

## INSPECTION REPORT

**VALE VIEW COMMUNITY SCHOOL**

Dover, Kent

LEA area: Kent

Unique reference number: 118494

Headteacher: Mrs. M. A. Champion

Reporting inspector: Mr. A. C. Matthews  
Rgl's No. 19410

Dates of inspection: 13<sup>th</sup> – 16<sup>th</sup> November 2000

Inspection number: 225376

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

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## INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Type of school: Infant and Junior

School category: Community

Age range of pupils: 4 - 11

Gender of pupils: Mixed

School address: Vale View Road  
Dover  
Kent

Postcode: CT17 9NP

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Appropriate authority: The Governing Body

Name of chair of governors: Mrs. D. Millard

Date of previous inspection: March 1998

## INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Team members		Subject responsibilities	Aspect responsibilities
Andrew Matthews No. 1910	Registered inspector	English as an additional language Equal opportunities Mathematics Information and communication technology Design and technology Music	What sort of school is it? How high are standards? How well are pupils taught? How well is the school led and managed? What should the school do to improve further?
Jane Chesterfield No. 13874	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?
Hazel Callaghan No. 22254	Team inspector	Under fives Science Art and design Religious education	How good are the curricular and other opportunities offered to pupils?
Tim Andrews No. 31285	Team inspector	Special educational needs English Geography History Physical education	

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## **PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT**

### **INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL**

Vale View Community School is slightly smaller than average, with 199 pupils on roll – 105 boys and 94 girls. The school roll has remained stable since the last inspection. The school is situated in the Priory ward and the great majority of pupils come from this ward and a few from Tower Hamlets and St Radigunds. Pupils come from a wide variety of socio-economic backgrounds which are broadly average. The range of parents' occupations extends from professional to unskilled. The last census showed that the percentage of parents in higher education is below average whilst the percentage of ethnic minority children is well below average. The school has recently admitted some pupils whose parents are seeking asylum in this country. Five pupils have English as an additional language and are given extra support. Nineteen per cent of pupils are receiving free school meals, which is broadly in line with national averages. There are 72 pupils on the school's register of special needs and one pupil has a statement of special educational needs. The percentage of pupils on the special needs register is well above the national average. Children begin school full-time in September if their fifth birthday falls between September and December. Those children whose birthday falls between January and April begin part-time mornings only from September and all other children attend part-time in the afternoons. The school, in consultation with parents, decides when it is appropriate for the part-time pupils to begin full-time. Attainment on entry is well below average.

### **HOW GOOD THE SCHOOL IS**

Vale View is an effective school and has improved considerably since the last inspection. Pupils make good progress as they move through the school with their attainment in mathematics and English improving from well below to average by the time they leave the school. Pupils with special educational needs are well supported and also make good progress. The teaching overall is satisfactory, with a significant proportion of lessons being good. The leadership and management of the school were strengthened considerably after the last inspection by the arrival of a new deputy head and the well-focused training for governors and subject co-ordinators. There is a clear view of where the school is going and this vision is supported well by staff and governors. The school has a broadly average income and provides satisfactory value for money.

#### **What the school does well**

- There have been significant improvements in National Curriculum test results in Key Stage 2 and results in last year's Key Stage 1 tests were very high.
- The headteacher and governors provide good leadership.
- Effective strategies for teaching numeracy and literacy have resulted in pupils making good progress since the last inspection.
- Pupils enjoy coming to school and have good relationships with each other and with their teachers.
- The school provides good opportunities for pupils' social development and makes good provision for pupils with special educational needs.

#### **What could be improved**

- The standards of religious education, science and writing are not high enough.
- The quality of teaching in areas of assessment and expectations of the quality of pupils' work and behaviour are below the required standard.
- The school's multi-cultural provision is unsatisfactory.

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

### **HOW THE SCHOOL HAS IMPROVED SINCE ITS LAST INSPECTION**

The school has made good progress since the last inspection in March 1998. The school management team was improved by the appointment of a deputy head and the team worked very hard to address weaknesses identified at the time of the previous inspection. Co-ordinators for English, mathematics, information and communication technology (ICT) and science received well-focused training. The numeracy and literacy strategies have been successfully introduced and this has led to noticeable improvements in English and mathematics. Similarly standards have improved in ICT and are now in line with national expectations. Despite improvements in science, attainment is below average. Governors now fulfil all their statutory duties and provide a sense of direction for the work of the school and carefully evaluate the standards it achieves. The health and safety issues that centred round the old mobile classroom have been addressed by the erection of a new temporary classroom, complete with cloakroom and toilets.

The particular emphasis on raising standards in English, mathematics, science and ICT has resulted in less time for the development of other subjects. As a result, the standards in some are below expectations. Whilst the proportion of lessons with very good or excellent teaching has risen, so has the proportion of unsatisfactory lessons.

## STANDARDS

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

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

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

Results for the year 2000 National Curriculum tests show that, when compared to all schools, results in English were average and below average in mathematics and science. However, when compared to schools which draw their pupils from a similar background, the results were well above average in English and average in mathematics and science. The proportion of pupils achieving the higher Level 5 when compared to similar schools was average in English and science but above average in mathematics. The improvement in pupils' attainment over the last four years has been faster than the national trend and there have been considerable improvements in all three subjects since the last inspection. Inspection evidence indicates that the present Year 6 group of pupils has average attainment in English and mathematics but below average attainment in science. The school's targets for this group of pupils are appropriately challenging and are 71 per cent to achieve the expected level in English and 75 per cent in mathematics. Although lower than last year, these targets take account of the increased proportion of pupils with special educational needs in this group; inspection evidence indicates that the pupils are on course to meet these targets. Attainment in ICT is in line with national expectations, although standards in religious education are below those described in the locally agreed syllabus.

Attainment in design and technology, history, geography and physical education, through the school and music in Key Stage 1, is in line with national expectations. However, attainment in art through the school and music in Key Stage 2 is below national expectations. The results for the 2000 National Curriculum tests for Key Stage 1 last year showed an exceptional improvement over previous years, with pupils being in the top five per cent in reading, writing and mathematics when compared to similar schools. Children in the Foundation Stage have settled well but their standards are below average.

## PUPILS' ATTITUDES AND VALUES

Aspect	Comment
Attitudes to the school	Pupils enjoy coming to school and the great majority are enthusiastic about their learning.
Behaviour, in and out of classrooms	Satisfactory overall.
Personal development and relationships	Relationships are good and pupils' personal development is satisfactory overall.
Attendance	Satisfactory.

Most pupils display positive attitudes in lessons and listen attentively to their teachers. However, in some classes when the work set is not well matched to pupils' needs, or the teacher is not skilled in controlling the children, a significant minority becomes distracted, misbehaves and disrupts the learning of the other pupils.

Most pupils behave well in the playground and show consideration for others. Around the school pupils are sometimes boisterous and noisy because this behaviour often goes unchecked by staff. Pupils get on well with staff and with one another, with older pupils keeping a careful watch over the younger ones at playtime. Year 6 mentors take their responsibilities seriously and play an important part in looking after other pupils' welfare.

## TEACHING AND LEARNING

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

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

Overall the quality of teaching is satisfactory through the school. Of the 44 lessons observed, 89 per cent were satisfactory or better, with 44 per cent of lessons being good, 11 per cent being very good and two per cent being excellent. Nine per cent of lessons observed were unsatisfactory and two per cent were poor. The best teaching was observed in Reception, Year 3 and Year 5, where teachers set interesting and appropriately challenging work. This makes pupils enthusiastic about their learning and has a direct impact on the good and sometimes very good progress that they make in lessons. Most of the unsatisfactory teaching occurred in Year 2 and Year 6 when the work was not well matched to the pupils' abilities and the teachers did not always have successful strategies to deal with some pupils' unacceptable behaviour.

The basic skills in literacy and numeracy are taught well and contribute to the good progress that pupils make in these subjects as they move through the school. The use of homework through the school is satisfactory and successfully reinforces pupils' learning. Teachers plan their lessons carefully but their marking rarely indicates to pupils what they have to do to improve their work. The specialist support teacher for pupils with special educational needs is experienced and gives good quality advice to teachers and this helps pupils make good progress.

#### OTHER ASPECTS OF THE SCHOOL

Aspect	Comment
The quality and range of the curriculum	Broad and well balanced and enhanced by good extra-curricular activities and visits.
Provision for pupils with special educational needs	Good overall; it is well planned with pupils receiving good support from their teachers and classroom assistants.
Provision for pupils' personal, including spiritual, moral, social and cultural, development	Satisfactory overall; good provision for pupils' social development but unsatisfactory provision to develop pupils' multi-cultural awareness.
How well the school cares for its pupils	The school has good procedures for child protection and for looking after pupils' welfare. It has satisfactory procedures for monitoring pupils' academic performance and their personal development.

The school has satisfactory relationships with parents who make a satisfactory contribution to the work of the school and to their children's learning. However, only a small number come into school to help on a regular basis. The parents' questionnaire showed that a significant minority of parents were unhappy with some aspects of the school. The school makes appropriate use of assessments and tests to monitor pupils' progress and has begun to analyse the National Curriculum tests so that the strengths can be built on and the weaknesses addressed. The school makes good provision for pupils to take on extra responsibility as they move through the school, with Year 6 pupils entering the local Young Citizen Project and working as school mentors. Pupils' awareness of the multi-cultural society in which they live is unsatisfactory and leads to some misconceptions about different cultures and their beliefs.

#### HOW WELL THE SCHOOL IS LED AND MANAGED

Aspect	Comment
Leadership and management by the headteacher and other key staff	Good. The headteacher gives good leadership to the school and a clear direction to its work. She is well supported by her senior management team.
How well the governors fulfil their responsibilities	Governors are committed to the school, give good support to individual subjects and perform their duties well.
The school's evaluation of its	National Curriculum assessments are carefully analysed. Monitoring of

performance	teaching is good with clear targets set for improvement. Numeracy and literacy co-ordinators have regularly monitored teaching but this is not well developed in other subjects.
The strategic use of resources	Satisfactory overall. The school makes good use of a local school's ICT and physical education resources for Year 6 pupils.

The school has an adequate number of teachers who are well supported by a good number of experienced classroom assistants. However, the school is going through a period of significant change, with two teachers and the deputy headteacher leaving at the end of last term and the headteacher leaving at the end of the present term. Her successor takes up his appointment in January. The school's accommodation is satisfactory but space is limited in the classrooms of the older pupils. Resources are satisfactory overall, although there are some weaknesses in mathematics, history, religious education and music. The school applies the principles of best value satisfactorily, particularly in the comparison of its results with schools nationally and in achieving good value in its spending.

#### **PARENTS' AND CARERS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL**

<b>What pleases parents most</b>	<b>What parents would like to see improved</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Children enjoy school and make good progress.</li> <li>• The school is approachable when there is a difficulty.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Homework.</li> <li>• Information on children's progress.</li> <li>• The school's leadership and management.</li> <li>• Children's behaviour.</li> <li>• The links with parents.</li> <li>• Children's personal development.</li> <li>• Extra-curricular activities.</li> </ul>

The inspectors fully endorse the parents' positive comments about the school and also agree with some of their concerns. Pupils' behaviour is inconsistent because not all teachers have the same high expectations as to how pupils should behave. Whilst pupils' reports are good overall, they do not refer to children's personal targets nor consistently indicate areas for improvement. The team felt that the extra-curricular activities, including the visits, were good overall and that the school created satisfactory opportunities for pupils' personal development. The school's leadership was judged to be good and was primarily responsible for the good improvements in pupils' attainment since the last inspection. Homework is set regularly and successfully supports pupils' learning. Although parents in the questionnaire expressed concerns over the school's link with parents, the team could not discover in their interviews with parents what was the principal cause of these concerns.

## **PART B: COMMENTARY**

### **HOW HIGH ARE STANDARDS?**

#### **The school's results and achievements**

1. The improvement in pupils' attainment over the last four years has been faster than the national trend and there have been considerable improvements in English, mathematics and science since the last inspection. The results for the 2000 National Curriculum tests for 11 year olds show that pupils narrowly missed the school's challenging target set for them in English but missed the mathematics target by a wide margin. The reason for this difference was the greater emphasis given to English in the 'booster' classes and the inaccurate teacher assessment in mathematics. When compared to national averages, attainment was average in English and below average in mathematics and science. When compared to schools which draw their pupils from a similar background, the pupils' performance was well above average in English and average in mathematics and science. When compared to similar schools, the proportion of pupils scoring the higher Level 5 was average in English and science and above average in mathematics. When compared to their attainment in the 1996 tests at the end of Key Stage 1, pupils have made very good progress in English, good progress in mathematics and satisfactory progress in science.
2. Inspection evidence indicates that the present Year 6 group of pupils has average attainment in English and below average attainment in science. Pupils' attainment in mathematics is higher than the previous year because of the improvement in teachers' assessment in the subject and the impact of good quality teaching in both ability sets. As a result of these improvements, pupils' attainment is average. The targets for this group of pupils are 71 per cent to achieve the expected level in English and 74 per cent to achieve the expected level in mathematics. These targets are lower than the previous years, particularly in English but accurately reflect the higher proportion of pupils with special educational needs in this cohort. However, the pupils are on course to meet these targets. Over the last three years, boys have outperformed girls by a small margin in English but by a more significant amount in mathematics and science. During the inspection no significant differences were seen in the standards achieved by pupils of different gender, ethnicity or background.
3. Over the last four years, there has been a significant improvement in Key Stage 1, particularly with the National Curriculum test results for the year 2000, when pupils' performance was well above average in reading and writing and in the top five per cent of all schools for mathematics. When compared to similar schools, standards in reading, writing and mathematics were very high and in the top five per cent of such schools. Inspection evidence shows that the attainment of the present Year 2 group of pupils is not as high as last year's because of a much higher proportion of pupils on the special educational needs register, but has average attainment in English and mathematics.
4. Children under five enter Reception with attainment that is well below that expected of children of a similar age, particularly in their speech and language acquisition. Pupils' mathematical skills are slightly higher than their language skills but still well below those found nationally. Although pupils have well below average personal and social skills, most are able to concentrate on their own choice of activity for appropriate lengths of time. Children benefit from the carefully planned learning experiences, good quality teaching and the good teamwork of the teacher and the classroom assistant. As a result, they make a good start to their learning, with a majority of the children on their way to achieving the expected standards in all the six areas of learning that form the National Foundation Stage of learning by the time they move into Year 1.
5. Standards in English at the end of both key stages are average. Pupils in Key Stage 1 have well developed speaking and listening skills, clearly shown in a Year 2 lesson exploring the significance of Remembrance Sunday. Pupils have satisfactory reading skills, with higher-attaining pupils reading at the expected levels and with good expression. Pupils' writing in Key

Stage 1 is below average, although some pupils are beginning to develop their sentences into simple sequences. In Key Stage 2, pupils have good speaking and listening skills and use these skills well in their learning. Pupils enjoy discussion and are beginning to adapt their choice of vocabulary and style for different purposes. Pupils have satisfactory reading skills although a significant proportion lacks fluency and expression and an enthusiasm for reading. The higher-achieving pupils have well developed library skills and have good inferential ability to explain why characters from their books act as they do. Pupils' writing is competently developed with satisfactory knowledge of punctuation, such as apostrophes and speech marks, and average spelling. However, pupils' writing is below average with their stories lacking imaginative language and often being untidily presented.

