work is not adequately marked to direct pupils to improve their writing techniques.
101. A revised scheme of work is now in place throughout the school and appropriate resources are being purchased to support lessons. A consistent approach to planning is also being taken. The subject leader has started a collection of pupils' work to show expected standards at each year and there will be some opportunities for monitoring of lessons this year.

INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY (ICT)

102. The school has successfully addressed some of the weaknesses identified in the last report, although some remain. There are many more computers available and pupils now have much better opportunities to work regularly with a range of programs, although the range is still too restricted.

103. The best standards are achieved in word processing. Throughout the school, pupils are successfully learning to use ICT to present information in subjects such as history and religious education using word processing programs. The youngest children confidently use resources such as computers to help them to read by using talking books. These skills are extended so that children become adept at altering text, changing the size and shape of the letters and become familiar with, for instance, the spelling checker. This results in the oldest pupils having good skills that they use to produce multi-media presentations incorporating text, pictures and sounds. Some of these presentations are of a high standard, for instance brochures about different European countries are stylishly produced.
104. Teachers' confidence and knowledge in using computers is still variable and persists in making a difference to what pupils achieve in lessons, although teaching overall is satisfactory and occasionally good or very good. Pupils clearly enjoy using the new computer suite and respond very positively to the opportunities to use the machines. They often learn at a good rate especially when the teaching is sharp and knowledgeable, such as when the Year 4 pupils learned how to create and manipulate shapes with a view to producing a plan of their classroom. The teacher's explanation was clear and concise and supported by a good demonstration. Pupils quickly grasped the idea and rapidly produced a range of shapes that very effectively exploited the technology. The current timetabling arrangements mean that lessons with the older pupils are too short and pupils do not have the time to produce work of the quality they are clearly capable.
105. Occasionally, teaching is less confident and children do not achieve as much as they could in some lessons. Too much time is spent by pupils laboriously typing in text before they begin to learn the editing skills that the teacher intends. In the lessons where the text was already available, the learning was much quicker and pupils achieved more. Confident and knowledgeable teaching helped the Year 6 pupils to begin to produce interesting presentations about cathedrals as part of their work in history.
106. The subject is managed effectively but there is no evaluation of the teaching or standards and this is contributing to the unevenness in the quality of teaching. The school is fully aware of the current deficiencies in the opportunities that are offered to pupils and there are plans to introduce a wider range of programs to pupils so that they can fully exploit the potential of ICT in different ways. Some of the newer programs are already being used in the popular computer club, with the intention of extending their use into lessons. Resources are adequate, although the lack of software is limiting the experiences given to pupils.

MUSIC

107. Since the last inspection, the school has significantly enhanced the provision for music and this has raised standards. Pupils achieve expected standards by the ages of seven and eleven. At the end of both key stages standards meet expectations. All pupils make satisfactory progress as a consequence of teachers good subject knowledge.
108. The teaching is satisfactory overall in Years 1 and 2 and good in lessons in Years 3, 4, and 6. No lessons were seen in Year 5. A lively lesson in Year 2 was managed well and pupils sang, clapped and kept a steady rhythm in time with the teacher. Teachers successfully encourage the class to use picture symbols when composing and these are read and performed with correct dynamics. Pupils listen attentively in lessons and assembly to a variety of composers. The pupils give imaginative responses such as “snowflakes” “a honeycomb” when asked to say what the music makes them think of. The school’s participation in the Bromley Creativity project is having a positive impact on teachers’ confidence in applying the scheme of work and pupils respond well musically to the story.
109. By the age of eleven pupils have well-developed musical skills. In Year 3, the teacher makes good use of her expertise to introduce musical structures. This knowledge is developed well and by Year 6 pupils understand and perform a rondo, improvising two and four bar phrases and select and organise their ideas collaboratively. The majority read letter scores and some read musical notation. Pupils with special educational needs are included well and make good contributions to the lesson. Pupils recall the pentatonic scale and successfully contribute their ideas to the group performance. They have good attitudes and are keen to evaluate and improve their own and others’ performances.
110. Music is well managed. She has made a good contribution to improving teachers’ confidence in teaching music by demonstrating lessons and this is benefiting older pupils. A good range of instrumental tuition and extra curricular music is offered to pupils by the school.

