

# **INSPECTION REPORT**

## **PELLS C OF E PRIMARY SCHOOL**

Landport, Nr Lewes

LEA area: East Sussex

Unique reference number: 114536

Headteacher: Mrs V Cobb

Reporting inspector: Keith Homewood  
21627

Dates of inspection: 2<sup>nd</sup> – 4<sup>th</sup> December 2002

Inspection number: 247473

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

© Crown copyright 2003

This report may be reproduced in whole or in part for non-commercial educational purposes, provided that all extracts quoted are reproduced verbatim without adaptation and on condition that the source and date thereof are stated.

Further copies of this report are obtainable from the school. Under the School Inspections Act 1996, the school must provide a copy of this report and/or its summary free of charge to certain categories of people. A charge not exceeding the full cost of reproduction may be made for any other copies supplied.

## INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Type of school: Infant and Junior  
School category: Voluntary Controlled  
Age range of pupils: 4 – 11 years  
Gender of pupils: Mixed

School address: Landport Road  
Lewes  
East Sussex  
Postcode: BN7 2SU  
Telephone number: 01273 476708  
Fax number: 01273 480488

Appropriate authority: The Governing Body  
Name of chair of governors: Dr M A Turner

Date of previous inspection: 3<sup>rd</sup> – 6<sup>th</sup> June 1997

## INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Team members			Subject responsibilities	Aspect responsibilities
21627	Keith Homewood	Registered inspector	Science Music Physical Education Religious Education English as an additional language	What sort of school is it? The school's results and achievements How well are pupils taught? How well is the school led and managed? What should the school do to improve further?
9588	Anthony West	Lay inspector		How well does the school care for its pupils? How well does the school work in partnership with parents?
30075	Mike Duggan	Team inspector	English Information and communication technology Geography History Special educational needs	Pupils' attitudes, behaviour and personal development
18498	Denise Morris	Team inspector	Foundation Stage Mathematics Art and design Design and technology Educational inclusion	How good are the curricular and other opportunities offered to pupils?

The inspection contractor was:

*PkR* Educational Consultants Ltd  
6 Sherman Road  
Bromley  
Kent  
BR1 2JH

Any concerns or complaints about the inspection or the report should be raised with the inspection contractor. Complaints that are not satisfactorily resolved by the contractor should be raised with OFSTED by writing to:

The Complaints Manager  
Inspection Quality Division  
The Office for Standards in Education  
Alexandra House  
33 Kingsway  
London WC2B 6SE

## REPORT CONTENTS

	Page
<b>PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT</b>	<b>7</b>
Information about the school	
How good the school is	
What the school does well	
What could be improved	
How the school has improved since its last inspection	
Standards	
Pupils' attitudes and values	
Teaching and learning	
Other aspects of the school	
How well the school is led and managed	
Parents' and carers' views of the school	
<b>PART B: COMMENTARY</b>	
<b>HOW HIGH ARE STANDARDS?</b>	<b>12</b>
The school's results and pupils' achievements	
Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development	
<b>HOW WELL ARE PUPILS TAUGHT?</b>	<b>16</b>
<b>HOW GOOD ARE THE CURRICULAR AND OTHER OPPORTUNITIES OFFERED TO PUPILS?</b>	<b>18</b>
<b>HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL CARE FOR ITS PUPILS?</b>	<b>21</b>
<b>HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL WORK IN PARTNERSHIP WITH PARENTS?</b>	<b>23</b>
<b>HOW WELL IS THE SCHOOL LED AND MANAGED?</b>	<b>24</b>
<b>WHAT SHOULD THE SCHOOL DO TO IMPROVE FURTHER?</b>	<b>28</b>
<b>PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS</b>	<b>29</b>
<b>PART D: THE STANDARDS AND QUALITY OF TEACHING IN AREAS OF THE CURRICULUM, SUBJECTS AND COURSES</b>	<b>34</b>

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

### **INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL**

Pells Church of England Primary School is a voluntary controlled school situated on the Landport estate in the borough of Lewes, East Sussex. It is smaller than other primary schools nationally. There are 131 pupils on roll, 59 boys and 72 girls aged four to 11, arranged in five mixed ability classes. The vast majority of pupils come from the local housing estate and join the school aged four. The area around the school is socially mixed. The percentage of pupils known to be eligible for free school meals is above the national average at 27 per cent. Attainment on entry is well below average. Thirty-eight per cent of pupils have special educational needs and 3 per cent have statements, which is above the national average. Most of these pupils have either severe learning difficulties or speech or communication difficulties. Four per cent of pupils come from ethnic minority groups and three per cent of pupils have English as an additional language. Two per cent of pupils come from the travelling community. Pupil mobility is high.

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

This is a good school with some very good and excellent features. Due to the school's small size and well below attainment on entry, standards attained in national tests at the age of seven and 11 vary from year to year. However, the trend over time is one of gradual rise and most pupils' achievements and progress are frequently good. Teaching is strength being at least satisfactory but mostly good or very good. The leadership of the headteacher is very good and key staff manage the school well. It is now an effective school providing good value for money.

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

- Teaching is good and sometimes very good.
- Progress made by pupils with special educational needs and those for whom English is an additional language is good.
- Pupils' attitudes to school, behaviour and relationships are good.
- Curriculum provision is good and provision for extra-curricular activities excellent.
- Equality of access and opportunity is very good, as is the provision for personal development.
- The leadership and management by the headteacher are very good and by senior staff good. The governing body fulfils its role well.
- There is an excellent shared commitment to improve and succeed.

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

- Standards of attainment, particularly in English, mathematics and science in both key stages.
- The continued development of basic skills as pupils move through the school to support the raising of standards in all subjects.
- The provision and structure of learning for pupils in the Foundation Stage to support independent learning and making choices.
- Using marking, daily assessments and evaluations more effectively to inform planning for the next stage of learning.
- The quality and quantity of work in pupils' books.

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

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

At the time of the last inspection in June 1997, the school had serious weaknesses. Since that time, the school has made good progress. Overall, standards have improved and most pupils are making good progress in relation to their capabilities. However, pupils' acquisition and use of basic skills are still weak and restrict a greater improvement in standards. The attitudes of pupils are now good and the school has been successful in improving pupils' behaviour. Teaching has improved and is good overall with no unsatisfactory teaching. Arrangements for the curriculum and assessment are now good but there are weaknesses in the use of assessment to guide daily planning and delivery for different age and

ability groups. The governing body has improved its effectiveness and fulfils its responsibilities well. The school is now housed in a bright and well-planned new building.

## STANDARDS

The table shows the standards achieved by pupils at the end of Year 6 based on average point scores in National Curriculum tests.

Performance in:	compared with			
	All schools			similar schools
	2000	2001	2002	2002
English	E*	E*	C	A
Mathematics	E*	E	E	D
Science	E*	E*	E	D

**Key**

well above average    A

above average        B

average                C

below average        D

well below average   E

very low               E\*

Results in the 2002 National Curriculum tests at the end of Year 6 showed that standards, based on average point scores, were in line with the national average in English but well below the national average in mathematics and science. All pupils with special educational needs attained the national average. Compared to similar schools the results were well above average in English and below in mathematics and science. These results were significantly better than those achieved in 2001 and the school's targets were exceeded. The trend over time is one of gradual rise. The school's Year 6 cohort in 2002 was small (12 pupils) and there were no high-attaining pupils so comparisons with other schools, average point scores and with different cohorts are not reliable. Overall, the school did well when compared to 2001 in that 92 per cent of pupils achieved Level 4 and above in English and science and 67 per cent achieved Level 4 and above in mathematics. However, fewer pupils than the national average achieved the higher Level 5 which affects the comparative results for the school.

Inspection evidence shows that standards in English, mathematics and science are below average by the end of Year 6 but pupils make good progress from a low starting point as they move through the school. They achieve average standards in art, history, music and physical education, and above the standards expected in religious education. Standards in information and communication technology, design and technology and geography are below expectations.

Results in the 2002 National Curriculum tests at the end of Year 2 showed that standards improved in reading and writing, although remaining well below the national average. They declined in mathematics and were in the lowest 5 per cent of schools nationally. This was due to a high proportion of pupils with special educational needs and a high mobility factor. Inspectors' evidence shows that standards are below average in reading and writing, well below average in mathematics and average in science. Pupils make good progress in English, science, art, music, physical education and religious education and satisfactory progress in all other subjects.

Most children when they start school achieve standards well below those expected of children of that age. They make satisfactory progress in the reception year but do not achieve the early learning goals of the Foundation Stage by the time they enter Year 1, except in personal, social and emotional development and in physical development.

Pupils with special educational needs and those with English as an additional language make good progress as they move through the school and achieve well. There are no noticeable differences in the attainment of boys and girls.



## PUPILS' ATTITUDES AND VALUES

Aspect	Comment
Attitudes to the school	Good. Pupils are keen to learn and enjoy being at school. They join in well with all school activities.
Behaviour, in and out of classrooms	Good. Pupils respond well to the school's rules and their behaviour in class and around the school is good.
Personal development and relationships	Good. The school is successful in fostering good relationships. Pupils respect the values, feelings and beliefs of others. They use their initiative well and enjoy responsibility.
Attendance	Unsatisfactory. The school does all it can to improve attendance. It has been successful in reducing unauthorised absences to below the national rate.

Most pupils are enthusiastic about school and are interested and involved in all on offer. Bullying is rare and is speedily and sensitively dealt with when it occurs. Pupils behave well in lessons and this supports their good progress and achievement. The school has good systems for monitoring and promoting attendance and behaviour. The same families consistently fail to comply with attendance regulations.

## TEACHING AND LEARNING

Teaching of pupils in:	Reception	Years 1 – 2	Years 3 – 6
Quality of teaching	Satisfactory	Good	Good

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

The overall quality of teaching is good or better. Teaching is satisfactory or better in all lessons. It was good in nearly 50 per cent the lessons seen and very good in a further 22 per cent of lessons. There is no unsatisfactory teaching. The quality of teaching in English is good and in mathematics it is satisfactory. The basic skills of literacy and numeracy are taught satisfactorily. Throughout the school most lessons are well planned with clearly expressed aims and learning intentions. The very best teaching is seen when teachers remain focused on these objectives and review with pupils their progress towards achieving them. Teachers have good subject knowledge which they use well to plan interesting lessons. However, not all teachers ensure that their planning identifies groups of pupils who will learn best with modified activities. The best teaching ensures that pupils maintain interest in their work and sustain concentration. There is a keen sense of urgency and time is used well. Not all teachers mark, assess and evaluate pupils' work consistently well.

The school meets the needs of pupils well. Relationships between pupils and teachers are good and this ensures a positive learning atmosphere. Overall, pupils' learning is good. When opportunities arise they work well independently, although basic skills are not used well by a significant number. Pupils with special educational needs and those from ethnic minority groups learn well. Well-trained support staff ensure that all pupils make progress and achieve well.

## OTHER ASPECTS OF THE SCHOOL

Aspect	Comment
The quality and range of the curriculum	Good overall. There is an excellent range of extra-curricular activities. In some lessons planning does not meet the needs of all pupils consistently well.
Provision for pupils with special educational needs	Very good. Pupils are included in all areas of the curriculum. Their individual education plans are focused and reviewed regularly and they make good progress.
Provision for pupils with English as an additional language	Very good. Good planning and effective use of resources enable pupils to be supported well. They make good progress.
Provision for pupils' personal, including spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	Very good. Provision for spiritual and cultural development is good. Provision for moral and social development is very good. Pupils respect differences between people's faiths and values.
How well the school cares for its pupils	Very good. Procedures for monitoring academic performance and personal development are good. Procedures for assessing pupils' attainment and progress are good but the use of assessment information to guide planning is inconsistent.