6. Pupils' attainment in mathematics at the end of Key Stage 1 is average. Pupils throughout the key stage are making clear progress in the way in which they set out their work. They form their numbers well and have a satisfactory understanding of place value and have a good knowledge of three-dimensional shapes. By the end of Key Stage 2, pupils have good skills in addition, subtraction and multiplication although their division skills are less well developed. Pupils have a good understanding of place value and a satisfactory understanding of probability. Higher-attaining pupils have a particularly good knowledge of their tables and this has a positive impact on their mental work. Pupils use computer programs regularly to support their numeracy work, particularly in data handling, where they make good use of spreadsheets. Whilst pupils have satisfactory skills in mathematics investigations, they have too few opportunities to use and develop their mathematical thinking in practical situations. The arrangements for setting by ability in Years 5 and 6 is resulting in pupils being well challenged and making good, and sometimes very good, progress.
7. The school has worked very hard and successfully to improve attainment in the three core subjects of English, mathematics and science, all of which were at a very low base three years ago. As a result of this concentration on these subjects and particularly English and mathematics, other subjects have not had the same opportunities for development. This has resulted in a decline in attainment in some subjects where standards are now not high enough.
8. Standards in science are below average in both key stages. In Year 2, the behaviour of some pupils during science investigations has a negative impact on the learning of the others. Pupils make little use of their literacy skills to record their science investigations and do not have a clear idea of the requirements for making a fair test. However, pupils do have a satisfactory knowledge of physical processes and materials. At the end of Key Stage 2, most pupils have a satisfactory range of knowledge, shown clearly in their work on the separation of materials by filtration and evaporation. They use their scientific knowledge appropriately to solve simple problems but a significant number are not able to make hypotheses or to use their scientific knowledge to explain the results they obtain.
9. Attainment in information and communications technology (ICT) is satisfactory and has improved in Key Stage 2 since the last inspection. Significant in this improvement is the increased subject knowledge and confidence of the teachers who work hard to integrate ICT across the curriculum. In both key stages, pupils are confident with computers and use word processing and data handling programs well to enhance their work. Year 1 pupils take good advantage of their adjacent computer suite and use appropriate programs regularly to support their literacy and numeracy work. Year 2 pupils make good use of a CD-ROM to find different Bible stories and show satisfactory modelling skills when designing their own town as part of their geography topic. Year 6 pupils benefit greatly from their use of a local special school's computer suite. They also benefit from the support of two knowledgeable classroom assistants. As a result, they are developing good skills in their data handling work on spreadsheets and in developing more advanced skills in their word processing, clearly shown in their poetry work. Pupils also benefit from attending a weekly extra-curricular computer club.
10. Attainment in religious education is below the expected levels described in the locally agreed syllabus. At the end of Key Stage 1, pupils do not use their literacy skills to record elements of what they have learnt and, as a result, many forget and become confused about what they have discussed. They have a limited understanding of some elements of different religions but some are confused with basic elements of Christianity. This confusion of ideas continues in Key Stage 2 where some older pupils, having learnt about Muslims, did not believe there were any living in England. They have a very limited knowledge of which artefacts are related to different religions and have a confused idea of how religious beliefs impact on other people's lives.

11. Pupils attain satisfactory standards in physical education and benefit from good teaching, with older pupils having above average control and fluency when performing sequences in gymnastics. In music, pupils reach standards in line with national expectations in Key Stage 1 and sing well together. However, in Key Stage 2 there is no teacher with specialist music skills and, as a result, pupils' composing and appraising skills are below expectations.

Pupils' singing in assembly is rarely accompanied and, as a result, many pupils sing out of tune, with a significant number of the older pupils not singing at all. However, the school does have a tradition of recorder playing and the older pupils reach a satisfactory standard and play regularly for the school.

12. Pupils' attainment in history and geography is in line with national expectations. Older pupils have a sound knowledge of rivers and how they can affect erosion. Pupils are encouraged to have a critical approach to historical sources and as a result understand how bias is employed in different historical accounts. Whilst pupils' attainment in design and technology is satisfactory, with Key Stage 1 pupils developing a good range of cutting and joining skills, pupils' attainment in art is generally below that expected. However, pupils' attainment in Years 3, 4 and 5 shows an improving picture due to the creative skills and the good subject knowledge of a classroom assistant who works regularly with these pupils.
13. The planned development of pupils' numeracy and literacy skills in other subjects has not yet been fully addressed. There are missed opportunities for pupils to develop their literacy skills across the curriculum, particularly in religious education, science and history. There is, however, some good practice; for example in science in Year 5, pupils write up their investigations and findings in their own words. There is evidence of the use of pupils' numeracy skills in ICT, science, history and design and technology. When this happens it creates good opportunities for pupils to use and apply their mathematical knowledge.
14. Pupils who are on the special educational needs register achieve well and make good progress towards the targets in their individual education plans because they receive well focused support in lessons from the teaching assistants. However, some pupils who have significant behaviour problems, often make very little progress during lessons and often disrupt the learning of their peers. During the inspection, only one pupil with English as an additional language was in school; because of the high mobility of the asylum-seeking pupils and the short time they spend in the school, it was not possible to assess their progress.

### **Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development**

15. The school has not been entirely successful in maintaining its high standards of behaviour and attitudes reported at the time of the last inspection. Although these are now still satisfactory, when the school was last inspected they were judged to be good. Relationships are still good and personal development satisfactory, as they were at that time.
16. Pupils enjoy coming to school and are enthusiastic about what it has to offer them. Most display positive attitudes in lessons, listening attentively to their teachers and settling quickly to their work. However, in some classes, when the tasks are not well matched to pupils' needs, or the teacher is not skilled in controlling the children, a significant minority becomes distracted and misbehaves. This affects the progress of the whole class, as the teacher then has to spend a disproportionate amount of time trying to establish order. Pupils' behaviour is satisfactory overall. Most behave well in the playground, showing consideration for others, taking turns on the apparatus and walking sensibly up and down the steps. Some parents showed concern in their questionnaires about pupils' behaviour in and around the school; pupils are sometimes boisterous or noisy, but this is because such behaviour often goes unchecked by staff. As a result pupils are led to believe that it is acceptable. There has been one temporary exclusion in the last year. The child concerned has now left the school. Instances of bullying or other oppressive behaviour are taken very seriously and handled firmly by the school with the involvement of pupils and parents.
17. The attitude of pupils with special educational needs is usually positive and plays a significant part in the good progress that these pupils make. However, there is a small concentration of pupils in Year 2 who are on the special needs register for behavioural problems. The Behaviour Support Service is involved with them individually but the poor attitudes to work that these pupils often display do have a negative effect on the attitudes and learning of their peers.

18. Relationships in the school are good. Pupils get on well with staff and with one another. In the playground at lunchtime, for example, older children were seen looking after younger ones, taking them inside for first aid. In class, pupils work well together, sharing ideas and resources. Pupils are polite and courteous to adults and keen to talk to them about their work and responsibilities. For example, Year 6 mentors, who are used by the school to listen to and help solve other pupils' problems, are proud of their role and take it very seriously. Pupils' personal development is satisfactory overall. Most take advantage of the opportunities they are given to take on responsibility and carry their duties out reliably. However, pupils sometimes lack confidence in themselves and their abilities. Some pupils taking part in the Year 6 class assembly were self-conscious about their role, even though the rest of the school in the audience was positive and supportive towards them.
19. Pupils' attendance is satisfactory. It is broadly in line with the national average. Most children attend regularly and the majority of absences are caused by illness. Unauthorised absence is also in line with the national average. At the time of the last inspection, attendance levels were good, but they have dropped slightly over the last two years. This is because of the movement of asylum seekers whose places are kept open, by order of the local authority, when they leave the school until they reregister at another school. This has an adverse impact on attendance figures; for example, one asylum seeker was absent for the whole of the summer term. Punctuality is satisfactory. Most children arrive on time so that lessons can begin promptly each morning.

#### **HOW WELL ARE PUPILS TAUGHT?**

20. The quality of teaching observed during the inspection was satisfactory overall. During the inspection 44 lessons were observed; in 57 per cent of these the teaching was good or better. In nine per cent of the lessons, teaching was unsatisfactory and two per cent were poor. Whilst the percentage of unsatisfactory and poor teaching is greater than at the last inspection, when six per cent of the lessons seen were unsatisfactory, during this inspection 13 per cent of the lessons seen were very good or better. This compares very favourably with the two per cent very good or better lessons seen at the last inspection.
21. Teaching was strong in the Reception class where over half the lessons seen were good or better. The quality of this teaching was the major reason for the good and sometimes very good progress that the children make in their first year in school. A strength of the teaching is the effective way that the teacher and classroom assistant work closely together. They model appropriate behaviour and successfully build children's self-esteem and confidence, which provides a good base for pupils to build their other skills. Children are very well stimulated into developing their speaking and listening skills by the well-focused questioning of the adults which quickly instils in the children a love of stories and an interest in books. Pupils enjoy counting and singing number songs because the adults make it interesting and fun. This was also the case when children built a model straw house as part of their work on the story of *Three Little Pigs* and tested the strengths of their models by using a hairdryer to represent the wolf's 'huffing and puffing'. Pupils' physical development is satisfactorily provided for by a good range of opportunities for pupils to develop co-ordination and control of small apparatus. Pupils also benefit from daily opportunities to use the outside adventure playground. A lack of large wheeled toys reduces the opportunities for the promotion of pupils' control and development of their spatial awareness.
22. The quality of teaching in English is satisfactory overall. Pupils benefit because the aims of the lessons are explained to them. They interact well with the lesson because teachers use language that is appropriate to the age of the pupils. Classroom assistants are generally well organised by the teachers and have a positive impact on the groups that they work with. This is particularly the case with pupils with special educational needs who make good resulting progress. Pupils in Key Stage 1 make good progress in developing their reading due to the insistence, during guided reading, that they pay most attention to the more difficult words. In Key Stage 2, elements from the good range of literacy texts are highlighted to consolidate pupils' learning. Whilst teachers carefully assess pupils in oral sessions, they are less successful at supporting individuals during whole-class writing. As a result, pupils do not always make the progress they are capable of. The marking of pupils' written work is regular but there are too few evaluative comments from teachers to indicate to pupils what they need to do to improve their work.

23. The quality of mathematics teaching is satisfactory overall and ranges from good to poor. A strong feature of the teaching is the way that teachers use their good subject knowledge in their questioning of pupils to consolidate their learning and to assess their understanding. However, the different experience and subject knowledge of the two part-time teachers in Year 3 is resulting in these pupils making different rates of progress during the week. The setting by ability arrangements in Years 5 and 6 has reduced the spread of ability for each class and is resulting in accurate targeting of work and a good pace of learning in both the classes. Good relationships were evident in most classes and this gives confidence to pupils to ask for help when required.

As a result, pupils make good progress, particularly in developing their numeracy skills. However, some teachers rely too heavily on pupils asking for help rather than assessing pupils' understanding as they move round the class. This results in some pupils under-performing. A strength of the teaching is the evaluation that teachers make at the end of each lesson on whether or not the learning objectives have been met. When this is not the case, teachers re-emphasise the learning in their next lesson. This helps to ensure pupils have a second opportunity to understand the new learning. The presentation of pupils' work is often untidy, except for Year 5 where clear expectations are laid down and marking reminds pupils when their work does not meet the required standards.