PHYSICAL EDUCATION

111. Not all aspects of physical education were seen during the inspection. The lessons observed mainly focused on gymnastics and some dance. However, the school has a full programme of physical education that gives opportunities to all pupils in games, athletics and swimming. The work seen indicates that standards have been maintained since the last inspection. By the age of seven standards are as expected in gymnastics. By the age of eleven they are at least satisfactory and in some aspects they are very high and well above what is usually expected for eleven-year-old pupils. The work with the older pupils is particular good in both gymnastics and dance.
112. Although teaching is never less than satisfactory and most is good, there are weaknesses that lead to pupils not achieving as much as they could in some lessons. Occasionally too little emphasis is placed on evaluating pupils’ work and so they are not given enough help to improve and expectations are not as high as they could be. Whilst pupils work hard at their activities, the organisation of some lessons results in them not being sufficiently active throughout the lesson and simply not getting enough exercise. However, a key positive feature of all lessons, is the emphasis on the importance of warming-up and down.

113. In the good gymnastic lessons with Year 5, teachers gave pupils clear guidance about how to improve their performance of sequences. There was a very good balance in the lessons between activity and discussion with pupils evaluating each other's work and being determined to improve. Good subject knowledge enabled the teacher to have high expectations to which pupils responded. They used symmetrical and asymmetrical shapes and a range of travelling techniques to produce imaginative and fluent sequences of movements. The demonstrations by pupils were skilfully used by the teacher to highlight improvement points that pupils rapidly incorporated into their own work. As the lessons progressed the standard of performance got much better.
114. Only one dance lesson was seen but the teaching was excellent and the work in progress was of a very high quality. The fluent, improvised movements expressed mood and tempo with real panache and all pupils were fully engaged and committed to the performance. Using vivid imagery, the teacher encouraged pupils to move in many different ways, her encouragement and eye to detail ensured constant refinement and improvement and her skilful use of pupils' suggestions resulted in their total commitment to the project. During the group work pupils unselfishly worked together to ensure the collaborative dance worked for everyone, the result in every way was a 'class act'.
115. The subject is enthusiastically managed. The introduction of the new national guidance for physical education has been helpful and is well used to guide teachers' planning and ensure a good range of opportunities for all pupils. The school has made substantial improvement to the range and quality of resources to support the teaching of gymnastics and games. The curriculum is very well supplemented by the good number of extra-curricular sporting activities and the subject maintains a high profile from the success achieved in local competitions.

RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

116. Pupils make steady progress in religious education and by the age of seven and eleven they reach the standards set by the locally agreed syllabus. In assemblies the story of The Good Samaritan is used to help pupils reflect on moral values such as helping others in the playground and the importance of looking after neighbours. From their visits to the local church, celebration of harvest and Christmas, pupils know about Christian customs. The visit to Rochester Cathedral clearly made a powerful impression on many pupils who recall how it felt to go down into the crypt and what it was like to be a monk in medieval times.
117. Teaching is satisfactory overall. Teachers follow up assembly themes in Year 1 lessons helping pupils to see the impact of their actions on others and to reflect on the feelings of other pupils. As Year 2 pupils listen and write about the story of the loaves and fishes they are reminded that Bible stories are intended to help them learn how to behave. They learn that the Bible is divided into the Old and New Testaments but their capacity to understand and talk about parables, disciples and miracles is underestimated. Year 5 pupils use their note-taking skills very effectively to write what they are told about Judaism. This lesson reinforces the idea of symbols helping people to focus on God. Year 6 pupils make sound use of their visits to find out about the different role of churches and cathedrals and to express their feelings about their visit to Rochester Cathedral. One piece of homework is cleverly set to enable Year 6 pupils to complete a replica of monk's rules written in vellum and singed at the edges which is safely done at home. While the factual features of religions are effectively

taught, in general there is not enough opportunity for pupils to explore their ideas or to talk about what belief means to different groups of people.

118. There are still very few artefacts in the school which was a criticism of the last inspection. In addition to stimulating the interest of pupils, these are needed to help teachers have more confidence in teaching about unfamiliar religions. In general the manager for the subject does not seek out ways to help teachers with world religions or bring visitors of different faiths into the school. As a result, what pupils learn about world religions is rather superficial and they do not find out what beliefs and faiths mean to different groups of people although a visit to a synagogue is planned to fit in with the teaching of Judaism later this term. The subject makes a good contribution to pupils' spiritual and moral education.