The school's partnership with parents is very good. The curriculum framework is good and there is good medium-term planning. The provision for under fives lacks opportunities for developing independence and choice. Links with the local community are strong. Links with a local Beacon school and a local primary school are being used positively to help to raise standards and improve provision further. Since the previous inspection, the provision for the care of pupils and their welfare has improved and is now very good.

## HOW WELL THE SCHOOL IS LED AND MANAGED

Aspect	Comment
Leadership and management by the headteacher and other key staff	The leadership and management by the headteacher are very good. She ensures clear direction for the work and development of the school. Good management and support from her effective senior management team encourages a commitment to improvement.
How well the governors fulfil their responsibilities	Good. They understand the school well and take a positive role in shaping its direction. Governors' understanding of the school's strengths and weaknesses is good.
The school's evaluation of its performance	Good. Internal and external evaluation of the school's performance is carried out well. Changes and improvements continue to be developed through an effective improvement plan. The school has been unable to improve as rapidly as it would like because it has a budget deficit.
The strategic use of resources	Good. Effective financial planning ensures that the school's resources are used well to meet priorities.

There is effective delegation to staff with management responsibilities but monitoring of standards in classrooms is an area for improvement. There is a good match of staff and expertise to teach the National Curriculum and all staff are deployed well. The accommodation is good. All available space is managed well, attractively displaying the work of the school. Learning resources are good. A committed

staff team has been established which is having a positive impact on standards across the school. The school applies the principles of best value well.

## **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>• Their children like school</li><li>• Children make good progress</li><li>• Behaviour is good</li><li>• Teaching is good</li><li>• They are comfortable with the way the school deals with questions and problems</li><li>• High expectations are set</li><li>• The school is well managed and led</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Greater challenge for higher-attaining pupils</li></ul>

Few parents attended the parents' meeting and only 22 per cent returned the questionnaire. From all available evidence, inspectors agree with the positive comments of parents. The school has no high-attaining pupils when compared to national ability bands but does have high average pupils. There is an element of lack of real challenge for some pupils.

## **PART B: COMMENTARY**

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

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

1. When children start school in reception aged four, they are achieving standards well below those expected of children of this age. By the time they reach Year 1, most of them reach the Early Learning Goals in personal, social and emotional development and in physical development. Their attainment in communication, language and literacy and in mathematical development is still well below the expected levels. Attainment in creative development and in knowledge and understanding of the world is below the expected levels. However, achievement and progress are mostly satisfactory. By the time they leave school at the end of Year 6, pupils are achieving standards below average standards English, mathematics and science. This is good achievement when considering pupils' low attainment when they start school.
2. The number of pupils in the school is small when compared to other primary schools. This means that pupils are in classes with two different year groups. Due to small cohort sizes and high mobility, the standards attained in national tests and throughout the school vary from year to year. However, the trend over time is one of a steady rise with pupils' achievements and progress being frequently good. This is an improvement since the last inspection. There are no significant differences between the performance of boys and girls. Any differences should be treated with caution because in some year groups the number of boys outweighs the number of girls and in other years a reversal is seen. The school's challenging targets for 2002 were exceeded.
3. In reading and writing, standards in the 2002 national tests at Year 2 were well below the national average but better than those achieved in 2001. In mathematics, standards attained were very low and within the lowest 5 per cent of schools nationally. In teacher assessments for science, 22 out of 24 pupils attained Level 2 or higher. This was similar to national standards and was better than in 2001.
4. In the 2002 national tests for 11-year-olds, pupils' attainment, when compared to the average point scores at all levels to those found in similar schools, is well above average in English and below average in mathematics and science. The school's cohort was small (12 pupils) and there were no high-attaining pupils. Therefore, comparison with average points achieved at all levels shows considerable differences compared to schools with the average number and range of Year 6 pupils. The school's results show that 92 per cent of pupils achieved Level 4 and above in English and science and 67 per cent achieved Level 4 and above in mathematics. However, few pupils achieved the higher Level 5 and this affects the school's results overall. All pupils with special educational needs attained the national average. Standards achieved were significantly better than those achieved in 2001.
5. Inspectors' findings show that standards in reading and writing are below the national average by the age of seven and 11. Speaking and listening skills are below average by the age of seven but in line by the ages of 11. These judgements are similar to those of the last inspection. Progress is good and therefore an improvement is seen since the last inspection. In mathematics, standards are well below average by the age of seven and below average by the age of 11. Again, this is similar to those found at the time of the last inspection but pupils make good progress as they move through the school and this represents good improvement since that time. Standards of attainment in science are in line with national averages by the age of seven and below average by

the age of 11. Standards are now better at age seven than in 1997 and, whilst standards at age 11 are similar to those of last time, attainment and progress are good and therefore a significant improvement.

6. By the end of Year 2, pupils' speaking and listening skills are below the national standard. Many pupils develop as confident communicators as they get older as a result of good class organisation and effective teaching strategies. The majority retell stories confidently and enjoy reciting poems. By the age of 11, standards are satisfactory. The majority of pupils are attentive and eager to engage in classroom discussions. Many pupils, including those with special educational needs, are articulate and venture opinions about the text they are studying. Reading is promoted well throughout the school. However, reading levels by the age of seven are still below national averages. All pupils are beginning to use a range of sound strategies to read a variety of texts but without better progress in comprehension skills standards are not likely to rise significantly. Year 6 pupils read fluently using expression which reflects the meaning of the text. Pupils use thesauri and dictionaries well and benefit from group reading sessions. However, not all pupils understand plot. Standards in writing are below those found nationally but are improving steadily. Seven-year-olds are beginning to write in a number of different forms and, for example, use imaginative vocabulary while planning a story. Punctuation is becoming more accurate and words are chosen mostly carefully. By the age of 11, pupils' skills in using dialogue and paragraphs are developing steadily. Written work is improved by drafting, redrafting, editing and proof reading. Pupils are beginning to learn the impact of figurative and imaginative language in stories and begin to use these in their own writing.
7. Standards in mathematics are well below average for pupils in Year 2 and below average for pupils in Year 6. However, pupils achieve well and there is good progress as pupils move through the school. By the age of seven, most pupils count and recognise numbers to 20, and higher-attaining pupils count to 100. They enjoy practical activities, solve simple problems and measure accurately, for example measuring the differences between objects and predicting differences in length. In some lessons, pupils do not do enough work to improve their standards. By the age of 11, pupils continue to make at least satisfactory progress in mathematics and some make good progress. Pupils enjoy their work and almost all have secure number skills. However, the amount of written work in books is too small to raise standards further. Whilst much of the pupils' work is practical, the lack of opportunities to solve problems and learn independently inhibits the raising of standards.
8. Standards in science are in line with national averages by the end of Key Stage 1 and below by the end of Key Stage 2. Steady improvement has been seen since the last inspection. By the age of seven, pupils make good progress in their investigative work and support this well with good use of scientific vocabulary. Pupils' descriptions and reports are recorded in a scientific way and this clearly demonstrates their sound and sometimes better observation skills, for example describing what they did when constructing an electrical circuit and why circuits do not always work. Work in pupils' books shows that they have achieved well over time and this has had a positive impact on raising standards to the current level. By the age of 11, pupils have built on their knowledge and understanding in science and have made good progress over time. Their level of attainment on entry and from the infants has been well below average and therefore their achievement is now good. Despite good progress and achievement, pupils' investigative skills remain unsatisfactory. Pupils set few hypotheses and are unable to suggest ways of varying test conditions or how to ensure they are carrying out a fair test. However, in lessons, pupils try hard and their attitude and behaviour are good and this supports good learning. Pupils do not set their work out in a scientific

way and the quality of work in books is poor. There is little observational detail, although some work on conductors and insulators shows fair comparisons between different materials.

9. By the age of seven, pupils' attainment in information and communication technology (ICT) is close to the national expectation. By the age of 11, attainment is below the national expectation. Many Year 2 pupils save, retrieve and print their own work. They also use click and drag skills effectively to illustrate patterns and pictures, which often include colour. The low standard seen in Year 6 is mainly due to limited higher order skills, resulting from a lack of suitable resources in previous years. This hampered the pupils' acquisition of knowledge, skills and understanding. Pupils' experience of using graphics to enhance written work is limited but they do use e-mail well to correspond with pupils in Boston, USA. There is little evidence of pupils developing knowledge in the use of control technology.
10. By the end of Year 2, attainment is in line with national expectations in art and design, geography, history, music, physical education, and frequently higher in religious education. Pupils' achievements and progress are good in art, music, physical education and religious education and satisfactory in all other subjects. Attainment is below expectations in design and technology. By the end of Year 6, pupils' attainment is above expectations in religious education and satisfactory in all other subjects except design and technology and geography where it is below expectations. Achievement and progress in art are very good and good in music, physical education and religious education. In all other subjects achievement and progress are satisfactory.
11. Literacy is promoted satisfactorily throughout the school. In all classes literacy is being improved through other subjects, for example the importance of listening to and carrying out instructions in physical education, in writing up science investigations accurately, and reading and acting out scenes from 'Alice in Wonderland' and 'Oliver Twist'.
12. The development of numeracy skills across the curriculum is satisfactory. Pupils are beginning to use numbers as part of their studies in science, geography and ICT. Evidence around the school shows that pupils have made good links with numeracy in science as they develop awareness of shapes and symmetry in the younger classes, and consolidate their understanding of fractions in the older classes. They use their measuring skills effectively in design and technology to estimate and measure accurately.
13. The school is successful in fostering the achievements of all lower-attaining pupils. Pupils with special educational needs are identified at an early stage. They have detailed individual education plans which focus clearly on areas for improvement and targets to be reached. For example, the teacher's assistant referred a group of pupils continually to their set targets during a Year 3/4 numeracy lesson about subtraction. These pupils are provided with effective support constantly and make good progress. In the 2002 national tests for 11-year-olds, all pupils with special educational needs attained the national average level in all subjects.
14. Pupils for whom English is an additional language and those from ethnic minority groups make good progress in all areas of the curriculum. In the 2002 national tests, these pupils attained levels at least in line with national averages. Achievement is good in comparison to prior attainment. Since the previous inspection, the school has maintained its good provision for these pupils and those with special educational needs.

15. Since the last inspection the school sets challenging targets. However, due to the small number of pupils in most cohorts, the school is not always capable of consistently achieving better results year on year and not enough pupils are reaching the higher Level 3 and Level 5. Historically the school has good years when attainment levels are at least in line with those found nationally. At other times, attainment levels fall below and frequently well below national levels and also in comparison to similar schools. However, pupils' achievements and progress are frequently good over time. The school's targets for improvement are appropriate and are set realistically to enable all pupils to achieve their best. Targets consistently bear in mind the variation in levels of attainment year on year that is found within the school's small cohorts. However, too few pupils are achieving the higher levels due to a lack of real challenge in some lessons and in previous years. The good and very good teaching that is now seen throughout the school is bringing about improvements and a rise in standards. The school realises that there is still more that can be done to improve standards further and this has been targeted within its improvement plan over the next few years. The continued development and practise of basic skills is a priority across all areas of the curriculum for many pupils and will bring about a better improvement in standards.