24. The quality of teaching in science is satisfactory overall, although unsatisfactory lessons were seen in Years 2 and 6. In both these lessons teachers were not assessing pupils' understanding carefully enough and as a result the work was not accurately matched to the pupils' needs. However, in other lessons, the work was well structured, so that pupils' knowledge and skills were built upon systematically. This was particularly evident in Year 3 and Year 5 where well-focused teaching led to good learning gains by the pupils. The development of pupils' recording skills, particularly in their investigation work, is inconsistent and this results in missed opportunities for pupils to develop their writing skills for specific purposes. In Year 5, there are again high expectations for pupils to record their investigations, using an appropriate format. Teachers' subject knowledge has been improved since the last inspection through focused training, and resources are now used appropriately to meet the needs of the new scheme of work.
25. The teaching of ICT has improved since the last inspection, particularly in Key Stage 2, and this is leading to all the programmes of study being taught at appropriate stages through the school. ICT is now better integrated into the curriculum and because of teachers' improved ICT skills, the programs they use are having a positive impact on pupils' learning. Good use is made of the computer suite used by Reception and Year 1, where the classroom assistants use their skills well to promote pupils' learning. This results in pupils being confident and enjoying the challenge of the range of programs. In Key Stage 2, a particular improvement has been the use of data-handling programs and the great variety of graph work around the school gives testament to the good quality work in this area. Particularly impressive is the high quality spreadsheet work that Year 6 pupils were carrying out as a result of skilled teacher input and very good use of the computer suite of a neighbouring school.
26. The quality of teaching in religious education is unsatisfactory overall because the quality of pupils' work at the end of both key stages is below the expectations of the locally agreed syllabus. The main reason for the unsatisfactory teaching and progress is the inappropriate focus of some lessons, the lack of classroom management to maintain pupils' interest and motivation and the over-use in some classrooms of worksheets, which are not well matched to the abilities of all pupils. Teachers provide too little opportunity for pupils to record their own ideas of what they have learnt and, as a result, many pupils quickly forget important elements of the subject. In some classes, such as in Years 3 and 5, effective teaching does take place and this leads pupils to acquire a secure understanding of how symbols and signs convey messages, and a sound knowledge of Islam.
27. Teachers' planning is satisfactory overall but a common weakness is that teachers do not always give enough attention to how activities are to be modified to cater for pupils of different ability. As a result, pupils do not always reach the standards of which they are capable. Teachers have satisfactory subject knowledge overall but good subject knowledge in mathematics, which results in pupils, particularly in the older classes, being well challenged and making good progress. However, in religious education and art through the school and music in Key Stage 2, the teachers' unsatisfactory subject knowledge leads to below average

attainment in these subjects. Relationships are good and often very good between staff and pupils and this gives pupils confidence to respond positively to teachers' questioning and to ask for help when they have difficulties. Experienced teacher assistants know their pupils well and support pupils before they become disheartened through lack of understanding. Teachers use questioning well to assess pupils' knowledge and to help pupils deepen their understanding. This was particularly evident in a Year 5 lesson when pupils explored the difference between Ancient Greece and Sparta. Most lessons have satisfactory pace and a strength in physical education lessons is the opportunities that pupils have to watch model exemplars and to use these ideas to develop their own work. As a result, pupils make good progress in the time available to them.

28. The quality of marking is variable. Whilst the majority of teachers write supportive comments at the end of work, too few outline what pupils need to do to improve, particularly in the area of presentation. Whilst the behaviour of the great majority of pupils is at least satisfactory in lessons, a minority of pupils in some classes do not follow the school's behaviour code and disrupt the learning of other pupils in the class. This is noticeable in the Year 2 class where the teacher and classroom assistant work very hard to maintain an effective learning environment and occasionally in Year, 6 where pupils are not always interested in the content of the lesson. Homework is set regularly and has a satisfactory impact on pupils' learning.
29. The teaching of pupils with special educational needs is good overall and they make subsequent good overall progress. Individual education plans are used appropriately by teachers so that the support they receive is appropriate to their needs. However, some work that teachers set for the pupils is not clearly matched to their needs and it requires the hard work of classroom assistants to ensure that pupils' learning is developed through the task. Teachers ensure that all pupils are involved in discussions at the beginning and end of lessons and this makes a positive contribution to the development of these pupils' self-esteem. No teaching of pupils with English as an additional language was observed. However, the local authority has arranged specialist teaching input for the very small number of pupils when they are in school. This teaching was disrupted during the inspection, as some of the pupils had returned to their country of origin for Christmas.

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

30. The curriculum is satisfactorily broad and well balanced. It appropriately covers all subjects of the National Curriculum and religious education as set out in the locally agreed syllabus. All subjects meet statutory requirements. Pupils are also given guidance on sex education and the use and abuse of drugs as part of their personal, social and health education.
31. Children in the Foundation Stage (Reception class) are provided with a curriculum that is appropriately planned under the six areas of learning recommended for such young pupils i.e. communication, language and literacy, mathematical development, knowledge and understanding of the world, creative development, physical development and personal, social and emotional development. The teacher in the Reception class provides a wide range of activities that effectively encourages children's learning and supports their development. Activities led by the teacher and the classroom assistant provide good opportunities for focused teaching and these are successfully balanced by opportunities for the children to choose activities for themselves and develop their knowledge and skills through structured play. The school has very appropriately decided that the children should follow elements of the National Literacy Strategy and National Numeracy Strategy, but they have been effectively adapted to these children's needs and they make good progress in developing their language and early mathematical skills.
32. Planning of the curriculum has been significantly improved since the previous inspection when many subjects did not have schemes of work and planning did not clearly set out what pupils should learn in each class to ensure there was a systematic development of pupils' knowledge and skills. All subjects now have schemes of work that ensure an appropriate progression of pupils' learning through the school. These schemes are mostly new to the staff, who are introducing them this term, and the school is well on track to provide the new aspects of learning set out in the Curriculum 2000. There has not yet been time to evaluate their effectiveness or to adapt them to the needs of the pupils in the school. Most subjects are

planned and taught separately. Some beneficial links are made between subjects, but this is not the general rule and opportunities to stimulate pupils' greater interest and promote their effective learning are not sufficiently promoted through these links, particularly in the development of pupils' literacy skills.

33. The school has appropriately implemented the National Literacy Strategy and National Numeracy Strategy, which are taught effectively through the school. Pupils' literacy skills are not, however, consistently promoted and developed in other subjects. They are in history, but in science and religious education, in particular, pupils' writing skills are not sufficiently developed. There is an over reliance on the use of work sheets and copied writing in some classes, rather than the provision of activities that enable pupils to use their own writing skills to express their ideas and record their findings.

Their speaking and listening skills are better developed and opportunities are made for pupils to share their work and discuss their ideas with the class in many subjects. Pupils' numeracy skills are well promoted in mathematics lessons and satisfactorily in subjects such as science and ICT.

34. The curriculum provided is appropriately relevant to the pupils in the school and adapted to meet their learning needs. All pupils are provided with an effective range of learning opportunities that broadens their experience, enhances their learning and ensures that they have similar access to the National Curriculum. The provision for higher-attaining pupils is satisfactory overall but good for Years 5 and 6 in mathematics. Staff are becoming more aware of the needs of these pupils and are beginning to provide more challenging activities that extend their learning. In science, for example, the number of pupils attaining the higher than expected standards of Level 5 doubled last year because greater focus was given to providing an appropriate range of activities and raising teachers' expectations for their understanding and achievements.

35. The school's main strategy for special educational needs pupils is to provide support for them in class so that they can experience not only the full breadth of the curriculum but also its continuity. Most often they are grouped together with a classroom assistant to do specially planned work which, at stage 2 and above on the register of special needs, takes note of the requirements in their individual education plans. Additional learning support is provided in some English lessons through withdrawal in small groups. The special educational needs co-ordinator personally withdraws certain pupils on her day in school so that she can work with them. The planning for special educational needs is good overall and makes a significant contribution to these pupils' learning. The local authority makes good provision for the specialist teaching for the asylum seekers, who are well integrated into the school.

36. There is a good range of visits to places of local interest that promote pupils' learning. The local environment is rich with opportunities to stimulate pupils' interest and promote their learning and is well used by staff. Visits to the local church as part of their work in religious education, to Dover Castle and other local museums to support history and to the local river for studies in geography, all provide good opportunities to enhance pupils' learning. Most pupils in Year 6 also participate in the annual residential trip to France and gain considerably from the experience that develops their independence and maturity. The curriculum for pupils in Year 6 is also enriched through the teaching of French.

37. Visitors to the school also provide a good range of expertise to promote pupils' interests and effective learning. The school takes every opportunity to promote these links with outside agencies, such as the police and local nurse who enhance aspects of pupils' learning. For example, an employee from Dover council has given time to pupils in Year 3 to promote their scientific knowledge and ICT skills as part of the "Bin Blitz Kit" investigations. The pupils really enjoyed learning about the impact on rubbish on their environment and using the E-mate computers provided to record their ideas.

38. Pupils' personal development is effectively promoted in the regular discussion times. These circle time sessions cover a wide range of topics and explore pupils' concerns and conflicts. They help them to be more able to cope with difficulties and make informed choices. Teachers plan these sessions effectively and use them to address issues that arise as well as general topics, which have been identified as areas for development. The areas of learning are not, however, set out in a whole-school plan that ensures pupils' personal and social skills are

systematically planned though the school. Pupils benefit from a good range of extra-curricular activities that give pupils of different ages well-planned opportunities to work and play together.

39. The school emphasises its commitment to pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development in its prospectus. Within the overall satisfactory position the spiritual and cultural elements are weaker than those promoting pupils' moral and social attitudes. However, overall the school makes satisfactory provision for pupils' spiritual, moral and cultural development and good provision for their social development.
40. Daily assemblies, which always have an act of worship in the form of a prayer or hymn, are the main ingredients by which the school furthers pupils' spiritual development. These incorporate suitable music, a quiet start and, sometimes, suitable pauses to encourage reflection.

However, opportunities to exploit a sense of awe and wonder in subject lessons which have potential for them, such as science or geography, are largely missed; neither do religious education lessons put sufficient emphasis on the beliefs and customs of faith other than Christianity. However, by celebrating pupils' achievements in its community, the school makes a good contribution to their awareness of the importance of the individual.

41. The school promotes pupils' moral and social development through a range of effective strategies. These are underpinned by the 'Golden Rules' in the behaviour policy, which emphasise good behaviour and a respect for others and for property. They work in conjunction with 'Golden Times', in which pupils engage in out-of-class activities, which are often celebrated in displays around the school. Pupils understand the conventions of polite manners in lessons from the earliest age and overall have good role models in their teachers, who award house points for good attitudes or success. However, these are not always given to a consistent pattern, resulting in some cynicism in older pupils. However, the school successfully exploits their growing capability to appreciate social and moral issues by entering Year 6 in the local Young Citizens Project and appointing some as school Mentors. They receive appropriate training for their responsibilities, which they take seriously and understand in a mature way. Pupils throughout the school turn to them for support and guidance, in matters such as bullying. Mentors have a weekly meeting with the headteacher and this increases their sense of being valued and that they are successfully contributing to school life. More generally, well-planned lessons of circle time allow pupils thoughtfully to air their ideas and concerns about social and moral issues and arrive at reasonable conclusions about them.
42. The school makes satisfactory provision for pupils' cultural development overall. Pupils have a sound knowledge of their own culture through their literacy texts and extra-curricular visits as part of their geography and history curriculum. However, music, art and drama play only a small part in pupils' cultural development. Although east European pupils are in school and pupils in Year 6 make an annual residential trip to France, there is scope as a whole for the development of multi-cultural elements in lessons or as part of extra-curricular activities. Nevertheless, a start has been made with 'taster' lessons in French and by increasingly using the Internet for pupils' personal research. Pupils' knowledge of their multi-cultural world is unsatisfactory, with religious education playing too small a role in raising pupils' awareness of different cultures and religious beliefs.
43. The school promotes a good range of links with the local community. These are well balanced between those which encourage pupils' awareness of social elements in their locality and others which serve the curriculum. Pupils learn about road safety and cycling proficiency from visits by the police but also have wider experiences by participating with other schools in the Young Citizens' Project. The school has a very productive association with a local special school which the pupils visit to share physical education and ICT lessons and with the secondary school to which many of them transfer in due course. Pupils visit a nearby old people's home to talk to the residents and sing to them at Christmas and Harvest time. They attend the parish church for services and as part of their learning, and the vicar is a school governor. The school supports charities such as the National Children's Home and the Jump for Heart appeal. Through the headteacher, it also participates in the Priory Ward Project, which seeks to improve local conditions. The school's contacts with institutions such as the museum and the sports centre are strong. Regular use is also made of the White Cliffs Countryside Project and the local newspaper feature "What's in the News?". A local pharmaceutical manufacturer organises visits

for pupils and gives a grant towards the science budget. The school is extending its contacts with the wider community through the Internet and by an annual residential visit to France.

## HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL CARE FOR ITS PUPILS?

44. Since the previous inspection the school has made many advances in the development of its procedures to assess and monitor pupils' attainment and progress. There is now a satisfactory range of strategies and tests employed in English, mathematics and science but there are no consistent procedures for assessing and monitoring pupils' attainment and progress in the other subjects. This sometimes results in a weakness in providing activities that effectively build on pupils' prior knowledge and skills.
45. In the Reception class, staff use good strategies to monitor children's progress and development. Observations of children's work and play build well into an overall detailed picture that focuses on their experiences and on what they know and can do.

This information is used well to match tasks, questions and learning opportunities to children's individual needs and leads to them making good progress.

46. The school appropriately carries out the end of key stage National Curriculum tests and uses a satisfactory range of its own assessments to identify pupils' attainment in reading, spelling and mathematics. There are developing strategies for monitoring pupils' writing skills, but these have only been introduced in the youngest classes so far. Teachers use tests for spellings, knowledge of key words and tables and measure pupils' attainment against the key elements in the National Numeracy Strategy. The information is systematically recorded and is passed on to the next teacher. Targets for individual pupils are set in English and mathematics, based on the areas to be studied in the next unit of work and, for some pupils, on their own specific areas of need. These targets are shared with parents and discussed with pupils, enabling them to have a clear understanding of their own progress and what the next area of focus is.
47. The quality of teachers' marking is inconsistent and comments in pupils' books are often over enthusiastic and do not give pupils a realistic idea of the quality of their efforts and progress. There are insufficient comments pointing out what pupils have achieved and the explanations of what the pupil needs to do to improve. In most classes, it is the comments in pupils' books in the non-core subjects that provide a record of their progress. This is not sufficient for supply teachers or teachers joining a class in the middle of an academic year to use and build upon, to ensure pupils' work is appropriately matched to their needs. The present lack of effective monitoring of pupils' understanding and skills in the non-core subjects makes it difficult for teachers to ensure that pupils have understood the work they have done and that pupils' learning builds effectively from year to year.
48. Results in the end of key stage National Curriculum tests and optional tests set in Years 3, 4 and 5 in English and mathematics are collated and used to track pupils' progress. However, teachers do not use these results effectively to judge whether pupils' progress has been sufficient, based on their previous standards. Co-ordinators are beginning to identify areas of weakness in the end of Key Stage 2 tests, and develop strategies for improvement. For example, the study of materials in science and pupils' progress in multiplication and in data handling in mathematics were recognised as weaknesses and have been areas of focus in teachers' planning this year. Whilst co-ordinators are beginning to evaluate the end of key stage National Curriculum tests, there is at present no evaluation of the Years 3, 4 and 5 tests. As a result, teachers who take a new class in September do not benefit from the knowledge of their new class's strengths and weaknesses in English and mathematics, so that their planning can take this information into account. Teachers monitor pupils' day-to-day work satisfactorily and opportunities for assessment are included in lesson plans; however, the teachers' use of information gained from these assessments to set future work is inconsistent. Whilst the school has worked hard to develop teachers' knowledge of different National Curriculum levels through the moderation of pupils' work, not all teachers have a secure knowledge, particularly when they move to a different year group. As a result, in some lessons, activities are too challenging for pupils' prior knowledge and support provided is not sufficient to ensure that pupils engage effectively with the task.