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

16. A significant number of pupils enter the school with personal, social and attitudinal development below that which is expected nationally. However, early in the reception year and thereafter throughout the school the pupils' attitudes to learning are good. This is due mainly to the very good structures and strategies employed by the school. For example, a vibrant school council and a regular personal counselling system have helped to raise the pupils' self-esteem. This is a significant improvement since the last inspection when many pupils in the eight to 11 age range took little pride or interest in their work. The pupils are now enthusiastic about school. The parent questionnaire and meeting confirm that pupils enjoy school and are happy to be there. Inspection evidence confirms this. Pupils are friendly, welcoming and open in manner. In lessons, during assemblies and extra-curricular activities, interest and enjoyment are apparent. Sometimes pupils are reluctant to terminate a discussion, as noted during a lunchtime conversation with Year 5 and 6 pupils about school life, hobbies and their favourite pop singers. Most pupils settle to work quickly, engage eagerly in lessons and the majority work purposefully to complete tasks, often with little direct supervision. Examples observed included a personal, social and health education lesson in Year 4/5 and a Year 2 literacy lesson on sentence building. Extra-curricular activities such as football, netball, choir and lunchtime clubs are supported well by both boys and girls.
17. Behaviour is good overall, both within and outside the school buildings, which is also an appreciable improvement since the previous inspection. The very good monitoring system contributes positively to this, as does the regular lunchtime supervision by the headteacher and other staff. With very few exceptions, the pupils behave well in lessons. Playtimes are lively and good-natured. For example, the pupils in both the upper and lower school playgrounds play football and other games in harmony. Most pupils know the bounds of unacceptable behaviour. They understand and accept the system of rewards and sanctions to which they have contributed, and in the vast majority of cases respond to them positively. They are well mannered and greet staff, each other and visitors politely, often holding doors open for them. There have been no exclusions during the past year. Bullying is rare and is speedily and sensitively dealt with when it occurs.

18. Relationships throughout the school are good. The pupils show concern for others, witnessed during the breakfast club when older pupils prepared food for their younger peers. Pupils are tolerant of views different from their own and are generous in supporting charitable causes. Examples recorded include fund-raising functions for Blue Peter and Remembrance Day Poppy appeals. School and personal property are treated with respect and the school grounds are litter free.
19. Attendance at the school is unsatisfactory. Over the reporting period 2001 to 2002, attendance in the school at 92 per cent was well below the national average of 94 per cent for similar schools. However, over the same period, unauthorised absence of 0.2 per cent was lower than the national average of 0.5 per cent. The high level of authorised absences has affected all year groups and has had a significant effect on the achievement and progress made by pupils. Unfortunately, the pupils' attendance records do not reflect the efforts made by the school to maintain and improve levels of attendance. Illness, medical treatment and additional family holidays are the most frequently recorded reasons for pupils' absences. Registrations are undertaken well and, with few instances of lateness, lessons get off to a prompt and effective start.

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

20. Teaching and learning are good overall and strength of the school. Compared to the last inspection, good teaching was seen across both key stages. Teaching for children under five is always satisfactory. Strengths in teaching far outweigh weaknesses. The quality of teaching is having a positive impact on learning, pupils' achievements and the progress they make.
21. The overall quality of teaching is good and better. Teaching is satisfactory or better in 100 per cent of lessons. It is good or very good in 68 per cent of lessons, including 22 per cent that was very good.
22. The basic skills of literacy and numeracy are taught satisfactorily. Teachers are beginning to ensure that literacy skills are improved through other subjects, for example in Year 2 science, where pupils' science investigations are written accurately and the use of suitable vocabulary is good. Staff have worked hard to improve strategies for teaching literacy and they are beginning to be more successful. In Years 3 and 4 the use of high frequency words while learning about different cultural festivals supports good learning. The teaching of numeracy enables sound development of numeracy skills across the curriculum. Teachers provide good opportunities for pupils to use numeracy skills in science, design and technology and geography.
23. The quality of English teaching is good in both the five to seven and seven to 11 age ranges. This is a significant improvement since the last inspection. Most teachers have high expectations. They establish good routines and generate a purposeful working atmosphere. In English, the good teaching promotes the positive attitudes of pupils who work hard. The best teaching combines discussion and explanation, practical work, high expectations and good pace. Overall, the good teaching promotes good learning. In mathematics, whilst teaching is overall satisfactory, there are good features in the infants with teaching in the juniors always good. This is an improvement since last time. The strongest feature of teaching is the good demonstrations at the beginning of lessons. These demonstrations enable pupils to follow and understand their tasks and make at least appropriate gains in learning. Where teachers focus on the development of specific skills, and remind pupils about learning from previous work, achievement and progress are frequently good. In Year 2, good assessment data is used effectively to guide teachers' planning for each ability group.



24. Throughout the school most lessons have clearly expressed aims and learning intentions. The very best teaching is seen when teachers remain focused on these objectives and review with the pupils their progress towards achieving them. This was particularly successful in a Year 2 science lesson on circuits where the teacher kept the pupils on task by regular support and intervention backed up with skilful questioning. Teaching standards in science have improved since the last inspection. Opportunities for pupils to learn through experimental and investigative methods are seen in every lesson. However, not all teachers ensure that tasks are modified to meet the range of abilities in the classroom. This means that the need to develop basic and specific skills for some pupils takes longer than it should. Religious education is taught very well and this is an improvement since the previous inspection. Teaching in art, geography, music, physical education and personal and social education is good overall. Teaching in design and technology and history is satisfactory. The teaching of information and communication technology (ICT) balances between good and satisfactory. Teachers are becoming more confident teaching ICT and in using the school's developing resources, for example an interactive whiteboard. Throughout the school, standards in teaching are far more consistent than at the time of the last inspection.
25. Overall, teachers have good subject knowledge which they use well to plan interesting lessons. However, not all teachers ensure that their planning identifies groups of pupils who will learn best with modified activities. For example, whilst there are a significant number of pupils in each class with special educational needs, and in all classes except Year 6 there are two year groups, lesson content, delivery and activity are frequently the same. This limits the development and use of basic skills by some pupils and for others means that they are not stretched enough. For example, Years 4 and 5 pupils in music and Year 6 pupils in science all do the same work and there is very limited opportunity for learning through different tasks designed specifically at their level. In such lessons, whilst teachers work hard, progress towards raising standards more rapidly is delayed. In lessons where teachers create greater balance, for example in mathematics, good teaching is closely linked to good awareness of pupils' attainment. In these lessons all pupils achieve well.
26. In lessons where teaching is good or very good, teaching ensures that pupils maintain interest in their work and sustain concentration. There is a keen sense of urgency and time is used well. Pupils' interest is kept up and, by maintaining a lively pace and by varying linked activities, achievement and progress are always good or better. This was seen in a Year 3/4 science lesson on materials and in a Year 3/4 religious education lesson on attitudes. Similarly, the plenary session of these lessons was used well to evaluate and assess the progress pupils had made in their knowledge and understanding and how well the learning intention had been met. How the current lesson would link to the next session was also discussed to help prepare the pupils.
27. Overall, teachers' use of day-to-day assessment is inconsistent. Where it is at its best in mathematics, teachers use assessment data well to plan for different ability groups. However, such an approach is not consistent throughout the school. Whilst there is very good analysis of assessment data from national and internal tests, teachers are not using their day-to-day assessments or evaluations to modify their planning for the next stage of learning. In too many lessons, there is little indication of how the needs of different groups will be met. This delays better improvement in standards and the development of basic skills.
28. Although there is an established marking policy, this is inconsistently applied and varies in quality. Some marking is up to date and provides clear information to pupils to help

them to improve. However, where marking is weak, a tick is put at the end of the work or bottom of the page. Some marking is not up to date and some work is passed over. In such cases, incorrect work goes unrecorded and good work unrecognised. This weakness has a negative effect on standards. In too many books there is little work to show what the pupils have been learning and how well they have achieved. Standards in pupils' books are not as good as those seen in lessons.

29. In all lessons teachers maintain good standards of pupils' attitudes and behaviour. They have good relationships with pupils and this contributes to good and better learning. Pupils respect their teachers and support staff and staff value pupils' contributions. The atmosphere for learning is always good in every class.
30. Pupils with special educational needs are taught well and therefore make good progress. Teachers are involved fully with the special educational needs co-ordinator in writing up individual education plans which outline clearly curriculum adaptations to meet identified needs. Teachers are skilful at briefing teaching assistants. The good support provided by these dedicated professionals makes a significant contribution to pupils' learning. This was exemplified well during a Year 3/4 literacy lesson on report writing when a group of special educational needs pupils was required to express orally and then commit to writing the appropriate sequence of events.
31. The quality of teaching for the small number of pupils for whom English is an additional language and pupils from the travelling community is consistently good. Teachers include these pupils in all aspects of school life and therefore their achievement and progress are good. These pupils are generally very enthusiastic and keen to learn. The advice and support of specialist teachers, such as that from the travellers education service, is used well to ensure that their needs are met. Teachers use the strategies, advice and resources they are given well, and ensure that each stage in pupils' learning is carefully monitored.
32. Classroom assistants work closely with teachers and are deployed well. They make a positive contribution to pupils' learning, achievements and progress and are a strength of the school. They plan and review with teachers and work well with groups and individuals. Many of them have been in the school for some years and have been instrumental in supporting school improvements. In most lessons they use their initiative sensibly to keep pupils on task and to guide and encourage those who lack confidence. In other lessons they provide an invaluable teaching aid, for example being the 'nasty troll' in infants dance lessons, much to the delight of the pupils.

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

33. There is a good, relevant, broad and balanced curriculum in place which meets the needs of the pupils well. There are some significant strengths within the provision which enrich the learning opportunities provided in all areas of the school. Provision has improved since the previous inspection, and the weaknesses identified then, mainly in the use of time and in provision within specific subjects, have been rectified. The curriculum for religious education is in line with the locally agreed syllabus for religious education.
34. A good curriculum framework has been developed and it ensures that all aspects of each subject are taught. Good medium-term plans identify what each class will study during the year. These are regularly monitored by subject co-ordinators. However, whilst in some classes lesson content is generally appropriate to the needs and

abilities of all pupils, this is not consistently so throughout the school. There are times when higher-attaining pupils are not challenged enough and not all pupils are working at suitable levels. There are times when not enough work is completed, particularly by older pupils in the school. This is because of the emphasis on practical activities, particularly in subjects such as mathematics and science. This inhibits standards in these subjects.

35. Pupils with special educational needs, those from ethnic minority groups and those for whom English is an additional language have equality of access to all areas of the curriculum including extra-curricular activities. The school is successful in the way it adapts the curriculum to ensure that these pupils make the best possible progress. Good planning and effective use of resources enable pupils to work successfully to their identified targets. A prime example was observed during a Year 4/5 personal, social and health education lesson where pupils with special educational needs were required to listen carefully to the views of others and respond either by agreeing or offering sensible alternatives.
36. The National Literacy Strategy has been implemented satisfactorily and the use of literacy across the curriculum is developing well. The National Numeracy Strategy is having a beneficial impact on achievement in mathematics and is beginning to be effectively implemented across the school. The use of numeracy skills in other subjects is emerging well. The opportunities offered to pupils through the planned curriculum for science are broad and balanced and include investigational work and fully meet National Curriculum requirements. Other subjects fully comply with National Curriculum requirements.
37. All pupils are fully included in the experiences on offer. The excellent range of extra-curricular opportunities is a strength and has a very positive impact on pupils' involvement in school life and in their personal development. The vast array of after-school clubs shows real commitment from staff and volunteers and is helping pupils to learn new skills. For example, because of the very good recorder club, pupils join in with the local Lewes Music Festival. They join local tournaments for football and netball and have won the small-school athletic tournament twice. Pupils in all year groups have access to at least two after-school clubs weekly and benefit from some expert coaching by professional trainers. Clubs are well attended and contribute very well to pupils' enjoyment of school.
38. Provision for pupils' personal, social and health education (PSHE) is good and includes provision for sex and drugs awareness education for older pupils, and a good citizenship programme to prepare pupils for life in the wider world. The school council fosters a sense of responsibility and care, and teaches pupils about social and personal aspects of development.
39. In the previous report, provision for spiritual, moral, social and cultural development was satisfactory, with some good features. This has improved, and provision is now very good overall, with particularly good provision for moral and social development.
40. Provision for spiritual development is good. Assemblies fully meet statutory requirements in relation to collective worship and teach pupils about the importance of reflecting on their own lives and behaviour. PSHE lessons help pupils to focus on their emotions and feelings and offer good opportunities for reflection and discussion. Spirituality within the curriculum is particularly evident in art and in singing. Pupils work with local artists and their success in producing whole-school pieces of artwork in the

after-school clubs are very special and promote a clear sense of awe and pleasure. Pupils' enjoyment in singing is evident and promotes their spiritual awareness well.

41. Provision for moral development is very good. Pupils know the difference between right and wrong, and behaviour policies are rigorously adhered to. Staff encourage good moral behaviour in class and provide good role models for their pupils. In PSHE lessons, pupils discuss various behavioural and moral issues, resulting in a caring, supportive community. A particularly strong focus is placed on moral issues in assemblies. For example, in a whole-school assembly, the issue about keeping promises was discussed at length, resulting in clear understanding and awareness of friendships and trusting one another. Pupils' behaviour in and around school is of a high quality and is a direct result of the very good provision.
42. Provision for social development is very good. Parents believe that the school promotes the values that they would wish to see and comment on how the school values all pupils, no matter what their background. Inspection evidence supports this view. There is a good set of 'golden rules' for all to see and opportunities are provided for older and younger pupils to work together. Also, many examples of higher-attaining pupils working with, and helping, less able pupils were seen. This is very evident in the development of speaking skills, where pupils have a 'talking partner'. This is helping to extend language skills as well as improving relationships and peer partnerships. The 'house-points' system works well and pupils thrive on gaining points for their house by producing good work and behaviour. The school is fully inclusive and offers all pupils opportunities to enjoy the school's social and educational activities together. The very good provision for social and moral development leads to good behaviour and attitudes throughout the school.
43. Provision for cultural development is good. Pupils are encouraged to learn about their own culture through local groups, tournaments and visits into the community. Pupils have opportunities to work with local artists and musicians to foster their own skills as they learn about the rich cultural environment in which they live. For example, they have worked with the sculptor Anthony Caro, visiting his studio and appearing on a television programme about their visit. The after-school art club with the art co-ordinator produced a batik hanging. This won the Bishop's Commendation Award for links with the community and was this year's Christmas card for the East Sussex Education Authority. The good range of enrichment experiences promotes pupils' understanding of the wider world, and the range of cultural opportunities available. Pupils learn about the rich cultural diversity in modern Britain through their studies. For example, in religious education, pupils study other faiths and customs, and learn about lifestyles different from their own.
44. Links with the local community are strong. Pupils have worked with the local college and fire service to develop a web site, and have undertaken drama workshops with the performing arts department of the college. Transition to secondary school is good and links with the local community college include teacher support, bringing expertise into the school. Work has been started with a local primary school to raise standards in writing. This is having a positive effect on provision at the school.
45. Provision within the Foundation Stage of learning is satisfactory. The planned curriculum is well linked to the Early Learning Goals for children of this age, but the taught curriculum is often too formal for children in their reception year. Too few opportunities are provided for children to learn through independent choice, and this restricts their opportunities to have autonomy over their learning. This is due to the organisation of the Foundation Stage, which includes Key Stage 1 pupils sometimes

from another class. The range of abilities becomes too wide for the curricular provision available.

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

46. Since the previous inspection, the provision for the care of pupils and their welfare has improved and is now very good. All members of the staff show concern for the well being of pupils. The quality of information kept on each pupil is detailed and comprehensive and members of staff know pupils and their medical and personal needs very well. The school is supported well by health professionals and other agencies.
47. The school identifies and deals well with any hazards found on site and health and safety inspections are regularly undertaken. The school's health and safety policy is detailed and indicates responsibilities for the implementation of checks and controls. The governors and members of staff take their responsibilities in this area seriously and undertake regular risk assessments. Assessments are undertaken of all school trips in accordance with local authority guidelines.
48. Members of staff are trained to administer first aid and provide suitable very good cover for the school's activities on and off site. The school's procedures for the care and treatment of pupils are very good, despite the lack of a first aid room. Thorough precautions are in place for dealing with emergencies arising from pupils' medical conditions and for dealing with accidents and injuries.
49. The school's arrangements for child protection are very good. The policy and procedures follow the guidelines of the local committee for the protection of children. The assistant headteacher is designated as the person responsible for child protection and is supported by the headteacher. Other members of staff are regularly trained to ensure that they understand the school's arrangements and procedures. The school monitors pupils very well, especially if there is any concern about their welfare. In line with local authority guidance, police checks are undertaken on new staff and helpers.
50. The school's ethos, the good quality of teaching and the consistent use of positive behaviour strategies support the good behaviour seen throughout the school. The monitoring of behaviour is handled consistently well by the staff and this results in the absence of any oppressive behaviour. The school has good procedures in place for encouraging positive behaviour. The school's "golden rules" are displayed throughout the school. Members of staff are able to use appropriate rewards or sanctions. Assemblies, class activities and circle time are used to reinforce good behaviour and the pupils devise their own code of conduct rules. Pupils' behaviour has improved to such an extent that the school no longer uses 'golden time' to encourage better behaviour. The school is good at monitoring and eliminating oppressive behaviour, and parents and carers confirm that their children feel safe in the school. Parents also confirm that there are few incidents of bullying or racism and that the school deals with any issues speedily and sensitively.
51. The monitoring of attendance and punctuality is good. The educational welfare service, the governing body and members of staff regularly monitor pupils' attendance. The school makes telephone calls home on the first day of any unreported absence for pupils that members of staff have concerns about. Any unauthorised absences and lateness are noted and followed up speedily. For day-to-day recording of attendance, the school uses manual registers that comply fully with all requirements for coding and reporting attendance. That data is regularly transferred into a computerised system for

analysis. The educational welfare officer provides the school with good support and this is helping the school in its endeavours to maintain and improve attendance levels.

52. The procedures for monitoring and supporting pupils' personal development are good. The teachers and support staff have very good knowledge of pupils' needs and they are working in class to improve pupils' personal development. The personal, social, health and citizenship education curriculum has been developed well. Pupils join in a very wide range of events in the school and extra-curricular activities that contribute to their personal development, including raising money for charities, visitors to school and outside visits. The school runs clubs to help and support their personal needs such as the breakfast club and curriculum development through the homework club. Pupils are encouraged to join the school council and contribute to the organisation of the school and school events. There are other opportunities for pupils to develop independence and to use their initiative; however, there are too few opportunities for pupils to develop as independent learners.
53. The school's procedures for assessing pupils' attainment and progress are now good. The discrepancy between teachers' assessments and test results in 2002 has been addressed through staff training. Clear and informative records are kept on pupils' attainment from reception to Year 6. Baseline assessments are carried out when children join the reception class. Along with ongoing assessments from optional tests, these are effective in providing teachers with clear information on attainment, achievement and progress over time. However, there is inconsistent use of assessment on a daily basis to change what is taught lesson by lesson. Whilst teachers' daily planning frequently covers good learning intentions, in too many lessons they are not modifying their planning enough to meet the range of abilities and ages in their class. Day-to-day evaluations and assessment are frequently not recorded.
54. The school has effective systems in place to identify, access, support and monitor pupils with special educational needs, those from ethnic minority groups and pupils for whom English is an additional language. Timely and appropriate help is given to all these pupils. The special educational needs co-ordinator is allocated two and a half days per week to review, plan and work alongside class teachers, a system further supported well by regular input from experienced members of the local education authority's learning support services. The school responds appropriately to the requirements as outlined in the pupils' Statements of Special Educational Need and implements fully the Code of Practice.
55. Pupils with special educational needs are assessed well. Monitoring and records are effective in providing clear information about pupils' progress and achievements. The aims and targets set in their individual education plans are very effective in meeting their needs and in ensuring that they attain levels in line with their abilities.

56. Pupils for whom English is an additional language and those from ethnic minority groups are well cared for. Mutual respect and understanding for their values, beliefs and feelings ensure that they are fully integrated into the life of the school, including provision for their specific needs. For example, there is language support for those who find English difficult, and catch-up sessions for pupils from the travelling community, most of whom attend school enthusiastically.

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

57. Parents' views of the school are good; the school has established very good links with parents and provides good information for them. The parents' involvement in the work of the school and their contribution to pupils' learning at school and at home is satisfactory.
58. Parents are invited to help and support the school, attend assemblies, performances, curriculum events, briefing meetings, parents' evenings and open afternoons. They are able to communicate with the school on a daily basis by seeing members of staff, or by arranging appointments. They are provided with half-termly newsletters, day-to-day class and school information.
59. Parents confirm that the school handles the pupils' start in school well and they appreciate the careful introduction of these young children into the school. Parents have opportunities each term to discuss their children's progress with the teachers. The school communicates with parents on attendance and timekeeping in writing and by telephone, and follows up unexplained absences. Parents confirm that the school is welcoming, that the school welcomes parent helpers, that it operates an "open door policy" and that the relationships between the school and parents have improved significantly.
60. Parents of pupils with special educational needs, those from ethnic minority groups and those for whom English is an additional language are informed regularly about their children's progress and are involved fully, where appropriate, in the review process.
61. At the meeting with the Registered Inspector, parents were confident that the school will respond quickly and positively to any suggestions or complaints and confirmed their confidence in the headteacher and senior management.
62. A great majority of parents in their questionnaires felt that they were well informed about pupils' progress. Pupils' annual reports are detailed and show that teachers know their pupils well. Although they list pupils' achievements, they do not include examples of how pupils can make further progress. Parents confirmed that they find the information they receive helpful and informative.
63. Parents' contribution to pupils' learning at school and at home is satisfactory. Comments made by parents at their meeting were that homework in the school was variable, with some comments that the younger pupils sometimes had too much issued. Although there were few parents in the school supporting activities during the inspection, parents are welcomed in school. They support clubs and extra-curricular activities, assist school trips, help with the library and organise fund-raising and social events through the Friends' Association. This active organisation has raised substantial funds for the school.

64. The school has organised, with a local tertiary college, a family club designed to help parents to understand more about how children learn in school and to enable parents to become involved in school activities. This work has been recognised, with the school receiving national awards. Parents have worked hard making resources for the school, for example discovery boxes and story sacks, as well as helping with the library project. Workshops and parent evenings on the curriculum have been organised by the school, including literacy, numeracy and information and communication technology.
65. The enthusiastic parents are proud of this school and its achievements and the support it provides for parents and carers in the community. The school is trying really hard to encourage and involve more parents. It has set targets to get more parents involved and attend its activities and to encourage parents to be more involved in helping their children with homework.