49. Pupils with special educational needs are appropriately identified and their learning needs satisfactorily assessed. Specific targets for future learning are identified in their individual educational plans and are monitored regularly so that progress is effectively maintained. The school receives good support from the local education authority to help address the needs of the asylum seekers. The school makes good use of this support and provides an appropriate curriculum for these pupils. However, the pupils' learning is adversely affected by their high rate of mobility.
50. Since the last inspection, the school has been successful in maintaining its high standards of care for its pupils. There are good policies to underpin the practice in this area, and good records are kept in pupils' personal files to provide an overview of each individual. Staff pay good attention to the welfare of pupils and daily routines run smoothly. Lunchtimes, for example, are well organised to ensure that pupils are properly supervised in the dining hall and around the site at all times. Midday staff treat the pupils well and as a result, relationships are good and lunchtimes are a positive experience for pupils. Induction procedures for Reception children are good. The carefully planned programme of school meetings, home visits and staggered entry enables them to settle quickly and successfully into school life.
51. Arrangements for child protection are good. The policy gives clear guidance for staff, procedures are well known to them and regular training is held. Pupils are taught about keeping safe through their health and sex education.
52. Health and safety issues too are well managed. The very good new policy covers all eventualities, the building is well looked after, and the problems presented by the site are minimised. Pupils are expected to behave safely on the steps to the playground, for example, and they respond sensibly to this. The major health and safety issues from the previous report, relating to the mobile classroom, have been fully addressed. The mobile has now been replaced and the replacement is secure and has its own toilets. This means that no pupils have to come and go without supervision. The playground and paths around the school are still in need of resurfacing to reduce the chance of accidents. First aid is administered with care and attention but the school lacks centralised facilities to treat and record incidents. The conversion of the school kitchens to include a medical room should alleviate this problem. The plan to include new cloakrooms here should also make the school easier to vacate in the event of a fire, as the current lack of space means that corridors are sometimes cluttered.
53. Discipline is maintained satisfactorily by most staff, but there is some inconsistency in practice across the school. It is often closely linked to the quality of teaching. When lesson content is well matched to the needs of the pupils, it holds their interest and they behave well. In a Year 1 numeracy lesson, for example, the children's attention was captured by the teacher's well-presented visual aids and clear explanations, and they settled down to their work. When this does not happen, some teachers lack the necessary strategies to control the class effectively, or use rewards and sanctions excessively so they lose their impact. In addition, expectations for behaviour around the school are sometimes too low. Teachers often ignore disorderly behaviour as pupils come into school or move around the corridors; talking at inappropriate times in assembly is often tolerated. Levels of noise in the dining hall are sometimes high, but midday staff have effective strategies to deal with this. The school has set up some good initiatives to promote good behaviour. Circle time is a well-established part of the timetable, where children are encouraged to think about right and wrong. The mentoring system is a very good feature of the school's approach to bullying, helping pupils to get involved with sorting out their peers' problems. Instances of bullying are taken seriously and investigated thoroughly by the headteacher, in close consultation with parents.
54. The school monitors attendance well. Consistent procedures for chasing up absence are followed by all staff, and good use is made of the educational welfare service where necessary.

#### **HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL WORK IN PARTNERSHIP WITH PARENTS?**

55. The school has not sustained the good relationships with parents, which were evident at the time of the last inspection. Although most parents say their children are happy at the school and that the school is approachable, around 30 per cent of those who replied to the parents' questionnaire were not positive about many aspects of the school. Approximately one third of the parent community responded to the questionnaire, so this means that at least ten per cent

of parents at the school are not satisfied with what it provides. This is a sizeable minority. Areas of concern are homework, information on progress, leadership and management, behaviour, links with parents, activities outside lessons and children's personal development. The evidence from the inspection is that there are strengths and weaknesses in all of these areas, but there are no obvious shortcomings that might make parents unhappy. Very few parents commented on the reasons for their dissatisfaction and very few attended the meeting held for parents. It was therefore not possible to discover the underlying cause for this negative feeling.

56. Despite the views of some parents, the school's efforts to keep them involved and informed are satisfactory. The school's website is excellent, containing up-to-date news and examples of pupils' work for parents to see. The prospectus is good, full of clear, readable information and both the prospectus and the governors' annual report now contain all the details required by law. Newsletters are regular and businesslike, though they do not always celebrate the school's successes and achievements. Some classes send home a class letter at the beginning of each term to inform parents about the topics their child will be covering.

This is much appreciated by parents but the practice is not consistent through the school. The nature of the school site makes it difficult for parents to drop in to their children's classes at the beginning and end to the day, but they agree that teachers are readily accessible and always prepared to see them if they wish.

57. Reports to parents on their children's achievements are good overall. They focus clearly on what the children know, understand and can do and the skills they have acquired in each subject. However, they do not specify how well the children are doing for their age, nor do they refer to the children's targets and say what they need to do to improve. This may be the reason why some parents are unhappy about the information they receive on their children's progress. Parents do, however, have sufficient opportunity to discuss progress and targets at termly consultations with their children's teachers. Parents of pupils with special educational needs are kept well informed about their children's work through regular contact with the special needs co-ordinator. They are fully consulted over the targets on their child's individual education plan, for which their support is enlisted, and are appropriately involved in the regular reviews.

58. Most parents make a satisfactory contribution to the work of the school and to their children's learning. They hear their children read at home and ensure that homework is completed, attend parents' evenings and support school events. A few are able to give their time as governors, parent helpers and members of the Friends' committee and the school values their loyalty.

#### **HOW WELL IS THE SCHOOL LED AND MANAGED?**

59. The school is going through a period of change. The deputy headteacher, the special educational needs co-ordinator and a class teacher left at the end of the summer term and two have been replaced by temporary staff. A new headteacher has been appointed from January. The present headteacher provides good leadership for the school and, together with her previous deputy, focused directly and successfully on driving up standards in the school. In the last two years, since the previous inspection, the school has shown a shared commitment to improvement. However, due to the imminent changes in senior staffing, it is not possible to make a judgement on the school's future capacity to improve further. The headteacher has a clear understanding of the school's strengths and weaknesses and, as a result, gives effective leadership and a clear educational direction for the school. Improvements are driven by a good quality, prioritised school development plan which co-ordinates all developments within agreed time scales and provides a clear framework for improvement. The plan is carefully linked to the school finances and evaluation by the school and governors carefully monitors the spending. The school applies the principles of best value satisfactorily overall but well in the areas of comparison and competition. However, less well developed is the formal evaluation of the impact that spending is having on pupils' attainment. The school development plan has successfully introduced the numeracy and literacy strategies which have had a marked impact on the standards attained by pupils at the age of seven and 11. It has also led to good improvements in science and ICT. The focus on these subjects has meant that other subjects have not received enough time to maintain their previous standards. As a result, attainment in religious education, art and music in Key Stage 2 is now below expectations.

60. Co-ordinators work hard and have benefited significantly from the training of the last deputy headteacher. This successfully addressed a key issue from the last inspection report and has also led to improvements in the curriculum planning for English, mathematics, science and ICT, which again were areas highlighted for urgent action. The co-ordinators for English, mathematics and science carry out their duties effectively and monitor the progress of individual year groups. They evaluate the National Curriculum tests for 11 year olds carefully and use this knowledge to adjust future planning so that weaknesses are addressed. However, whilst the non-statutory assessments are used in Years 3, 4 and 5 for English and mathematics to chart pupils' progress, the school does not evaluate these assessments so that the strengths of individual year cohorts can be built on and the weaknesses addressed in future years. Due to the emphasis on raising standards in English, mathematics, science and ICT, the role of the co-ordinator in the other subjects is very under-developed, with little monitoring of planning and not enough monitoring of the standards of pupils' work to ensure that attainment is appropriate.
61. The school's aims are satisfactorily reflected in its work. The school enables pupils to reach their full potential in acquiring effective skills in literacy and numeracy and helps pupils to learn to work with others and to be able to express their thoughts and ideas. However, because of weaknesses in art and music, pupils' imagination and creativity are underdeveloped.
62. The governing body is very supportive of the school and has addressed the weaknesses highlighted in the last report through well-targeted training. This has resulted in the greatly improved efficiency of the governing body that now carries out all its statutory duties well and monitors and evaluates the school's performance using relevant and up-to-date information. Several governors have taken responsibility for a curriculum area and give good support to co-ordinators through both formal and informal visits. The governing body is kept well informed of developments within the school by the visits of fellow governors, the termly report of the headteacher and feedback from other governor committees. Governors are instrumental in working with the school to draw up the school improvement plan but, at present, are not sufficiently involved in the ongoing evaluation of the school's developments. The finance committee plays an active role in setting the budget and carefully monitors school spending. Financial and school administration is carried out efficiently, and the office staff give good support to the smooth daily running of the school.
63. Governors are kept fully informed of the school's strengths and weaknesses and they carefully monitor the school's performance and assessment data and question the school carefully when there are concerns. The results of the non-statutory Year 3, 4 and 5 tests are scrutinised by the curriculum committee which feeds back its findings to the full governing body to ensure that all governors have a clear understanding of pupils' progress towards their end of key stage targets in English and mathematics.
64. The monitoring of teaching by the headteacher is well established and has been instrumental in raising the standards of teaching through the school. The headteacher has observed all new teachers this term and has set targets for improvement. The monitoring of teaching and learning by the literacy and numeracy co-ordinators has been well supported by the local authority consultants and has impacted positively on standards of teaching and pupils' attainment. However, the feedback to teachers at the end of observations and the setting of targets, are often not written down formally, nor followed up at a later date. As a result, the school is not able to monitor if identified weaknesses are being successfully addressed.
65. The school's process for setting end of key stage targets is rigorous and has led to improvements in English, mathematics and science. The targets for the year 2001 are lower than the previous years but are challenging and very appropriate for the present Year 6 group of pupils.
66. The school's staffing is adequate and has a good mixture of experience. Arrangements for the induction of new teachers are satisfactory and are matched to the individual's circumstances. Thus the newly arrived deputy head is monitored and supported by the headteacher and the new class teacher is supported by an established member of staff who is also the mentor for the student teachers. There are up to six of these in the school each year, allocated so that no class has an unfair balance. Their placement arrangements are formally set down in a handbook jointly produced with the training college. First-hand supervision and direction are by their class teacher but the mentor regularly carries out formal assessments. Written

statements by past students and discussion with current trainees suggest that the school's participation in the scheme is a successful one.

67. The school's accommodation is adequate for teaching the National Curriculum and is in mainly satisfactory condition. There are some poor features over which the school has little control, such as the size of classrooms for the older years and the extreme difference of levels between the main buildings and the play areas, linked by steep concrete steps. However, a recent improvement has been the installation of a good-sized classroom for Year 2, complete with its own toilets and cloakroom. This new building successfully addresses the key health and safety issue of the last inspection. Storage for science has also been developed to coincide with the acquisition of new equipment. Although other curriculum materials, including gymnastic apparatus, are easily accessible, the school has recognised the need for additional storage in its plans to adapt and refurbish the kitchen area.
68. The school's outdoor play areas and those for team games, are of adequate size and well used by pupils at playtime, for physical education and for extra-curricular team games such as netball, football and kwik-cricket. Deficiencies in the condition of the perimeter fence have been made good, but the playground surface is in need of repair in some parts.
69. The school buildings and paintwork are in sound condition and are well cared for by the caretaker and her assistant, who also maintain outside areas. Inside, circulation areas and classroom walls are decorated with well-presented examples of pupils' current work and colourful displays related to curriculum topics. These promote and enhance the learning environment.
70. Resources for learning are satisfactory in many subjects and are used effectively, including those off-site, at the local sports centre for swimming and at a local school to supplement those for ICT and physical education. Good improvements since the last inspection have been made in science and geography but artefacts for use in history are still insufficient and in art there are not enough materials to carry out the newly adopted scheme of work. There are also some weaknesses of provision in mathematics, music and design and technology, where, for example, there are not enough tools. A weakness in the generally good provision for children in the Foundation Stage is a lack of large, wheeled toys for the children to ride. Classroom libraries generally have sufficient stocks of books although the provision of guided reading books in Key Stage 1 is too limited. The library for Key Stage 2 has a good range and number of non-fiction books linked to curriculum subjects and catalogued using the Dewey system. However, Year 3 and 4 pupils rarely use the library to supplement their learning. The school has successfully addressed the lack of ICT programs to teach all elements of the curriculum, an issue which was highlighted in the last report.