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

66. Overall, the quality of the leadership and management of the school is good. The leadership and management by the headteacher are very good. She ensures clear direction for the work and development of the school. Good management and support from her effective senior management team promotes a commitment to improvement.
67. The headteacher joined the school after the last inspection of 1997. At that time there had been a high staff turnover and two acting headteachers. There was a period of great instability which was having a negative impact on school improvement. There was successful leadership in areas of improving pupils' behaviour and in involving all, particularly governors, in the life of the school. However, governors were not fully fulfilling their responsibilities and the school development plan had not been implemented. Not all subjects had a co-ordinator.
68. Since that time, the school has made significant progress, particularly in the last year. The school is no longer on a split site. All pupils are in a new building. There is a stable staff situation with qualified teachers in each class. The headteacher and the assistant headteacher work very well together and provide a clear sense of direction for the work of the school. The care and provision for pupils is a significant strength. Pupils are valued and appreciated. The school's ethos creates an environment that ensures their lives are enriched, and not just academically. The considerable efforts of the headteacher and committed staff team are having a positive impact on standards of teaching. Teaching and learning are good and frequently better. Achievement across the curriculum is good compared to prior attainment and pupils' attitudes and behaviour are good. These, along with others, are all significant improvements since the last inspection. Notable achievements have included the Artsmark Gold Award for music, dance, art and drama, a Good Practice Award for parents from the NCPTA (National Council of Parent Teacher Associations) and the Bishop's commendation Award for links with the community.
69. The headteacher has a very clear understanding of the school's strengths and weaknesses. She has worked very hard to build a stable and competent staff team and has now achieved the stability necessary to push forward further improvements. Objectives and targets within the school improvement plan are specific, manageable and achievable. The headteacher is a very good role model and leads by example, encouraging others to share and develop their strengths for the benefit of all and overcome areas where they lack confidence. This is a strength. Changes and improvements continue to be developed and, with the support of a local Beacon school, areas of weakness are being addressed in all aspects of school life. The serious



weaknesses identified at the time of the last inspection have been overcome. The key issues have been addressed and where necessary still form part of the school's further improvement.

70. Parents are very supportive of the school and the headteacher; relationships are very good. However, it has taken time to achieve the current improvements. This is due to an inherited and significant budget deficit, a lengthy building programme which impacted on school stability, the need to build a strong senior management team to assist in pushing forward improvements and the recruitment of good teachers. Further improvements are clearly identified within the next round of school development. The school is set to improve further.
71. All staff have curriculum responsibilities and their management is good overall. They have worked hard to review and modify subject policies and the school's schemes of work. Staff meetings have been used effectively to ensure that there is progress and continuity as pupils move through the school. Each subject co-ordinator monitors pupils' work and teachers' planning. Whilst their efforts are having a positive impact on raising standards, particularly in pupils' attitudes, teaching and learning, they do not have the time to work alongside colleagues in classes to ensure that basic skills are developed consistently and that standards rise more rapidly.
72. All staff, including support and administrative staff, work very well together. This is a strength and encourages pupils' progress, attitudes and behaviour. Administrative procedures and routines are very good and contribute to the efficient way the school is run. Staff clearly recognise the need to further improve standards and for these to be maintained consistently year on year. However, the school is small in comparison with other primary schools and with a significantly small number of pupils in each year group, and well below average attainment on entry by most pupils; small changes in ability between different groups impacts greatly on the school's overall performance in national tests. It is not always possible for attainment levels to be maintained. The school rarely has high-attaining pupils. Levels of attainment by the end of each key stage will vary from year to year, as do school targets. However, despite this, the school's contribution to maintaining high standards in other areas of school life is significant and adds good value to pupils' lives and their education.
73. The provision for pupils with special educational needs is led and managed well. The liaison and relationships between the special needs co-ordinator, teachers, classroom assistants and outside agencies are very good. Identification, support and monitoring procedures are organised and managed effectively. The success of this system is evaluated in one-hour weekly meetings with the special needs co-ordinator and teacher assistants. Support for these pupils is generally provided within class with occasional withdrawal to a designated special educational needs area. Resources are good and are used effectively.
74. Pupils from ethnic minority groups are supported very well and this ensures that they achieve their full potential. In the recent national tests these pupils achieved at least average levels and frequently higher. Despite a small number of pupils, teachers have good understanding of how pupils with English as an additional language learn. There are good records of achievement and the careful monitoring by the headteacher ensures that these pupils are fully included in all aspects of school life. The travellers' education service provides invaluable advice and support to the school. This has a beneficial effect on these pupils' education and the development of positive attitudes to school. Monitoring reports show that recommendations and advice are acted upon and that these pupils make good progress in all aspects of school life.

75. The governing body fulfils its statutory responsibilities well. Their involvement in the life of the school is good and an improvement since the last inspection. They are effective as a governing body and are making an increasingly important contribution to strategic planning and management. The focused leadership by the chair of governors ensures that there is an appropriate committee structure, which monitors and evaluates all aspects of school life. He has a clear understanding of the school's strengths and areas for improvement and provides invaluable support to the headteacher and staff. Governors are frequently in school, which adds greatly to their understanding of the school and how they can provide support. Performance management is up to date and effective in ensuring that school improvements are maintained.
76. Educational priorities are well supported through careful financial management. This is significant because, since joining the school, the headteacher has had to manage with a large budget deficit. With the invaluable support of governors they have managed to reduce the deficit although it is still high. The deficit is impacting on provision across the curriculum in this small school. The school has been unable to improve as rapidly as the headteacher and governors would like. The school's comprehensive improvement plan is used effectively as a working document. It is well organised and prioritised and effectively targeted and monitored. It is very carefully costed. Focus for school improvement is accurate, as are forecasts for the next few years. The school's performance targets are realistic. The school is good at taking the necessary action to meet its targets. Targets for 2002 were exceeded. Specific grants are used satisfactorily for their designated purpose.
77. There is a good match of staff and expertise to teach the National Curriculum. All staff are appropriately qualified. Procedures for the induction of new staff are good and the school provides good training opportunities for student teachers and those new to the profession. Support staff are effective in supporting teachers and in ensuring that the needs of pupils are met. They are a strength of the school. The headteacher and senior staff provide regular opportunities for training, professional discussions and staff interviews to identify strengths and areas for improvement. Staff recognise the importance of these and appreciate the support they receive. The effective way in which this is done adds greatly to the shared commitment and capacity to succeed, which is excellent and a significant strength.
78. The school is successful in applying best value principles. At the time of the last inspection it was providing unsatisfactory value for money. This has improved and it now provides good value for money. The school is good at comparing its performance with that of other schools and taking the necessary action for improvement within the constraints of its tight budget. Challenge, consultation and competition are rigorously applied by the headteacher and governors when deploying the school's resources.
79. The accommodation is good for the number of pupils on roll. The school has been in a new building for just over a year. All available space is used well and managed in an attractive and colourful way, with a full range of pupils' work, murals, photographs and school achievements. The school is clean and tidy and clearly shows the respect and enjoyment that pupils have in their school.

80. The overall quality of learning resources across the curriculum is good but there are deficiencies in design and technology. In all other subjects resources are up to date and more than adequate to meet the demands of the curriculum, teaching and learning. New technologies are used effectively to support teaching, learning and administration. The school is currently installing interactive whiteboards in each classroom.
81. There have been significant improvements since the last inspection. Despite unfavourable socio-economic circumstances and well-below-average pupil attainment on entry, improvements have been good overall. This is a school in which pupils, parents, staff and governors are justly proud.

## WHAT SHOULD THE SCHOOL DO TO IMPROVE FURTHER?

In order to improve standards of work and the quality of education provided, the governors, headteacher and staff should:

(1) continue to raise standards of attainment, particularly in English, mathematics and science in both key stages by:

- ensuring that there continues to be consistent development, practice and consolidation of subject specific skills as pupils get older;
- ensuring that all pupils, particularly higher-attaining pupils, are more suitably challenged to attain higher levels, particularly by the end of Key Stages 1 and 2;
- providing pupils with regular and specific targets for improvement where there are weaknesses and supporting their progress towards achieving them.

Paragraphs 5-10, 15, 24, 25, 82-88, 90, 91, 94, 96-98, 101, 102, 104-106, 111-113, 116, 118-120, 124, 125, 126, 131, 133, 134, 136, 142, 146, 149

(2) improve the provision for pupils in the Foundation Stage of learning by:

- enabling more opportunities for independent learning and making choices;
- ensuring that the provision for these children is not affected when pupils from the infants class join them.

Paragraphs 45, 82-88

(3) improve the use of assessment in classrooms by:

- ensuring marking is up to date, informative and gives pupils short-term targets for improvement;
- using daily assessments, judgements and evaluations of pupils' achievements and progress to modify the next stage of learning for groups and individuals and for this to be included in daily planning;
- ensuring that teachers build on pupils' previously acquired learning and skills and use this information to guide planning, teaching and learning.

Paragraphs 24, 25, 27, 28, 34, 45, 53, 56, 107, 120, 126, 131, 133

(4) improve the quality and quantity of work in pupils' books by:

- providing greater opportunities for them to record what they know, understand and do in their books;
- establishing appropriate standards for pupils' recorded work that meets the requirements for each subject.

Paragraphs 7, 8, 34, 99, 102, 106, 110, 111, 116, 142, 144, 167, 168

In addition the school should address the following minor weaknesses:

- Ensure the school's attendance rate continues to rise – 19
- Seek further ways to continue to reduce the school's budget deficit - 76
- Improve the monitoring of standards in classrooms by subject co-ordinators – 71, 122
- Improve resources for design and technology – 80, 127, 128, 131, 133

## PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS

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

Number of lessons observed	37
Number of discussions with staff, governors, other adults and pupils	20

### Summary of teaching observed during the inspection

	Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very poor
Number	0	8	17	12	0	0	0
Percentage	0	22	46	32	0	0	0

The table gives the number and percentage of lessons observed in each of the seven categories used to make judgements about teaching. Care should be taken when interpreting these percentages as each lesson represents nearly three percentage points.

### Information about the school's pupils

<b>Pupils on the school's roll</b>	YR – Y6
Number of pupils on the school's roll (FTE for part-time pupils)	131
Number of full-time pupils known to be eligible for free school meals	35
<b>Special educational needs</b>	YR – Y6
Number of pupils with statements of special educational needs	4
Number of pupils on the school's special educational needs register	48
<b>English as an additional language</b>	No of pupils
Number of pupils with English as an additional language	4
<b>Pupil mobility in the last school year</b>	No of pupils
Pupils who joined the school other than at the usual time of first admission	22
Pupils who left the school other than at the usual time of leaving	19

### Attendance

#### Authorised absence

	%
School data	7.6
National comparative data	5.4

#### Unauthorised absence

	%
School data	0.2
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 2)

	Year	Boys	Girls	Total
Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 1 for the latest reporting year	2002	8	16	24

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		Reading	Writing	Mathematics
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	*	*	*
	Girls	*	*	*
	Total	17	19	16
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	71 (67)	79 (71)	67 (71)
	National	84 (84)	86 (86)	90 (91)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	*	*	*
	Girls	*	*	*
	Total	18	20	22
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	75 (71)	83 (71)	92 (71)
	National	85 (85)	89 (89)	89 (89)

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

### Attainment at the end of Key Stage 2 (Year 6)

	Year	Boys	Girls	Total
Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 2 for the latest reporting year	2002	3	9	12

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys	*	*	*
	Girls	*	*	*
	Total	11	8	11
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	92 (29)	67 (35)	92 (59)
	National	75 (75)	73 (71)	86 (87)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys	*	*	*
	Girls	*	*	*
	Total	8	7	10
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	67 (47)	58 (71)	83 (71)
	National	73 (72)	74 (74)	82 (82)

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

\* The number of boys and girls attaining the national Level 2 or above for Key Stage 1 and Level 4 and above for Key Stage 2 has been excluded because there were either 10 or fewer boys or girls.

***Ethnic background of pupils******Exclusions in the last school year***

Categories used in the Annual School Census	No of pupils on roll	Number of fixed period exclusions	Number of permanent exclusions
White – British	126	0	0
White – Irish	0	0	0
White – any other White background	0	0	0
Mixed – White and Black Caribbean	0	0	0
Mixed – White and Black African	0	0	0
Mixed – White and Asian	0	0	0
Mixed – any other mixed background	0	0	0
Asian or Asian British – Indian	0	0	0
Asian or Asian British – Pakistani	0	0	0
Asian or Asian British – Bangladeshi	1	0	0
Asian or Asian British – any other Asian background	1	0	0
Black or Black British – Caribbean	0	0	0
Black or Black British – African	0	0	0
Black or Black British – any other Black background	0	0	0
Chinese	0	0	0
Any other ethnic group	3	0	0
No ethnic group recorded	0	0	0

*The table refers to pupils of compulsory school age only. It gives the number of exclusions, which may be different from the number of pupils excluded.*



### **Teachers and classes**

#### **Qualified teachers and classes: YR – Y6**

Total number of qualified teachers (FTE)	6
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	20.0:1
Average class size	26.2

#### **Education support staff: YR – Y6**

Total number of education support staff	12
Total aggregate hours worked per week	130

*FTE means full-time equivalent.*

### **Financial information**

Financial year	2001/2002
----------------	-----------

	£
Total income	367,746
Total expenditure	373,321
Expenditure per pupil	2,939
Balance brought forward from previous year	-39,483
Balance carried forward to next year	-45,048

### **Recruitment of teachers**

Number of teachers who left the school during the last two years	3
Number of teachers appointed to the school during the last two years	3

Total number of vacant teaching posts (FTE)	0
Number of vacancies filled by teachers on temporary contract of a term or more (FTE)	0
Number of unfilled vacancies or vacancies filled by teachers on temporary contract of less than one term (FTE)	0

*FTE means full-time equivalent.*

## Results of the survey of parents and carers

### Questionnaire return rate

Number of questionnaires sent out	131
Number of questionnaires returned	28

### Percentage of responses in each category

	Strongly agree	Tend to agree	Tend to disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know
My child likes school.	71	25	4	0	0
My child is making good progress in school.	64	32	0	0	4
Behaviour in the school is good.	50	50	0	0	0
My child gets the right amount of work to do at home.	54	32	11	0	4
The teaching is good.	75	21	0	4	0
I am kept well informed about how my child is getting on.	57	32	7	4	0
I would feel comfortable about approaching the school with questions or a problem.	89	4	7	0	0
The school expects my child to work hard and achieve his or her best.	79	21	0	0	0
The school works closely with parents.	57	29	11	0	4
The school is well led and managed.	81	11	4	0	4
The school is helping my child become mature and responsible.	57	39	4	0	0
The school provides an interesting range of activities outside lessons.	67	22	0	4	7

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

### **AREAS OF LEARNING FOR CHILDREN IN THE FOUNDATION STAGE**

82. There are ten pupils of reception age. The reception class includes five pupils from Year 1. The quality of education provided for children in the reception class is satisfactory and is similar to that of the previous inspection. From a well-below-average start, children achieve appropriately so that, by the time they reach Year 1, most of them reach the Early Learning Goals in personal, social and emotional development and in physical development. Their attainment in communication, language and literacy and in mathematical development is still well below the expected levels. Attainment in creative development and in knowledge and understanding of the world is below the expected levels. This is because a significant proportion of children have limited vocabulary to explain themselves or describe their experiences. They also have limited prior knowledge of numbers, shapes and measures. Provision for children in the Foundation Stage who have special educational needs is good. Effective support is provided to meet their specific needs and clear targets are set to enable them to make as much progress as their peers. Provision is limited by the organisation of the class which also includes pupils from the Key Stage 1 class during parts of the day. This inhibits opportunities for reception-age children to make choices in their learning, and the structured provision at these times limits independent learning and choice.
83. The quality of teaching in the Foundation Stage is satisfactory, with some strengths and a few weaknesses. Children are well supported, and relationships are strong. They are well cared for and provision is appropriately planned to ensure that they have access to the Early Learning Goals. They are encouraged to join in with all the activities on offer and they benefit from the use of some good resources. However, sometimes there are not enough activities prepared to enable them to make a choice or to have any opportunity to make decisions about their own learning. Tasks are too often prescriptive, with all children required to make or do the same activity. The combination of reception and Year 1 pupils in the same class, particularly in the afternoons, inhibits sufficient opportunity for reception children to explore, investigate and develop freedom of choice. Children's learning is therefore only satisfactory.

### **Personal, social and emotional development**

84. Provision for personal, social and emotional development is good. Children are on target to meet the early learning goals. Teaching is good. There are many planned opportunities for children to work and play with their peers and with older children, who provide good role models. This enables them to begin to form constructive relationships with others. Children quickly learn the difference between right and wrong and benefit from calm, quiet reassurance and firm boundaries. They are beginning to show curiosity, such as when they used coloured, clear plastic shapes to look through and commented in surprise at the changes they saw in the things around them. "Look, it's all pink" commented one child as he shared his experience with another. Children feel safe and secure and are beginning to relate well to the familiar adults in the class. Occasionally, expectations of children's ability to be independent are not high enough, and children do not have sufficient opportunities to explore, experiment and find out things for themselves.

## **Communication, language and literacy**

85. The quality of teaching and provision for communication, language and literacy are satisfactory. Children learn through play and benefit from planned opportunities for speaking and listening, as well as reading and writing. Children begin to learn about handling books and listening to a good range of stories and rhymes. During the inspection, children were following the story of 'The Three Billy Goats Gruff', and were seen acting out the story using expressive language, words and gestures. The teacher's expectations were appropriate, providing pointers for deeper understanding as she encouraged children to use picture cues when reading the story. Children are beginning to develop their phonic knowledge through the use of alphabet cards. By questioning them, the teacher extends this knowledge so that they begin to make the initial sound in simple three-letter words. Children enjoy stories and respond well to them. Whilst listening to the story of 'Mog', they sat still and showed good levels of concentration and understanding, eager for the next page. Children are beginning to write their names and show understanding that print carries meaning. They show interest in pictures and point to favourite characters. However, there are too few opportunities for them to express themselves regularly and talk about their work. They are not given enough independence in their learning, so that their opportunities to learn through their own experiences are limited. For example, in a science activity, too much was provided for children so that all they had to do was 'cut and stick', rather than find 'light sources' for themselves through trial and error. This reduced the level of discussion and limited their understanding of the task.

## **Mathematical development**

86. Provision for mathematical development is satisfactory. Mathematical understanding is developed through stories, such as 'The Three Billy Goats Gruff', through games and imaginative play. For example, children were observed playing in the sand and water tray, to fill containers of different sizes. They were trying to find out which ones were bigger or smaller than the others. The practical activity helped them to learn in an enjoyable way and led them to comparing with each other "whose container was the biggest". Children are beginning to count to 10 and recognise some of the numerals. They enjoy counting and story activities linked to numbers, and join in with enthusiasm. Satisfactory teaching in this area of learning leads to appropriate gains in skills and knowledge and satisfactory progress. However, not enough examples were seen of children counting regularly and consistently, practising and consolidating their skills. Limited role-play situations, where children learn to use the language of number in everyday situations, such as a shop, a post office, using telephones, handing out cups and saucers, were seen or planned.

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

87. Provision for the development of children's knowledge and understanding of the world is satisfactory. Children learn to use simple tools, such as scissors, glue brushes and hole punches. They were observed making a collage about 'light' as they learned about the importance of light and different light sources, and using coloured plastic shapes to look through. They showed curiosity and interest as they explored the resources, but not enough opportunity was created to talk to them about these experiences and so extend their knowledge. Children are learning to use computers and show an interest in information and communication technology, but too little evidence of children using equipment, controlling programmable toys or becoming aware of technology around them was planned during the inspection. Satisfactory teaching, however, leads to appropriate gains in learning overall.

## **Physical development**

88. Provision for physical development is satisfactory, and is good in lessons. Children do not have sufficient opportunities to use outdoor play facilities, except at playtimes. They are not able to choose an outdoor activity or become independent in their own decision to play out or in. However, in physical education lessons, they make good progress and achieve well because of good teaching. They jump across a 'river' and practise carefully to improve their jumping. They benefit from good demonstrations and suggestions by the teacher as they concentrate and try hard. They know the difference between large movements, as made by 'Big Billy Goat Gruff', and small ones, such as those made by 'Little Billy Goat Gruff'. They practise their movements around the hall, achieving well and reaching standards in line with those expected for children of this age.

## **Creative development**

89. Provision for creative development is satisfactory. Children enjoy exploring paint and resources, and using musical instruments. They join in appropriately with a range of familiar songs and show pride in their achievements. In one lesson, children were observed handling, naming and playing instruments that they could bang or shake. They knew how to use many of the instruments, but found the tambourine difficult to play. The quality of teaching in creative activities is satisfactory. Good resources are provided and effective demonstrations offered. However, not enough exploration time is given to allow children to experiment and try out new sounds or to think of ways of making different sounds. Turn taking reduces the amount of time available for learning new skills. Children enjoy painting, and concentrate well to put their thoughts onto paper. They have made hand and footprints and painted pictures of their family, making effective use of space by using the whole of the paper to paint on.

## **ENGLISH**

90. Inspection findings indicate that standards in reading and writing are below the national average by the end of Years 2 and 6. By the end of Year 2 speaking and listening is also below the national average but by the end of Year 6 it is in line. This judgement is similar to that of the last inspection. The main factor contributing to these lower-than-average standards is the unusually high proportion of pupils with special educational needs in these year groups. Since 1998 the trend in the National Curriculum test results for Year 2 pupils for reading and writing shows that standards have fluctuated but have usually been below or well below the national average. During the same period the results of the National Curriculum Year 6 tests have also alternated between below and well below. There was a marked improvement in 2002 when compared to similar schools, with a significant result well above the national average.
91. The school recognises the need to raise standards in all classes, especially in speech and language in the five to seven age range and writing in the seven to 11 age group, and is determined to do so. A thorough analysis of areas for development has resulted in challenging targets being set for each year group. This is beginning to have a positive impact, with the pupils' progress being tracked and recorded in each year group. A pleasing feature is the promotion of imaginative and creative writing throughout the school. Information and communication technology is used satisfactorily to support pupils' achievement. In Year 2 pupils use word processing skills competently to write simple sentences when developing stories and pupils in Year 6 develop multimedia presentations to enhance written work.
92. There is no significant difference in the attainment or progress of boys and girls from different ethnic or cultural backgrounds. All pupils, including those with special

educational needs and those for whom English is an additional language, achieve well in lessons and over time, due mostly to overall good teaching and a willingness to learn.

## **Speaking and Listening**

93. The pupils start in Year 1 with skills in communication, language and literacy which are well below national expectations for their age. Many of these pupils develop as confident communicators as they get older as a result of good class organisation and effective strategies. By the age of seven, for example, higher-attaining pupils demonstrate good listening skills when responding quickly and sensibly to the teachers' questions about the story plot and plan in the book of 'The Isle of Struay'. Lower attainers have more difficulty in explaining their work, as observed in a Year 1 lesson enacting scenes from 'The Three Billy Goats Gruff'. The majority accurately retell stories which they have heard or read, give reasons why they like school and enjoy reciting rhymes. During lessons they read aloud and explain their work while others listen, which enhances confidence and self-esteem.
94. By the age of 11 standards overall in speaking and listening are satisfactory. The majority of the pupils are attentive and eager to engage in classroom discussions, especially at the beginning and end of lessons. Many pupils, including those with special educational needs, are articulate and venture opinions about the text which they are studying. A good example was noted in a Year 5 lesson where the pupils contributed eagerly to a discussion about the function of adverbs in sentences. In some classes the pupils' listening skills are weaker. They are usually keen to contribute their ideas but the rule about putting their hand up before speaking is not always firmly established and they do not listen consistently well to each other.