#### **WHAT SHOULD THE SCHOOL DO TO IMPROVE FURTHER?**

71. In order to improve the standards of attainment and the quality of education, the governors and staff should:
- (1) improve standards in science in both key stages by:
    - ensuring pupils in Key Stage 1 understand the elements of a fair test and record the results of their investigations;
    - giving more support to the lower-attaining pupils to ensure they participate successfully in lessons when challenging work is being undertaken;
    - raising teachers' expectations about pupils' behaviour in lessons and the standard of investigation recording;
    - using information and communication technology more effectively to record research findings;
    - improving teachers' knowledge of the different levels of attainment in the new science curriculum.(Paragraphs 8, 24, 103-113)
  - (2) improve attainment in religious education by:

- raising the status of religious education in the school and giving more time to the co-ordinator to monitor the standards of pupils' work and the continuity of pupils' knowledge and understanding in the different years;
- ensuring that teachers use the new locally agreed syllabus to plan appropriately challenging lessons for all year groups;
- improve the quality of resources to ensure all aspects of the new syllabus can be meaningfully taught;
- developing the use of pupils' literacy and information and communications technology skills by providing more opportunities for pupils to record their own ideas and what they have learnt;
- creating closer links between religious education and school assemblies;
- improving pupils' knowledge of different faiths so that they have an enhanced understanding of the multi-cultural society in which they live.  
(Paragraphs 10, 26, 42, 94, 149-156)

- (3) improve attainment in pupils' writing by:
- continuing the development of the school's writing scheme of work;
  - planning more opportunities for pupils to develop their writing skills in other subjects;
  - setting regular writing assessments through the school and using staff meetings to moderate pupils' level of attainment and monitor their progress;
  - ensuring that marking is standardised and clearly identifies what pupils need to do to improve their work.  
(Paragraphs 8, 10, 13, 22, 26, 28, 89, 92, 94, 104)

- (4) Improve the quality of teaching by:
- (a) using assessment more effectively to provide appropriate work for pupils' different abilities by:
- clearly identifying in planning, what pupils of differing abilities are to learn in lessons;
  - developing the present lesson evaluations to determine how well different groups of pupils have learnt;
  - systematically recording pupils' day-to-day progress in an easily accessible format.  
(Paragraphs 22, 23, 24, 60, 92, 108, 110, 153)
- (b) raising teachers' expectations of the quality of pupils' work and their behaviour around the school by:
- ensuring teachers consistently carry out the school's behaviour policy;
  - overseeing pupils when they are moving around the school building;
  - having well understood procedures in place for pupils who persistently disrupt their peers' learning;
  - ensuring teachers' marking clearly identifies when pupils' work is not satisfactory and what they need to do to improve;
  - sharing the good marking practice that already exists in school.  
(Paragraphs 16, 28, 100, 152)

In addition to the key issues above, the following minor weaknesses should be considered for inclusion in the action plan.

- Improve the quality of art through the school and the standards of music in Key Stage 2. (Paragraphs 59, 61, 114-118)
- Improve the communication between parents and the school to help defuse parents' present concerns about aspects of the school.  
(Paragraphs 55,56)
- Standardise the information that parents receive at the beginning of each term describing the work their child will be covering during the term.  
(Paragraph 56)

## PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS

### Summary of the sources of evidence for the inspection

Number of lessons observed	44
Number of discussions with staff, governors, other adults and pupils	38

### Summary of teaching observed during the inspection

Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
2	11	44	32	9	2	0

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

### Information about the school's pupils

#### Pupils on the school's roll

	Nursery	YR – Y7
Number of pupils on the school's roll (FTE for part-time pupils)		192
Number of full-time pupils eligible for free school meals		37

*FTE means full-time equivalent.*

#### Special educational needs

	Nursery	YR – Y7
Number of pupils with statements of special educational needs		1
Number of pupils on the school's special educational needs register		72

#### English as an additional language

	No of pupils
Number of pupils with English as an additional language	5

#### Pupil mobility in the last school year

	No of pupils
Pupils who joined the school other than at the usual time of first admission	23
Pupils who left the school other than at the usual time of leaving	18

## Attendance

### Authorised absence

	%
School data	4.8
National comparative data	5.4

### Unauthorised absence

	%
School data	0.5
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	13	13	26

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		Reading	Writing	Mathematics
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	11	12	12
	Girls	12	13	13
	Total	23	25	25
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	84 (61)	96 (45)	96 (77)
	National	83 (82)	84 (83)	90 (87)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	12	12	12
	Girls	13	13	13
	Total	25	25	25
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	97 (58)	96 (42)	96 (61)
	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	15	14	29
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National Curriculum Test/Task Results		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys	13	6	11
	Girls	11	10	10
	Total	24	16	21
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	83 (71)	55 (71)	73 (74)
	National	75 (70)	72 (69)	85 (78)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys	12	13	14
	Girls	13	13	13
	Total	25	26	27
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	86 (71)	87 (61)	93 (77)
	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	0
Black – African heritage	0
Black – other	2
Indian	0
Pakistani	0
Bangladeshi	0
Chinese	0
White	170
Any other minority ethnic group	1

This table refers to pupils of compulsory school age only.

#### Exclusions in the last school year

	Fixed period	Permanent
Black – Caribbean heritage	0	0
Black – African heritage	0	0
Black – other	0	0
Indian	0	0
Pakistani	0	0
Bangladeshi	0	0
Chinese	0	0
White	1	0
Other minority ethnic groups	0	0

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

#### Teachers and classes

#### Financial information

**Qualified teachers and classes: YR – Y7**

Total number of qualified teachers (FTE)	8.4
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	22.9
Average class size	27.4

**Education support staff: YR – Y7**

Total number of education support staff	7
Total aggregate hours worked per week	135

*FTE means full-time equivalent.*

**Results of the survey of parents and carers**

**Questionnaire return rate**

Number of questionnaires sent out

150

Number of questionnaires returned

49

**Percentage of responses in each category**

My child likes school.

	Strongly agree	Tend to agree	Tend to disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know
My child likes school.	57	39	4	0	0
My child is making good progress in school.	29	51	14	2	4
Behaviour in the school is good.	22	49	24	2	2
My child gets the right amount of work to do at home.	10	39	29	14	8
The teaching is good.	28	49	12	6	4
I am kept well informed about how my child is getting on.	28	33	20	14	4
I would feel comfortable about approaching the school with questions or a problem.	49	35	8	8	0
The school expects my child to work hard and achieve his or her best.	30	49	18	0	2
The school works closely with parents.	24	39	24	8	4
The school is well led and managed.	31	37	12	12	8
The school is helping my child become mature and responsible.	22	49	20	4	4
The school provides an interesting range of activities outside lessons.	21	48	19	8	4

My child gets the right amount of work to do at home.

The teaching is good.

I am kept well informed about how my child is getting on.

I would feel comfortable about approaching the school with questions or a problem.

The school expects my child to work hard and achieve his or her best.

The school works closely with parents.

The school is well led and managed.

The school is helping my child become mature and responsible.

The school provides an interesting range of activities outside lessons.

Financial year	1999
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	£
Total income	366,602
Total expenditure	357,574
Expenditure per pupil	1,736
Balance brought forward from previous year	15,655
Balance carried forward to next year	24,683

**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**

72. Children are admitted to school in the autumn term of the year in which they are five years of age. They attend part-time at first and all children are usually in full-time schooling before Christmas. At the time of the inspection there were 18 children in school all day and nine children who attended in the afternoons only.
73. Children start school with a range of attainment, but most are well below the standards usually found, particularly in their speech and general language acquisition. In the last few years, no children have exhibited standards above those expected, which is unusual in most schools. In the baseline assessment carried out in the first few weeks of school, children are well below average in early language and literacy skills particularly in their awareness of letter sounds. Their mathematical skills are slightly better, but still well below those found nationally. The baseline shows that children also have unsatisfactory personal and social skills although a majority are able to concentrate on their own choice of activity for appropriate lengths of time. Children make a good start to their learning in the Reception class and many are on their way to achieving the Early Learning Goals by the time they move on to the next class, in Year 1.

**Personal, social and emotional development.**

74. Children settle well into class and school routines and develop good attitudes to their work. They show interest in their activities and mostly share their toys and resources sensibly, working and playing happily with one another. Most have made good relationships with the other children and the adults they meet. A few are very immature, especially those who still attend part-time, and are slow to ask for help or play with other children. Most happily help to clear away at the end of lessons and are proud if it is their turn to take the register to the office.
75. The quality of teaching in this area of children's development is good. The teacher and classroom assistant work closely together and promote children's personal and social skills well. They effectively model appropriate behaviour; for example, the assistant is quick to show the children what they should do when asked to stop and listen. The adults effectively build children's self esteem and confidence and provide many opportunities for children to make choices, develop independence and organise themselves. The sharing of the activities that the children will be doing during the morning and afternoon prepares the children well for what is to happen and helps them understand the basic structure of the day.

**Communication, language and literacy.**

76. Children make good progress in this area of their learning due to the skilled levels of teaching that stimulates the children's love of stories and interest in books. Opportunities for role-play in the "story house" or using the "story sack", which is filled with toy characters from stories they have shared, are well used to stimulate children's imagination and speaking skills. The teacher and assistant are effective in their questioning, which successfully promotes children's language and speech. Most are confident to respond on a one-to-one basis, a few in whole-class sessions, but several are still slow to speak except when at play.
77. The teacher effectively develops children's awareness of print and the way in which it is linked to the pictures so that children were heard to ask, "What does it say?" They handle books well often pointing to the pictures with some retelling the story in their own way. Many of the children remember the repeated phrases in the stories and enjoy saying the different refrains such as those found in the story of The Three Little Pigs.
78. Children have many opportunities to practise writing their name and learn about the letters that are in it. The first activity of the day is for children to find their name and stick it on the attendance board. During the inspection most children could recall the "Letterland" name for many letters and the sounds that they make. The higher-attaining children are beginning to recognise words by the initial and in some cases the first two letters.

None as yet can recognise words within text without support. Their writing skills are developing well and most are beginning to write letter strings to express their ideas. The younger and less able children, however, are still scribbling, not yet recognising the individual shapes of letters.

### **Mathematics**

79. Many children enter school able to recite numbers to five, but most have little concept of counting or recognising written numbers. Most recognise and name colours such as red, blue, green and yellow, but there are several who still find this difficult. To help them, the teacher has given them additional names such as “Barbie pink” to aid their memory learning. The teacher makes opportunities in all areas of learning for children to practise their counting, and songs that include this element are thoroughly enjoyed. Children make good progress due to the thoughtful teaching provided. During the inspection children recite to ten, several recognising that zero is at the start. They recognise the formation of dots on a dice and many tally as they count to five. They recognise and name two-dimensional shapes, such as the circle and square, but they tend to confuse triangle and rectangles. However, they made good progress in a lesson on recognising shapes that are symmetrical, and in a lesson on three-dimensional shapes, several children used their knowledge of balls to predict what would happen if you tried to roll a sphere or a cube. No children are meeting the Early Learning Goals as yet.

### **Knowledge and understanding of the world.**

80. Children enter school with very little awareness of the world outside their homes. A good proportion of children have attended playgroup before starting school, but this area of their learning is weak. However, children make good progress in their learning and are fascinated by simple things, such as watching a cone roll, delighted by the fact that it goes around in a circle. The quality of teaching in this area of children’s learning is good and stories are used well to stimulate children’s awareness. For example, the story of the Three Little Pigs provided an opportunity for children to experience the respective qualities of straw, twigs and bricks, when building a house. They constructed their own straw house for a pig, choosing their own methods of fastening and then tested their structure to see if it would fall down. The teacher very effectively introduced the children to making a model to suit a purpose and to test it to see if it met the requirement. The children were spellbound by the simple use of a hairdryer (the wolf) to test if the house would fall down. When one did, there was much laughter but such was the confidence of the children that when the teacher suggested they could make it better, they readily agreed.
81. Cooking is a regular activity, whether it is linked to science or design and technology. Making jelly, for example was a good opportunity to discuss its wobbly properties and explore language as well. Children regularly use the computer and several are making good progress in using the mouse to draw shapes. They quickly pick up how to use a variety of programs and work well together in pairs.

### **Creative development.**

82. Children enjoy singing and even those who only attend part-time try to follow the actions. Their paintings of “Goldilocks and the Three Bears” are bright and colourful and children show developing imagination in their role-play. The quality of teaching is satisfactory overall and supports children’s development; it provides an appropriate range of opportunities for children to express their ideas.

### **Physical development.**

83. The quality of teaching is satisfactory and children are given many opportunities to use pencils, paint, playdough, scissors and construction equipment in order to develop their co-ordination and control of small apparatus. They exhibit a wide range of skills, from those who find great difficulty in controlling pencils and scissors to those who have developed satisfactory co-ordination and ability to use tools and writing utensils.
84. Children run, jump and hop with good balance and control. They show satisfactory awareness of space and usually manage to play without bumping into each other. Physical education lessons in the hall provide satisfactory opportunities to develop their skills of manipulating a range of small apparatus. Their aim when sliding a quoit across the floor is good.

Children also have the opportunity of using the adventure playground next to the classroom each day, which they enjoy greatly and this further develops their agility, confidence and balance. There are no large wheeled toys at present to promote their control and spacial awareness, but an additional area for outside play is planned, which will provide a safe area for such toys to be used.

85. The provision for children in the Foundation Stage is good. The teacher and learning assistant work well together and provide a stimulating environment in which children make a good start to their learning.