## **Reading**

95. Reading is promoted strongly within the school. All pupils are supported well by a high quality system for reading at home and an effective use of extra support in school, including volunteer helpers. However, reading levels by the end of Year 2 are still below those expected nationally, due to weak comprehension skills. The higher-attaining pupils read a good selection of literature and express well their opinions about stories they have read. All the pupils use a good range of strategies, such as knowledge of letter sounds, pictures and the context of the story, to establish meaning, exemplified well in a Year 1 guided reading lesson. Most pupils are enthusiastic about books and enjoy reading simple narratives, for example 'The Three Billy Goats Gruff', as observed with another group of Year 1 pupils. Year 2 pupils show curiosity about features of non-fiction text such as glossary and contents, witnessed in their shared text lesson.
96. By the age of 11, many pupils read fluently, using expression which reflects the meaning of the text. Most use their knowledge of letter sounds and blends to tackle unfamiliar words, as noted while listening to a Year 4 pupil reading 'Animal Trainer' by Shelly Holmes. Whilst higher attainers use the context of the story to help them to figure out the meaning of unfamiliar words, lower attainers find this more difficult. Most pupils located required books in the library with ease. During many lessons the majority use a thesaurus and dictionary well to enhance language skills. Many pupils understand how increasing vocabulary adds to one's enjoyment of reading and writing. For example, pupils in Year 6 chose vibrant lines from J K Rowling's 'Harry Potter and the Philosopher's Stone' to illustrate tension and fear. Higher-attaining pupils, especially amongst the girls, interpret very well and express vividly the sensitivity of relationships and emotional experiences of many characters portrayed in Jacqueline

Wilson's books. They read a wide range of literature which includes modern poets and stories from other cultures, for example 'Tales from India' edited by J E B Gregg. Many older pupils in this age range select challenging books, including such classics as 'Oliver Twist' and 'Lord of the Rings'. All pupils benefit from group reading sessions and higher attainers discuss plot and characterisation confidently, as, for example, a Year 6 pupil did while expressing his enjoyment of 'Soccer at Sandford' by Rob Childs. However, many are still finding it difficult to comprehend fully the plot, themes and storylines in the books they read, evident in reading sessions with groups of Years 4, 5 and 6 pupils.

## Writing

97. By the end of Year 2 the pupils are beginning to write in a number of different forms, such as lists of clothes they wear and accounts of stories and poems. In the five to seven age groups most rearrange 'given' words to make a sensible sentence while higher-attaining pupils set out sentences so that they follow a sequence or tell a story. Year 1 pupils write simple stories, retelling features of 'Goldilocks and the Three Bears'. In their independent writing they express likes and dislikes, for example "I like to play in my garden". Pupils in Year 2 use imaginative vocabulary while plotting a story based on 'Goldilocks'. Higher-attaining pupils are beginning to compose simple rhymes. Their creative and free story-writing includes titles such as 'Jonah's Den' and 'Playing Out'. The focused and systematic teaching of literacy is evident in examples of extended writing in other subjects such as history and religious education. Spelling skills are developed progressively with good use of appropriate wordbanks for all pupils. Although pupils' writing is usually neat and well formed, few consistently join script in their everyday work. By the time they are seven, punctuation is becoming more accurate and words are often chosen carefully, especially by higher-attaining pupils. However, the ability of many pupils to express their ideas and thoughts in appropriate written form is still below what is expected nationally, but is improving steadily.
98. By the age of 11, most pupils write for a range of purposes, for example playscripts, instructions, reports, biographies and book reviews, as well as creative and descriptive stories. The pupils in Years 3 and 4 understand the use of tenses, adjectives, similes and metaphors. The skills of dialogue and paragraphing are developed steadily in Years 5 and 6. Written work is improved by drafting, redrafting, editing, proof reading and then presenting the final form. The quality of creative and extended writing, although below national expectations overall by the end of Year 6, is improving and for the higher-attaining pupils reflects a good depth of reading experience. This was especially noticeable in story plots and character descriptions from Charles Dickens' 'Oliver Twist'. In Years 5 and 6 the pupils begin to learn the impact of figurative and imaginative language in stories and begin to use these features. For example, a poem entitled 'The Playground' written by pupils in Year 5 contained lines such as "Standing staring, watching everything. Soft breezes against my face. Whistling through delicate trees. Children laughing, telling secrets". Such interpretation of others' writing and then their own subsequent written work reinforce the importance of language as a means of communication. Examples of report writing in Years 4 and 5 based on the study of food in Ancient Greece, contain colourful analyses of characters and sensible and thoughtful comments from another person's viewpoint.
99. Literacy is promoted satisfactorily throughout the school. In all classes literacy is being improved through other subjects, for example the importance of listening to and carrying out instructions in physical education, in writing up science investigations accurately and reading and acting out scenes from 'Alice in Wonderland' and 'Oliver Twist'.

100. Overall, the quality of teaching in both the five to seven and seven to 11 age ranges is good, which is a significant improvement since the last inspection. The staff have worked hard to improve strategies for teaching the literacy hour and have been successful. A particularly good example was in a shared reading activity when Year 3 and Year 4 pupils discussed the use of high frequency words while learning about the foods eaten at different cultural festivals, for example Christmas and Diwali. In the same session questioning was used effectively to assess and then promote the pupils' understanding.
101. Most teachers have high expectations of the pupils and value their contributions to discussions, seen to good effect in a Year 4/5 lesson on composing playscripts, based on the Biblical Nativity account. In all the English lessons observed teachers established good routines and generated a purposeful working atmosphere. This contributes well to promoting the positive attitude of pupils who generally work hard, with enthusiasm and interest, to complete their work successfully. Such an example was evident in a Year 2 lesson on planning a story based on the character Katie Morag in the book 'The Isle of Struay'. The best teaching combines discussion and explanation, practical work, high expectations and the maintenance of good pace. This was exemplified well in a Year 3/4 class studying the process of report writing from known information. The teachers' close co-operation with teaching assistants has a positive impact on the quality of learning and particularly for pupils with special educational needs. Support for higher-attaining pupils is not so apparent.
102. Behaviour overall is good. Once they are assigned to a task the pupils concentrate well but, due to the underdeveloped language skills of a significant minority, the work output is frequently limited. An analysis of the pupils' past and present work also supports this judgement. In the good and very good lessons planning is focused clearly on practising and improving key skills. For instance, in a Year 6 lesson the teacher provided the pupils with good examples from a non-fiction text about water which illustrated the important structure and features of non-chronological writing. This good teaching enabled the pupils to re-order a group of statements successfully. The ends of lessons are used well to reinforce key learning points and opportunities to offer effective feedback. The pupils' work is marked consistently. It is always positive and occasionally evaluative, setting clear targets and suggestions to help pupils improve.
103. The co-ordinator is energetic and manages the subject effectively. This ensures that the curriculum is planned well and that there is a good balance and coverage for all aspects. The policy and scheme of work reflect the requirements of the National Literacy Strategy. Teachers' planning is thorough and is reviewed by the co-ordinator on a regular basis. A check is kept on the pupils' attainment and progress through the use of statutory tests for Years 2 and 6 as well as standardised tests for Years 3, 4 and 5, and the moderation and levelling of pupils' work which is now more accurate than at the time of the 2002 tests. The school analyses the results of these tests carefully and accordingly sets appropriate targets for each year group, which is an improvement since the last inspection. In order to develop professionalism, the staff have observed key literacy practitioners teach at a local Beacon primary school. This is already making a positive contribution to the current teaching practices at the school. The co-ordinator has clear ideas about the strengths and areas for development in the subject and realises that higher-order research skills in Years 5 and 6 are a priority. All classes are stocked adequately with books and the school library is used, maintained and supervised well. The co-ordinator carries out lesson observations regularly, offering verbal and written feedback to the teachers. She promotes the subject keenly and is committed to raise standards.



## MATHEMATICS

104. In comparison to similar schools, standards attained in the 2002 national tests at age seven were very low and within the lowest 5 per cent of schools nationally and lower than those attained in 2001. This was due to a high proportion of pupils with special educational needs and a high mobility factor. Standards attained in the 2002 national tests at age 11 were below average when compared to similar schools but an improvement since 2001. In lessons seen, standards in mathematics are well below average for pupils in Year 2 and below average for pupils in Year 6. During their time in the school, pupils achieve well in the subject. On entry to the reception class, the baseline assessment shows that standards in number and mathematical aspects of learning are very low. Satisfactory progress, as they move through school, leads to a rise in pupils' standards, even though they remain below average. This represents good improvement since the previous inspection, when progress was unsatisfactory.
105. Pupils in Years 1 and 2 make at least satisfactory progress, and often good progress, in their numeracy lessons. They benefit from some good teaching as they undertake a wide range of practical tasks to improve their skills. During one lesson, in which pupils were measuring everyday objects, the highest ability pupils developed their own sums well as they found the difference in length between two spoons, giving their answers in centimetres. Other pupils work well with adults to predict and measure the difference between two objects. They solved simple problems and understood that to find the difference between two numbers it was necessary to subtract one from the other. By Year 2, almost all pupils count and recognise numerals to 20, and higher-attaining pupils count to 100. They enjoy the practical aspect of mathematics lessons, but not enough evidence of pupils working on paper or in their books was found in the scrutiny of past work. In some lessons, pupils do not do enough work to improve standards further. Pupils with special educational needs and those with English as an additional language make good progress compared to prior attainment. Pupils use information and communication technology (ICT) competently to support their learning. In Year 1, for example, pupils use mathematics programs to improve their addition and subtraction skills.
106. In Years 3 to 6, pupils continue to make at least satisfactory progress in mathematics, and some, particularly those with special educational needs and English as an additional language, make good progress. For all pupils this is due to good practical activities and good teacher knowledge and skills, which help most pupils to achieve well in their lessons. Pupils in Years 3 and 4, for example, subtracted two and three-digit numbers successfully through good support and clear explanations. Past work indicates that they understand how to double numbers to 10, and undertake regular, practical measuring and estimating activities, achieving well in their tasks. Older pupils in Years 4 and 5 know their multiplication facts up to the four-times table. They count on and back in 10s and 100s from a given number, but the lack of different challenges for higher ability pupils inhibits their opportunity to show what they can do. Past work indicates that this group of pupils multiply numbers by 10 and 12 with ease and understand and calculate perimeters of regular shapes. The oldest pupils in the school, in Year 6, work hard to achieve success. They enjoy their mathematics lessons and benefit from the very positive relationships in the class. Almost all multiply numbers by 10 and 100 with ease. Higher-attaining pupils show appropriate understanding of the method for halving, with one pupil successfully demonstrating this on the board to the rest of the class. Effective modelling and demonstration by the teacher led to good achievement in the lesson. Past work shows evidence of a broad and balanced range of activities, but the amount of content in pupils' books and files is

too small to raise standards further. Much of their work is practical, and this is entirely appropriate in relation to their attainment. However, the lack of content in which pupils work things out for themselves is inhibiting opportunities for standards to rise.