## ENGLISH

86. Results from the 2000 National Curriculum tests for pupils aged 11, show that this group of pupils made very good progress over the last four years and attained average standards when compared to all schools. When compared to similar schools, pupils' attainment was well above average. The proportion achieving the higher Level 5 was average when compared to similar schools. These results show a significant improvement since the last inspection. Evidence from this inspection indicates that the present Year 6 cohort has made good overall progress. The pupils have average attainment and are in line to meet the school's target of 71 per cent of the pupils reaching the expected level. The 2000 National Curriculum tests for seven year old pupils show a dramatic improvement on the previous year, with pupils attaining well above average results when compared to all schools and very high results when compared to similar schools, being in the top five per cent of such schools. Particularly noticeable was the well above average of pupils who gained the higher Level 3. Inspection evidence indicates that the present group of seven year olds, which has a much higher proportion of pupils with special educational needs than the previous year, has average attainment and has made good overall progress since they joined the school.
87. In Key Stage 1 pupils' skills in speaking and listening are well developed. For instance, in a lesson exploring the significance of Remembrance Sunday, Year 2 pupils spoke with confidence and fluency, using well-chosen anecdotal detail from family experiences. In oral sessions, pupils listen carefully to each other's contributions and choose appropriate vocabulary when making responses to teachers' questions. Their standards of reading are satisfactory for their age and ability. In group reading, they show understanding by stressing words or phrases, particularly in humorous passages. They are above average in the enthusiasm and knowledge they show about choices of books. They explain not only the differences between simple forms of writing, such as a list, rhymes or a story for instance, but also describe their preferences. They also explain the use of various techniques for finding out about the meaning or spelling of words. Pupils remember details of stories and the higher-attaining read them aloud with good intonation and fluency. Pupils' writing in Key Stage 1 is below average overall. However, pupils are beginning to develop their sentences into simple sequences, conveying narrative or description. Year 2, when writing about guinea pig facts, show they are successfully beginning to explore other forms of writing.
88. Pupils in Key Stage 2 are good listeners and speakers, making good use of what they hear in oral sessions. For instance, Year 6 pupils, in a lesson on the origin of English words, explained confidently and convincingly the deductions they had made as a result of the discussion. Many pupils are also beginning to adapt their choice of vocabulary and style according to the purpose of the discussion. Most pupils read their own work clearly and with intonation that takes account of their audience. When reading printed text, pupils' standards are mainly satisfactory, although a significant proportion lack fluency, expression and an enthusiasm for reading. In discussions they show a sound understanding of significant ideas and themes of fiction texts, whilst the higher-attaining pupils use inferential skills well to explain why characters act as they do. Most pupils' independent reading is sufficiently developed for them to extract information from non-fiction and reference works. For example, Year 3 pupils use their alphabetical skills well to enable them to find words quickly in dictionaries, whilst Year 6 pupils were able to use the library's classification system efficiently.
89. Pupils' writing in Key Stage 2 is competently developed, although the quality of the oldest pupils' writing is below average with their use of complex sentences and imaginative language underdeveloped. Pupils' writing has been correctly identified as a weakness by the school and has been included in this year's improvement plan. However, whilst pupils write for a wide range of different purposes, for example they write play scripts in Year 5 and practise newspaper

headlines and captions in Year 4, teachers do not plan sufficiently for the development of pupils' writing skills in other subjects.

Pupils are also developing judgements over using language to capture attention and whether to use standard or colloquial forms of English. This was seen, for instance, in a poem from Year 6 beginning "Crikey, it's Christmas time!" and in a letter in Year 3, "I'm having the time of my life". Pupils' acquisition of the technical aspects of writing is adequate, in the understanding of advanced punctuation such as apostrophes and speech marks. Spelling is generally sound with pupils using good phonic skills for polysyllabic words. Generally, the oldest do not consistently aim high enough in their presentation of work so that, for example, redrafting is often not significantly better than the original.

90. The quality of teaching across the school is broadly satisfactory with some strengths observed in each key stage. Teachers plan their lessons thoroughly, using good judgement over the timing of changes in direction. They convey the aims of the lesson effectively to pupils, using appropriate language so that instructions are clear to the pupils. Resources used in class are appropriate and in good condition. These include ready access by pupils to computer programs which help pupils to reinforce spelling and extend vocabulary and sentence structure. Teachers generally organise the work of their classroom assistants to have a positive effect and influence on pupils' work, especially those with special educational needs. However, in some lessons not enough use is made of the skills of the classroom assistants whilst the teacher is addressing the whole class.
91. Links with the National Curriculum are sound, although drama is an important omission from the scheme of work for listening and speaking. However, teachers clearly appreciate the structure imposed by the National Literacy Strategy but some are not always successful in balancing the proportion of the hour's elements against time available. In Key Stage 1, direct teaching to the whole class is good. A strong feature of guided reading is when teachers insist that pupils pay most attention to more difficult words and successfully consolidate their knowledge of the text by using relevant and challenging questioning. In Key Stage 2, a good aspect is that the range of texts chosen, including non-fiction, is systematically expanded. In both key stages, teachers make effective use of incidental examples of pupils' work arising during lessons to illustrate points already made and so consolidate their learning.
92. Teachers make good use of opportunities to assess pupils' learning in oral sessions when their questions are well distributed and matched to the ability of pupils, including those with special educational needs. However, some are less successful at attending to individuals when the whole class is writing. Few teachers were observed giving older pupils the chance to improve by assessing their own or others' work in a formal way. Teachers' marking of written work is regular and up to date. Not all, however, employ elements of good practice, such as making evaluative comments aimed at helping pupils improve. Sometimes only praise and encouragement are given, even at the end of Key Stage 2. In both key stages teachers select good examples of work for display. In Key Stage 1 they are careful to include some from all the pupils at some stage.
93. Pupils, including those with special educational needs, have mostly positive attitudes to work, which help them make good overall progress. Teachers encourage them to collaborate with each other from an early age so that it becomes an informal but productive habit. All pupils are quick and willing participants in oral sessions, which older ones use effectively to develop their own ideas and conclusions. As they move up the school they begin to ask more searching questions, not just to assist the task in hand but to increase the scope of their knowledge. Most co-operate in classroom conventions such as waiting in turn and are well organised so that lessons can proceed at an uninterrupted pace. Pupils throughout the school are able to sustain their concentration appropriately over periods of time.
94. The planned development of pupils' literacy skills in other subjects has not yet been fully addressed. There are missed opportunities for pupils to develop their literacy skills across the curriculum, particularly in religious education, science and history. There is, however, some good practice; for example in science in Year 5, pupils describe their investigations and findings in their own words.
95. The subject is organised through a whole-school policy, which is being further developed by the newly appointed English co-ordinator to promote language across the curriculum in Key Stage 1 and introduce a whole-school approach to elements such as handwriting. The policy's aims are

clearly stated and the main aspects, including formal skills, are covered in good proportion. The principles and rationale for assessments are clearly set out, together with the annual timetables. National Curriculum links are made well in each attainment target although an important omission is that of drama.

The previous co-ordinator had worked successfully to develop strong progression and good teaching strategies by observing teaching and learning in the classes and setting targets for improvements. This had a very positive effect on standards. Resources are adequate in Key Stage 2 but in Key Stage 1 the choice of guided reading books needs extending. Classrooms have sufficient and accessible storage. Overhead projectors, tape recorders and video players are in good supply and used appropriately to develop pupils' skills. The policy states that resourcing needs will be discussed at regular senior management team meetings and English as a curriculum subject is reviewed annually by the school.

## **MATHEMATICS**

96. In the 2000 National Curriculum tests for pupils aged 11, pupils' attainment was below the national average but average when compared to similar schools. However, the proportion of pupils achieving the higher Level 5 was above average when compared to similar schools. These results show a decline on the 1999 National Curriculum test results but show a big improvement on the results when the school was last inspected. Statistics show that this group of pupils made good overall progress in Key Stage 2. Inspection evidence indicates that the present Year 6 group of pupils has average attainment and is in line to meet the school's target of 74 per cent of pupils reaching the expected level. The 2000 National Curriculum tests for seven year old pupils show a dramatic improvement on the previous year, with pupils attaining very high results when compared to national averages and to similar schools. This means that the results were in the top five per cent of the country. Particularly noticeable was the very high percentage of pupils who gained the higher Level 3. Inspection evidence indicates that the present group of seven year olds, who have a higher proportion of pupils on the special educational needs register, has average attainment in mathematics and has made good overall progress since they joined the school.
97. By the age of 11, pupils have good skills in addition, subtraction and multiplication, although their division skills are less well developed. Pupils have a good understanding of place value and use this knowledge well in their decimal and percentage work. Higher-achieving pupils have particularly good knowledge of tables and this impacts positively on standards in their mental work. However, the knowledge of tables amongst the lower-achieving pupils is not well developed and this slows their manipulation of numbers both orally and written. Pupils have satisfactory understanding of probability and of handling data. Pupils make increasing use of computer programs in numeracy lessons; for example, they used a data-handling program effectively to show the development of square numbers. Pupils have satisfactory skills in mathematics investigations but there are too few opportunities for investigative work and this limits their opportunities to use and develop their mathematical thinking in practical situations. The Year 6 pupils are taught in groups based on ability for mathematics with the pupils with special educational needs working in the Year 5 class; here they are suitably challenged and make good overall progress.
98. Pupils make good overall progress as they move through the school because the curriculum is appropriate to the pupils' needs and teachers plan the work carefully. The new target-setting process that is employed by all teachers is leading to a clear focus on the development of pupils' skills. Year 1 pupils form their numbers well and are developing good knowledge of different three-dimensional shapes. This is well built on in Year 2, where pupils measure accurately using centimetres and have a satisfactory understanding of place value to two digits. These pupils are also making clear progress in the way in which they lay out their mathematical work. Pupils make good progress overall in Year 3, particularly in their number work and in their understanding of digital and analogue time. However, sometimes pupils make unsatisfactory progress, when the work set does not challenge them appropriately and does not build on their previous understanding. Pupils are developing satisfactory number skills in Year 4 and use these well in their mental work. For example, pupils know how to add nine and 99 in their heads. They have a good understanding of fractions and have good skills in the measurement and calculation of perimeter. However, the progress of some pupils is slowed due to low output of work, which means that the pupils do not always consolidate the skills taught in lessons. The quality of some pupils' work is untidy, particularly when this involves worksheets.

Presentation dramatically improves in Year 5, where the higher-attaining pupils who work with Year 6 as part of the setting arrangement are making particularly good progress. Year 5 pupils have good strategies for manipulating numbers, both orally and on paper, and have a good knowledge of the relationship between decimals and percentages. They are also helped in their progress by the clear targets that are set for them in the front of their books and by the good quality marking which clearly indicates what pupils need to do to improve.

99. Pupils enjoy their lessons and generally work hard to improve. Pupils' attitude to work varies in the Year 3 class due to the different expectations of the two part-time teachers. Pupils' behaviour is generally good and pupils quickly settle to work. Pupils work best when teachers impose strict time limits, such as in Year 6, and this ensures that pupils complete an appropriate amount of work to practise the new skills they have learnt. Pupils maintain good concentration but when the apparatus is not good quality, such as in the Year 3 lesson on time, pupils lose interest and become careless. Pupils show good collaborative skills when this is planned for and, in Year 5, pupils became deeply involved in the tactics of a challenging number game.
100. The quality of teaching is satisfactory overall and ranges from good to poor. The great majority of teachers have good subject knowledge and use this well in their questioning of pupils and when assessing their understanding. High expectations and good pace to learning are the norm in the two top classes and this is resulting in pupils of all abilities making good progress. The good relationships in the classes encourage pupils to respond well to their teachers' questioning and gives them confidence to ask for help when required. However, teachers sometimes rely too heavily on pupils asking for help rather than assessing a pupil's understanding as they move round the class whilst pupils are working. Teachers make satisfactory use of the plenary at the end of lessons but not all of them use it as an opportunity to assess what pupils have learnt so that they understand what needs to be revised in the next lesson. However, teachers generally evaluate each lesson and, when there are clear indications that pupils have not understood what the teacher wanted them to learn, then this is revisited the next day. This was clearly evident when Year 4 pupils revised analogue time. The marking of pupils' work varies as do teachers' expectations of presentation. Only in Year 5 in Key Stage 2, are there clear expectations laid down by the teacher of how work should be set out; pupils who do not follow the expected code are clearly reminded when the work is marked. In too many of the books untidy work is allowed to continue. The school homework policy is used consistently through the classes and makes a satisfactory contribution to pupils' learning.
101. The National Numeracy Strategy has been successfully introduced through the classes. However, the school does not have enough good quality resources in some areas and this has a detrimental effect on pupils' understanding of some processes. For example, the absence of a geared clock in the initial analogue time lesson for Year 3 pupils, made it difficult for some to see the relationship between the movement of the two hands. Resourcing is also made more difficult because of the small central storage area, which is often blocked by larger equipment. The termly planning is clear and the weekly and daily planning give a clear indication of what the pupils are to learn in the lesson. However, not all teachers share these learning objectives with their pupils at the beginning of a lesson or revisit them during the plenary to ensure that all pupils have a clear understanding of what they should have learnt.
102. The school makes good use of the end of key stage National Curriculum tests to identify areas of strengths and weaknesses. For example, multiplication and interpretation of data were weaknesses in last year's Year 6 group of pupils and these are being addressed with the present pupils through a greater emphasis on these aspects when they are taught. The school makes good use of the non-statutory tests for assessing pupils' progress in Years 3, 4 and 5. However, a present weakness is that these tests are not analysed for strengths and weaknesses so that these can be addressed in subsequent years. The planned introduction of half-termly assessments is a good initiative and should enable teachers to monitor pupils' progress more carefully and address areas of weakness on an ongoing basis.
103. The planned development of pupils' numeracy skills in other subjects has not yet been fully addressed. There is, however, evidence of the use of pupils' numeracy skills in ICT, science, history and design and technology. When this happens it creates good opportunities for pupils to use and apply their mathematical knowledge.

## SCIENCE

104. Standards at Key Stage 2 have improved considerably since the previous inspection when they were very low. Standards at Key Stage 1 have also improved well. In the most recent end of Key Stage 1 National Curriculum tests, the teacher's assessment showed a higher than average proportion of pupils to have achieved the expected Level 2, and a well above average proportion of pupils achieved the higher standard of Level 3.

At Key Stage 2, in the 2000 National Curriculum tests, standards were below the national average when compared to all schools but were average when compared to similar schools. The proportion of pupils achieving the higher Level 5 was similar to that found nationally. The school is successfully focusing on the attainment of pupils with the potential of high standards and enabling them to succeed.

105. During the inspection, however, standards at the end of Key Stage 1 were judged below those expected. There is a small but significant proportion of pupils with behavioural problems in the class and this has a negative impact on their learning and that of other pupils. There is insufficient recorded evidence of what they know and have learnt, and so judgements were gained from the lesson observed and by talking to pupils. From discussion with pupils in Year 2, it could be seen that whilst many have a satisfactory range of knowledge, a significant proportion of pupils do not. Pupils have a satisfactory understanding of the effect of magnets on other materials, recognising that metal is usually attracted to magnets, whereas wood, plastic and glass are not. They use simple classifications to sort living things into animals, birds, amphibians and fish. Pupils' recording skills are poor and they do not understand the need for making a test fair so that they can make simple judgements in their investigations. They recognise that pushing or pulling will move objects, but pupils have very little concept of how to find out what factors affect the way that toy cars move.

106. Last year, pupils in Key Stage 1 including those with special educational needs, made very good progress in their learning, but it is not as effective this year. Pupils in Reception make a good start in their learning and in Year 1 pupils continue to make satisfactory progress. However in Year 2 this year, pupils are not at present learning successfully and their progress is limited due to their lack of concentration and insufficient application to their tasks.

107. Standards at Key Stage 2, during the inspection were judged below those expected due to the small, but significant, proportion of pupils who are not working at the expected level for their age. Most pupils have a satisfactory range of knowledge. They explain how to separate materials by filtration and evaporation, have a growing understanding of how insulation is used to maintain heat, and understand the impact of conductors and insulators in an electric circuit. Higher-attaining pupils explain how plants use photosynthesis to make food in their leaves and give off oxygen, and they use their scientific knowledge appropriately to solve simple problems. Pupils record their findings satisfactorily, but many are not yet able to make hypotheses and suggest reasons for their results.

108. Pupils in Key Stage 2 make generally good progress in their learning, building their knowledge and understanding effectively from year to year. In Year 3, pupils have a good understanding of how the different parts of a plant enable it to grow. In Year 4, pupils satisfactorily build on their knowledge of simple circuits to predict the effect of using additional bulbs, and spot problems in circuits that will prevent the bulb from working. By Year 5, pupils' investigative skills are developing satisfactorily and they have a good understanding of the need to ensure that their tests are fair by controlling the variables. They make simple measurements and explain the process and results of their investigations. By Year 6, pupils use appropriate apparatus, such as Newton gauges to test the stretch in different materials, and display their results on tables and graphs. Whilst the work provided challenges the potentially higher-attaining pupils, other pupils who have more difficulty understanding concepts are not always sufficiently supported and they make less progress than the rest of the class. For example, pupils of all abilities in Year 6 had a good understanding of which materials exhibited the greatest flexibility when they tested the force that was required to stretch them. They were not successful, however, in recording their findings as a line graph and interrogating their results in this format because they did not have the support they needed to enable them to draw the graphs.

109. Pupils enjoy science and usually show good levels of interest and concentration. However, when the purpose of their task is not clear or they are given insufficient support, their attention wanes and they show less motivation to learn. They respond well to stimulating ideas and work well together sharing ideas. Pupils in Year 3 were particularly well motivated when working with a

visitor from the local council who provided small computers on which to record their ideas about the impact of rubbish on plants.

110. Overall the quality of teaching in the school this term is satisfactory which has resulted in pupils making overall satisfactory progress in their lessons. Over the last few years, pupils have made very good progress through the school, but there have been some changes in staff and during the inspection there was no evidence of a high level of teaching. In the lessons observed, teaching ranged from good to unsatisfactory. In the most effective lessons there were clear aims for the pupils' learning, and lessons were well structured so that pupils' knowledge and skills were built upon systematically. This was evident in the lessons in Year 3 on how plants grow. Pupils have good recall of the information gained in lessons when the teaching is effective. For example, pupils in Year 5 developed a good understanding of how light bounces off objects when the teacher threw a ball at the blackboard as a demonstration. They used this information to explain why they had to be careful in their experiment on the reflective qualities of different materials. Pupils explained that they had to keep a torch in the same position, so the light angle was constant, if they wanted reliable results.
111. Teachers through the school generally use investigations effectively for pupils to gain new knowledge, but the recording of their findings is of an inconsistent standard, and pupils' literacy skills are not sufficiently promoted in some classes. In Year 5 there are high expectations for pupils to record their experiments using an appropriate format that is developed satisfactorily through the school. This expectation is not as effectively maintained in Year 6. Pupils' numeracy skills are used satisfactorily in science to take measurements and record findings in the form of tables and graphs. ICT, however, is not sufficiently used to develop pupils' skills, to carry out research or to record findings.
112. The curriculum for science is appropriately broad and balanced and is now based on the scheme of work produced by the Qualifications and Curriculum Authority. There was concern that certain subjects of the curriculum were being repeated unnecessarily whilst other were lacking in effective development. If implemented consistently through the school the new scheme of work should ensure that pupils' knowledge and skills are developed systematically through the school.
113. The subject has been successfully led and managed by the co-ordinator who has a satisfactory appreciation of the quality of teaching and pupils' learning through the school. Various forms of monitoring are used appropriately and data from tests are being used effectively to identify weaknesses and develop strategies for improvement. Teachers' subject knowledge has been improved through focused training and resources improved to match the needs of the new scheme of work. Procedures for assessing pupils' attainment are satisfactory, but not all teachers are sufficiently secure about the levels pupils are achieving and work is not always sufficiently well matched to their age and previous learning.

## **ART AND DESIGN**

114. Standards in art have declined since the previous report because much of the teachers' attention has been given, appropriately, to raising standards in English, mathematics and science. At the present inspection, pupils' standards are below those expected for their age and their progress in acquiring skills and knowledge are generally unsatisfactory through the school. It is, however, an improving picture and pupils in Years 3,4 and 5 have had the benefit of working with a classroom assistant who has good expertise, which is having a positive impact on their progress and learning.
115. There is a limited range of pupils' artwork around the school. Opportunities provided at present are rather limited, especially for creating three-dimensional art, such as sculpture. Pupils' techniques are also fairly limited, and the acquisition of skills, such as colour mixing to provide a range of tones, or developing the ability to use line and shade in their drawings, or the skills of working in a range of media, are unsatisfactory. Pupils' artwork is rather immature, as they have had insufficient opportunities to develop their observational skills, which would in turn help to promote their own style and ability.

116. It was possible to see only one lesson during the inspection and so judgements are also based on a scrutiny of pupils' work and on the teachers' planning. The quality of teaching is unsatisfactory overall. Most teachers lack the confidence and experience to promote pupils' knowledge and skills effectively. However, the good expertise of one of the classroom assistants has introduced pupils in Key Stage 2, particularly those in Year 5, to an increasing range of techniques and materials. Her knowledge and enthusiasm for art have promoted their learning of a variety of techniques and an awareness of the different ways they can be used. Consequently the pupils' imagination and skills are improving.

It has also resulted in the development of pupils' good attitudes to work. They share ideas effectively, concentrate well and are improving the levels of creativity in their work. The introduction of sketchbooks in Key Stage 2 has also been a positive measure and pupils are starting to use them to experiment and plan out their ideas.

117. A positive trend through the school is the linking of pupils' art work with other areas of learning, such as mathematics, history and religious education. However, this has not resulted in the promotion of pupils' skills and their work is used more as illustrations and less as a personal expression and an opportunity to develop learning in art. The work of artists is used satisfactorily to extend pupils' awareness of a range of styles but there are insufficient examples from non-western traditions to give them a good appreciation of the art of other cultures.
118. There has been insufficient leadership provided in the development of art and teachers' subject knowledge has not been sufficiently improved in order to give guidance to pupils. The co-ordinator provides support for staff but there has been very little monitoring of pupils' work to ensure effective progress is being made. There are no formal assessment procedures and most teachers do not monitor pupils' learning against agreed criteria. This term the school has adopted a scheme of work produced by the Qualifications and Curriculum Authority, which will support teachers in providing a broad and balanced curriculum, but weaknesses in the range of resources will need to be improved if the full potential of pupils' art is to be achieved.

## **DESIGN AND TECHNOLOGY**

119. During the inspection only one lesson was observed. Judgements are based on discussion with pupils and teachers and the work that pupils have completed since the beginning of the academic year. Based on this evidence, attainment at the end of both key stages is in line with national expectations, with pupils making overall satisfactory progress as they move through the years. Standards have remained the same as reported at the time of the last inspection but opportunities for food technology have improved with the development of a small kitchen area.
120. By the age of 11, pupils have a sound understanding of the importance of design and a satisfactory working knowledge of a range of materials. They understand the importance of the correct choice of materials for a specific purpose and show a good understanding of how materials can be strengthened by reshaping. Pupils have sound designing skills but their understanding of the relevance of the evaluation of finished products is still comparatively underdeveloped. Higher-attaining pupils show good making skills when constructing a solar-powered model windmill.
121. Pupils in Key Stage 1 develop a range of cutting and joining skills and use these appropriately in their work, such as when they make moving parts for teddy bears. Pupils are developing a good understanding of different types of levers. The sliding levers, used to animate creatures such as crocodiles, clearly demonstrate pupils' understanding of the lever principle and the importance of proportion. By the end of the key stage pupils have a sound understanding of joining and combining materials, clearly shown in their work on Joseph's coat as part of their religious education. Pupils make satisfactory progress with their food technology. Year 5 particularly enjoyed the element on making their own bread after tasting different varieties. There are some good links between the subject and mathematics when pupils use accurate cutting and scoring skills in Year 4 when making nets for their cubes.
122. In the one lesson observed teaching was satisfactory, with the teacher showing sound subject knowledge. The lesson was well planned and provided appropriate challenge to pupils, including those with special educational needs. The school has a satisfactory range of materials for the subject, although pupils do not use wood often enough in the making process. The range and quality of tools, however, is unsatisfactory.

123. No formal recording of the development of pupils' skills is made and infrequent photographic evidence collected through the years does not give a clear indication of a year group's progress. As such, new teachers have very limited knowledge to ensure they build on pupils' individual strengths and address their weaknesses.

## **GEOGRAPHY**

124. Opportunities to observe geography lessons during the inspection were limited to one in Key Stage 2. However, the scrutiny of work in Key Stage 2 and discussions with pupils, teachers and the co-ordinator indicate that standards in geography overall are satisfactory and have been maintained since the last inspection. Pupils at the beginning of Key Stage 2 demonstrate good local knowledge in work on maps, linked to written recording and using scales, which suggests adequate foundation skills are established in the lower part of the school. By the end of the key stage pupils are working at nationally expected levels. For instance, Year 6 pupils show their knowledge and understanding of natural processes on the land in their notes and oral explanations about the growth of rivers. In these they spontaneously used appropriate vocabulary such as 'meander', 'estuary', and 'sediment'. Pupils' questions, despite a tendency to move off the point, demonstrated their interest in the subject and were clearly aimed at improving their knowledge and ideas. Effective investigative skills were also seen in pupils' use of recording forms for their enquiry into erosion. There was too little evidence from pupils' work in Key Stage 1 to make a judgement about standards.
125. The quality of teaching is sound, although expectations might be higher, as shown by the over-praising of only average work and in the often poor standards of presentation accepted in pupils' books. Sketch maps, for instance, are often scrappy and inadequately labelled. However, teachers are sufficiently knowledgeable and plan their lessons thoroughly, building in appropriate work for pupils with special educational needs. They are supported by a whole-school policy, which covers a broad range of aspects and has useful guidance on attainment by year. However, the co-ordinator's influence is restricted to making suggestions on long-term planning by years and terms, so that individual teachers are left too much alone in deciding what to teach and how to approach topics. This hampers thorough coverage and continuity of the curriculum.
126. Resources for geography are sufficient and in good condition. They include suitable modern atlases, local maps in a variety of scales, good quality photographs and other artefacts such as rock samples. Worthwhile use is made of video and Internet material and of resources outside the school, such as the local museum or the White Cliffs Countryside Project.

## **HISTORY**

127. Pupils' attainment in both key stages is satisfactory, and in some areas, such as chronology, it is better than that. This attainment represents an improvement in Key Stage 2 since the last inspection when standards were judged to be below average. In Key Stage 1 pupils show their understanding and knowledge of people and events in history, as in a lesson exploring the significance of Remembrance Sunday when pupils spoke lucidly, using by way of illustration relevant anecdotal detail from family experiences. Pupils are also beginning to use different sources of information and appreciate how the past can be represented in various ways, through personal writing, pictures or artefacts. In Key Stage 2, pupils explain how things were different in the past, such as, for instance, the collection of water in Ancient Egypt. They begin to employ a critical approach to sources and understand the intentions behind different historical accounts. At the end of the key stage, pupils write short historical pieces. However, these are too often taken directly from textbooks; this denies the pupils the opportunity to show their own appreciation of events and characters in history using a combination of imagination and facts.
128. The quality of teaching is good and ranges from excellent to satisfactory. Teachers' planning is good, with clear objectives and anticipation of the needs of all pupils. Teachers incorporate sections at the beginning when they question pupils effectively with appropriately challenging questions to ensure that previous work has been well remembered and understood. New work is introduced at a good pace with tasks clearly described so that pupils can use their existing knowledge and skills to extend their learning. Teachers allow adequate time for plenary

sessions at the end of lessons in which pupils not only talk about what they had learned but also in the process make an assessment of their own efforts and results against those of others. Teachers choose a range of stimulating and appropriate resources including newspaper cuttings, documentary and dramatised videos and artefacts. In Key Stage 2 strategies used included simple role-play and, to illustrate the workings of democracy, a simple mock election.

129. Pupils' mostly positive attitudes and classroom behaviour are complemented by the easy but respectful relationship they have with teachers. These, and well-developed study skills such as using their own initiative in personal research, contribute to better than average progress being made in some age groups. Pupils listen critically to others' contributions in class to promote their own progress as, for example, in Year 5, when completing their own lists in a lesson on the difference between Ancient Greece and Sparta.
130. The history department has adopted the Qualifications and Curriculum Authority scheme of work, which is well suited to the needs of non-specialists. Teachers are pleased with the way it gives them confidence. The co-ordinator has recently reviewed the whole-school policy to incorporate topics fitted into termly periods of teaching time. This now applies to all years except Year 6, where history alternates with geography each half term. A strength of the curriculum is the good range of study units with an appropriate emphasis given to local studies. The overall planning acknowledges the abilities of all pupils and includes descriptions of attainment levels.
131. Resources for history are deficient in artefacts, a weakness noted in the last inspection report. However, topic work is supported through boxes prepared by the co-ordinator and books from the school library. Stocks supplied by the library service supplement these. Also, class visits take place to sites of the Dover Museum, such as the Roman Painted House. These are themed with a range of activities appropriate to the topic being studied. History is not part of the school improvement plan until 2002/3, which is too long to wait for a full evaluation of the new curriculum and its impact on pupils' attainment.

## **INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY**

132. Pupils' attainment by the ages of seven and 11 are in line with national expectations. Standards have been maintained in Key Stage 1 since the last inspection but have improved in Key Stage 2 due mainly to the development of teachers' skills and subject knowledge and the acquisition of new programs and computers.
133. By the age of 11, pupils have good word processing skills and show a good awareness of audience, clearly shown in the poem *Blast into the Past*. Pupils use ICT well to display findings of their work, such as when they investigate square numbers. They retrieve information confidently from CD-ROMs to support and supplement their projects, such as in their geography work on rivers. Access to the Internet is limited because only one computer is at present linked but some pupils have a good understanding of how to access information from this medium and also how to use the school's digital camera to import pictures into their texts. Pupils' data-handling skills are good. They understand how to create formulae and use this knowledge well; for example, they compare different distributions of pocket money. Year 6 pupils benefit from visiting the computer suite of a local special school where they have access to individual computers and are helped by their teacher and two well-qualified assistants. The skills learnt during these sessions are then well integrated and built on in lessons during the following week, such as when they create a spreadsheet to record Fibonacci numbers as part of their mathematics work. Interested pupils also benefit from attending the extra-curricular computer club, which is taken by the co-ordinator. Pupils make satisfactory progress in their work on control, monitoring and modelling.
134. Through the school, pupils make overall satisfactory progress in the subject. Pupils in Key Stage 1 benefit from their computer suite of six computers. These pupils build well on the work of the Foundation Stage. They have good confidence with computers and use a word processing program successfully to write their own name and import pictures from 'clipart'. Good use is made of this program in literacy lessons when pupils write their own consonant-vowel-consonant words. There are good links with mathematics when pupils use a data-handling program to draw graphs of the different hair and eye colours of members of the class.

ICT work is satisfactorily integrated into the work of Year 2 when pupils use a CD-ROM to read different Bible stories and design their own town as part of their geography topic. Throughout Key Stage 2 pupils make satisfactory progress in all aspects of the subject. Year 3 pupils benefit when higher-achieving peers use the Internet to find information for their Egyptian topic and Year 4 pupils show a good awareness of audience in their autumn poem display. Year 5 pupils make very good use of a data-handling program. This was evident in their good quality two-dimensional and three-dimensional graphs to indicate distances between Dover and major destinations in the United Kingdom.

135. Pupils enjoy using computers and have a good awareness of how they can help in their everyday work. They are enthusiastic during lessons and use computers successfully to enhance the quality of their work. They show good collaborative skills and support each other sensitively. This was particularly evident when Year 6 higher-achieving pupils worked with pupils with special educational needs.
136. Only one lesson was observed where ICT skills were taught but in all the work observed during the week, teachers have at least satisfactory subject knowledge which they use well to develop pupils' skills. ICT is better integrated into the curriculum than at the time of the last inspection and pupils in Key Stage 1 are now benefiting from reliable computers and an improved range of programs. A new scheme of work is being developed by the co-ordinator but the old scheme still ensures that all elements of the subject are planned. The school has been let down by some faulty networking in Key Stage 2, so the further development of the subject has been slowed. Six new computers, with a full range of programs, are shortly to be delivered to the school and these will further improve the range of available programs to support the curriculum. Since the last inspection, all teachers have undertaken computer training, together with some members of the classroom support staff. This has had a significant impact on the way that ICT is now used in the classrooms.

## MUSIC

137. During the inspection only two lessons were observed. Judgements are based on these lessons, extra-curricular activities and assemblies. Based on this evidence, pupils' attainment is in line with national expectations in Key Stage 1, but below national expectations in Key Stage 2. At the last inspection no judgement was made due to insufficient evidence.
138. By the age of 11, pupils' singing is below average. Their diction is not clear, they do not control pitch well and there is little sense of phrase or musical expression. Much of this is due to the fact that a majority of the pupils' singing is unaccompanied and, as a result, pitch and tempo are not sustained. However, when pupils are accompanied, such as in the weekly whole-school assembly, songs are sung more confidently although the singing lacks sensitivity. Pupils' composing and appraising skills are below average because these are not practised enough as part of the music curriculum. All Key Stage 2 teachers are responsible for their class music lessons but the majority do not have sufficient subject knowledge to develop the pupils' musical skills. Opportunities are also missed for developing pupils' appraisal skills, when the music for assemblies is simply used for background music and does not become an integral part of the development of pupils' overall musical awareness. Higher-achieving pupils, who are members of the recorder club, reach a satisfactory standard of playing and their talents are used well by the school for regular assemblies and special occasions.
139. In Key Stage 1, pupils are developing satisfactory listening skills and show a clear understanding of the difference between long and short sounds, with higher-achieving pupils following simple notation to make sequences. Pupils have above average singing skills due to the regular accompanied singing that they take part in during assemblies and the good subject knowledge of the co-ordinator who now teaches in Key Stage 1. The development of pupils' music skills slows in Key Stage 2 and is unsatisfactory in all elements of the subject.
140. Younger pupils enjoy music and particularly singing together. This is not so with the older pupils, a significant minority of whom do not join in the singing during assemblies and show disinterest. However, pupils do listen appropriately to their peers when they play their recorders in assemblies. Pupils' behaviour in lessons is only satisfactory and sometimes unsatisfactory. Much of this is because the teachers do not challenge the pupils with interesting work that is at the appropriate level.

141. The school's scheme of work is based on the national guidelines. The school has not yet decided how it is going to develop the teaching of music through the school. There is enough teacher expertise in Key Stage 1 to ensure that all elements of the National Curriculum are successfully taught, but in Key Stage 2 this is not the case. The school is considering the employment of a part-time specialist music teacher to work with Key Stage 2 pupils but will rightly not make a decision until after consultation with the local authority music inspector. The school's music resources are satisfactory overall, although there are not enough tuned percussion instruments nor enough recorded music reflecting different cultural traditions.

## **PHYSICAL EDUCATION**

142. Pupils' attainment at the end of both key stages is similar to that at the last inspection when it was in line with national expectations. All pupils are well integrated in the areas of activity and no significant differences were seen in the levels of attainment between boys and girls.
143. At Key Stage 1, pupils work at a sound level of competency, not only in exploring basic skills but also in combining them in different ways to form sequences which they remember and perform. For example, pupils in Year 1 were able to present a series of actions such as walking and crawling in different ways whilst balancing on a bench and completing the sequence with a forward roll. Pupils also know the conventions of the subject, for example the importance of consistently-controlled exertion in warm-up activities and the basic rules of safety, not only in exercises but also in using apparatus.
144. At Key Stage 2, some pupils have above average control and fluency when performing their sequences in gymnastics. Their ability to judge others' performances and so improve their own is well developed. For example, in a Year 5 dance lesson, pupils in groups were seen successfully developing and improving rhythmical floor movements having appraised other groups' efforts. Pupils understand the effect of exercise on their bodies and how they can improve their stamina and strength. They have generally good knowledge of health issues and they know what they should and should not attempt in gymnastics. In dance and team games they acquire understanding of the interaction of groups, the use of space and the importance of co-ordination. In swimming, over half of the pupils can swim 25 metres by the end of Year 4.
145. No teachers are specialists in the subject but they take care to plan lessons with activities designed to promote a good balance of skills and understanding matched to pupils' physical development and abilities. They give comprehensive instructions, anticipating questions and explaining the reasons for an activity and how it might develop. They emphasise health and safety issues, for example by always including warm-up and warm-down exercises and by being extremely careful how pupils handle apparatus. Lessons proceed at a good pace and opportunities for assessment by teachers and by pupils of themselves are well judged. Differentiation is mainly by outcome, although teachers show sensitive awareness of what are appropriate challenges for all pupils. Extended periods of inactivity seldom occur. Lessons often end with a summing up by the teacher and a controlled departure.
146. Pupils' positive attitudes significantly contribute to the good progress they make in the subject. They clearly enjoy the lessons and want to contribute their own ideas in sensible ways. They listen well to what their teachers are saying and respond quickly but in an orderly way to instructions. Most pupils are consistently enthusiastic and energetic in a wide variety of activities. They are happy to collaborate with each other when they discuss the realistic possibilities of their actions.
147. The whole-school policy for the subject is designed for the non-specialist teacher and contains guidance on what should be included in all lessons. The co-ordinator leads the subject well and is improving the scope of teachers' planning to include half-termly units and a set of descriptive bullet points to assess the various levels of attainment. The school has also adopted elements of the nationally approved scheme of work. Curriculum time allocated is adequate and resources for all activities are sufficient and in satisfactory condition. Access to fixed apparatus in the hall is good and the storage of moveable equipment, such as benches and mats, is convenient.

148. Facilities are satisfactory although the school augments its own accommodation by using the swimming pool at the town sports centre. Year 6 also use the specialist provision at a nearby special school. The hall itself is well proportioned and large enough for all but the team games of the oldest children. These can take place either on the field or on the hard playground. Changing facilities have not been improved since the last report but the co-ordinator does not feel this is an immediate issue and it did not appear to be so during the inspection.

## RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

149. Standards have declined since the previous inspection. This is due in part to the greater emphasis given to raising standards in English, mathematics and science and partly because the school has been waiting for the new locally agreed syllabus, which was introduced this term.
150. At the end of Key Stage 1, there is insufficient recorded evidence of what pupils know and understand and so evidence has been gained from the lesson observed and by talking to pupils. Pupils have a simple understanding that different people have different religions, such as the Hindus who celebrate Diwali but they are confused and believe this was a long time ago and nothing to do with today. They know that Jesus was born at Christmas, although one child in Year 2 thought he was born in the millennium. A group of pupils in Year 2 knew that Jesus was crucified but had no clear understanding of the link to Easter.
151. A similar confusion of ideas is found in Key Stage 2. Pupils in Year 6 had a satisfactory recall of the work they had covered in Year 5 and talked about how Muslims pray and about their holy place, the mosque. They did not believe, however, that there are any Muslims living in England. They recognised that other religions have a holy book, a leader to whom they pray and symbols that are of importance to them. They do not, however, recall the names of these things and have difficulty in remembering which artefacts are of importance to which religions. In discussion with a group of pupils in Year 6, there is evidence that the pupils did not realise the importance of respect for other people's beliefs and had no clear idea of how strong religious beliefs impact on peoples' lives.
152. Pupils do not have positive attitudes towards their learning in religious education and work in their books is often carelessly presented. Teachers in many classes do not promote pupils' interest or stimulate their curiosity and their expectations for pupils' work are unsatisfactory. This results in their lack of attention and, sometimes, their bad behaviour. The progress of pupils through the school is therefore inconsistent. Pupils with special educational needs are often expected to complete the same work as others in the class and although they may get satisfactory support to read the work sheets they are not enabled to develop their skills of independent working by using work of an appropriate level.
153. The quality of teaching is unsatisfactory overall, judged from the quality of pupils' work and the knowledge they have acquired. However, lessons observed during the inspection ranged from good to unsatisfactory. In the most effective lessons, the teachers stimulate pupils' interest resulting in good participation in the lesson, with subsequent good gains in their learning. In Year 5, pupils have acquired satisfactory knowledge of Islam and are developing an understanding of the similarities and differences between Christianity and Islam. In Year 3, effective teaching has resulted in pupils having developed a secure understanding of how symbols and signs convey messages and that some symbols help us to remember things, happenings and people. In other lessons pupils do not have clear understanding of what they are learning or why. Pupils in Year 6 could not explain why they had been planning a celebration evening. Teachers do not sufficiently ensure that the content of the lesson is appropriate for the pupils or that pupils are sufficiently well managed to maintain their interest and motivation. A general weakness in the teaching is the lack of opportunity to promote pupils' basic skills in literacy and ICT. Most pupils, irrespective of their reading ability, complete the same worksheets, which are often inappropriate. There is very little opportunity for pupils to record their own ideas or what they have learnt, which would stimulate their interest and help to consolidate their knowledge and understanding. In Year 2, there is no evidence of pupils' own recording. Satisfactory links with pupils' learning in art provided opportunities for pupils to create their own diva lamps as part of their work on Diwali. In Year 4, pupils produced their own Rangoli patterns, but this was mostly a colouring exercise.
154. The new locally agreed syllabus provides a clear structure of knowledge to be taught and opportunities for pupils to develop their skills of empathy so they grow to respect other peoples' ideas and religious beliefs and acquire their own values. However, during the inspection, no

- opportunities were made in assemblies to promote pupils' learning in religious education and very little opportunity was provided for pupils to reflect on what they had been thinking about.
155. There has been limited leadership given to the development of religious education in the last two years and very little monitoring of pupils' work to ensure effective progress is being made. There are no formal assessment procedures and most teachers do not monitor pupils' learning against agreed criteria.
156. The school has a range of artefacts and other resources, but needs more to support the areas of learning in the locally agreed syllabus. The school has close links with the local church to which regular visits are made and the vicar, who is also a school governor, visits the school regularly to provide an input into lessons.