107. The development of numeracy skills across the curriculum is satisfactory. Pupils are beginning to use numbers as part of their studies in science, geography and ICT. For example, they have used simple data collections of information about themselves, such as the colour of hair or eyes in the class, to develop their numeracy and ICT skills, presenting them in graph form. Evidence around the school shows that pupils have made good links with numeracy in science as they develop awareness in the younger classes of shapes and symmetry, and consolidate their understanding of fractions in the upper school. For example, pupils talked about halves, quarters and percentages as they described the scientific process of filtration in a science lesson. They use their measuring skills effectively in design and technology to estimate and measure accurately when making models.
108. The quality of teaching and learning in mathematics is satisfactory, with good features in Years 1 and 2, and is always good in Years 3 to 6. The most positive feature of the teaching is in the good demonstrations at the beginning of each lesson. These demonstrations enable pupils to follow and understand their tasks and make at least appropriate gains in learning.
109. The best teaching was seen where teachers focused carefully on the development of a specific skill, such as in Years 4 and 5, where the teacher extended pupils' skills by a good reminder about previous learning, and then built on these skills to ensure they understood how to derive doubles, before moving on to doubling decimal numbers. Also, good teaching was closely linked to good awareness of pupils' attainment. For example, in Year 2, good assessment data enabled the teacher to plan tasks for each ability group, enabling them to achieve well as they measured objects accurately.
110. However, scrutiny of past work indicates that, although teaching during lessons was good overall, over time it is broadly satisfactory. This is because there is too little evidence of sufficient work in pupils' books and folders. Marking is weak. Much of the marking is inconsistent, and does not diagnose errors or help pupils to move forward. There are few comments in pupils' books that set short-term targets for improvement and to build on learning. Often there is too little modified work for pupils of differing abilities, particularly higher attainers. These weaknesses are not helping to raise standards, despite pupils achieving well in their lessons.
111. The leadership of mathematics is good and is having a positive impact on provision. A high level of support from the Local Education Authority consultant has led to the sound implementation of the National Numeracy Strategy. Lessons are closely linked to the strategy objectives, and the organisation of lessons reflects good awareness of teaching mathematical skills, knowledge and understanding across the school. Effective analysis of assessments and the monitoring of lessons are helping to identify strengths and weaknesses in the provision. This has led to a clear focus on mental mathematics strategies which is having a positive impact on learning in lessons. The good use of mathematical language by teachers is helping to improve pupils' awareness and use of the language of mathematics. The main weakness in the provision is the lack of content in pupils' past work; this has not been monitored and is inhibiting further progress in the subject.

## SCIENCE

112. In the 2002 national tests the percentage of pupils aged 11 attaining Level 4 and above, in comparison with similar schools, was below the national average. The school's cohort was small (12 pupils) and there were no high-attaining pupils. However, the school did well in getting 83 per cent of pupils to achieve Level 4 but only 8 per cent achieved Level 5. This was a significant improvement on the 2001 results. Based on teacher assessments, the percentage of pupils aged seven attaining the expected Level 2 and the percentage achieving the higher Level 3, was average. This result was better than 2001. In lessons, standards are in line with national expectations in the infants but more variable in the junior classes with the current Year 6 underachieving. These pupils have underachieved as they have moved through the school. Achievement and progress by pupils in the infants class are good. Progress is good in the juniors and achievement overall satisfactory. Pupils with special educational needs make good progress in line with the targets set in their individual education plans. The good support given to pupils for whom English is an additional language (EAL) enables them to make good progress in science.
113. Steady improvement has been seen since the last inspection. At that time pupils in the infant class attained levels below average but progress was good. Pupils in the current infant class have made good improvement since being in the reception class. At that time their level of attainment was below national averages. Good and very good teaching has ensured that progress has been rapid and they are now attaining levels in line with those found nationally. Compared to their level of attainment on entry, pupils in Year 6 have improved from well below average to below average. Pupils in Years 3 and 4 have made good progress and are generally attaining levels broadly in line with expectations. There were no unsatisfactory lessons observed in science during the inspection. The scheme of work has been updated and there is an emphasis in all lessons on investigative science. Planning is consistent throughout the school and assessment has been standardised. The time allocated to the subject is in line with that found nationally. Detailed records on attainment in national and optional tests are maintained for each pupil and used to track progress.
114. By the age of seven, pupils begin to use scientific vocabulary well to describe what they do and in response to teachers' questions. Many pupils speak with confidence and understanding and make good progress in their investigative work. This has a positive impact on their learning, which is good. In work on light and dark, pupils carefully investigate objects that use batteries. They describe clearly what they find and record their work in an accurate way, which demonstrates that their observation skills are at least sound and sometimes better. They competently use literacy skills to write stories about their work and progress to writing in a scientific way. In a practical lesson on circuits pupils were successful in working out how to use batteries, wire and buzzers to make the buzzer work. Most pupils confidently described what they did and why sometimes their circuit did not work, for example putting both wires to one end of the battery. Pupils' learning improves further when they apply their understanding to construct a circuit with a bulb in it. Again, all pupils achieved success. Information and communication technology (ICT) is beginning to be used confidently for simple research and to enhance their work.
115. Work seen in pupils' books shows that they have made good progress in their achievements since first joining the class. At the beginning of the term pupils investigated sounds within the locality of their classroom. This was simply recorded and frequently below expected levels. As their work progresses to investigating their body and growing up there is a distinct improvement in observation and recording skills. Work is neatly set out, diagrams are clear and labelling and spelling are mostly accurate. Pupils measure accurately and their findings are recorded simply in a

sequence of short sentences. Pupils' investigations into materials and their properties are sound. They sort objects into sets well, based on qualities such as smooth/hard, bumpy/hard and smooth/squidgy. They suggest sound, alternative ways of sorting. By the current stage of the term their written work and presentation have improved and they are working in a far more scientific way. There are no high-attaining pupils in the infants class. However, higher-attaining pupils are beginning to extend their learning and pose hypotheses which they confidently investigate. Similarly, these pupils confidently talk about the positive and negative ends of batteries and how to identify each and how to construct circuits that work first time.

116. By the age of 11, pupils attain levels below and sometimes well below that found nationally. Whilst pupils have built on their knowledge and understanding in science and have made good progress over time, they are still not achieving levels comparable with other 11-year-olds. There are no high-attaining pupils in Year 6 and a significant number have special educational needs. Pupils' investigative skills are unsatisfactory. Their investigations filtering dirty water are basic due to insecure investigative skills. Few pupils set hypotheses which they investigate. One higher-attaining pupil confidently suggested what they might find and was correct. Most pupils just follow instructions and are unable to suggest ways of varying the test conditions or how to ensure that they are carrying out a fair test. However, they do try hard and their attitudes and behaviour are good and this supports good learning. Most pupils make appropriate observations but recording is unsatisfactory.
117. Work on electrical circuits is below average but progress and achievement are good. Pupils design and make simple circuits which work. Their investigations are recorded in a variety of ways such as tables, charts and written notes. There is some evidence of pupils drawing suitable conclusions. This is better done in work on nutrition where pupils clearly describe what they should and should not include in a healthy diet. They correctly describe the effects that too much sugar has on the body. However, in all work seen, pupils do not set their work out in a suitably scientific way. There is little observational detail, although some work on conductors and insulators shows fair comparisons between different materials. Whilst pupils list electrical components such as batteries, buzzers and resistors, few describe what they are used for or suggest how they work. The pupils' limited written work shows scant use of scientific vocabulary. Higher-attaining pupils are achieving levels just below the expected average level and are on target to achieve average levels by the end of Year 6. Pupils sometimes use ICT skills to enhance their work but it is not of an appropriate standard.
118. The quality of teaching is good overall and sometimes very good in the infants and for pupils in Years 3 and 4. No unsatisfactory teaching was observed. This is a significant improvement since the last inspection. Teachers have secure understanding of the science curriculum and all of them ensure that experimental and investigative methods are used. What distinguishes very good lessons from good lessons is the very good planning and delivery that ensures that all pupils are challenged at appropriate levels. Instructions are clear and the opportunity to develop and use skills in a variety of ways ensures that pupils achieve well and make at least good progress. In these lessons teaching is very focused. The balance of teacher-directed work, pupil activity, recap, review and assessment is managed well to ensure that pupils' learning is never less than good.
119. The best teaching in the infants ensures that pupils' learning is reinforced in a variety of ways. For example, skilled planning and teaching enable learning in mathematics to be applied to investigate symmetry and asymmetry in shadows and distance. In physical education, pupils form light and dark shapes with different poses and they travel in

straight lines. In the juniors, the best teaching is seen when teachers discuss objectives and learning intentions with the pupils. In Years 3 and 4, for example, they organise practical work in such a way that there is a balance of ability within groups, with pupils given the opportunity to work together as well as independently. Teaching assistants are deployed very well to work with pupils with special educational needs and also to guide higher-attaining pupils. They make a very good contribution to the good progress and achievement by these pupils. Plenary sessions are used effectively to make pupils think for themselves and apply previous learning. These sessions are also used to ensure that all of them have met the lesson objectives at their level and are prepared for the next stage of learning. Where teaching is less successful but still satisfactory, teachers allow pupils to take responsibility for their learning in practical tasks but do not provide enough guidance as the work progresses. There is also a lack of a clear structure to the work, for example work cards and guidance sheets, with the result that pupils become confused and slip off task. The step by step approach that these underachieving pupils need, particularly in Year 6, is limited and therefore hampers the development and refinement of basic skills and how to work in a scientific way.

120. Procedures for assessment are good. Pupils' attainment in national and optional tests are recorded and analysed well and their performance is tracked as they move through the school. Targets for improvement are set. However, the use of assessment in classes to guide planning is inconsistent and a weakness. Whilst teachers know their pupils well and record their progress and achievement, this is not reflected in most teachers' planning. With mixed age and mixed ability classes, teachers are not consistently modifying their planning for the next stage of learning to meet the range of pupils' needs. In lessons seen, despite good teaching and learning, few teachers highlighted modified tasks for different groups. In practical activities all pupils carried out the same work, irrespective of their knowledge, understanding and skills. Therefore, the opportunity to bring about a more rapid rise in standards for all pupils based on their prior attainment is missed. In some classes marking is frequently very brief and at worst is just ticks. The opportunity to use informative marking to praise and encourage and to set short-term targets for improvement in standards is lacking and a weakness.
121. The subject is well managed. The co-ordinator is fully aware of the need to improve standards in science for all pupils. However, whilst she monitors planning and work and gives valuable feedback, she is unable to work alongside colleagues in their classes and this limits greater progress in ensuring that standards rise more rapidly.

## **ART AND DESIGN**

122. Standards in art and design are in line with those expected in Year 2 and Year 6, as well as in other classes in the school. This is an improvement since the last inspection. Most pupils, including those with special educational needs and those for whom English is an additional language, achieve well. Pupils achieve very well in Years 3 to 6. They benefit from good teaching and some very good activities that enrich their school lives.
123. Pupils in Years 1 and 2 enjoy art and design. They achieve well as they investigate different drawing materials and try out different techniques. They communicate their ideas through paint and drawing, and are beginning to evaluate and improve their work. They have drawn self-portraits to communicate their own views of themselves, showing good awareness of colour, line and dimensions. They use mirrors to improve their accuracy and achieve good quality results. Pupils mix colour to achieve the most

accurate hair and eye colour, as well as skin tone. They competently use information and communication technology (ICT) to develop patterns and pictures and to incorporate colour.

124. Older pupils, in Years 3 to 6, improve their art and design skills through good links with other curriculum areas including ICT. For example, in Years 3 to 5, pupils were undertaking a printing project linked to their study of ancient Greece. They had worked with an external and very skilled teacher to research patterns on Greek sculpture and columns, and had combined their ideas to create their own pattern. These had been transferred to a printing block, using glue and string, and then printed on to coloured materials. The resulting prints were of good quality and were all of individual design. Pupils could explain the process accurately and talk about the major difficulties they had overcome. For example, they described the process of attaching string to the block as “very challenging” and thought there might be easier ways of achieving it – however, they could not think of any. Outcomes to the topic were good; however, there is no hierarchy of skills or progression built into the topic to enable older pupils in Year 5 to build on skills learnt earlier. Hence, although achievement in the Years 3 to 4 lesson was very good, as it was in the Years 4 to 5 lesson, standards remain in line with those expected, as there is no opportunity to raise them higher.
125. The quality of teaching and learning in art and design is always good, and is very good where it is taught by an external art teacher. This leads to high achievement in lessons, particularly in Years 3 to 6. Teachers’ knowledge and understanding of art and design are good, and they have high expectations of pupils’ achievement and behaviour. Pupils succeed well in the subject and thrive on the very good, varied activities provided. For example, older pupils have completed some good three-dimensional models of Egyptian masks and Greek vases linked to their history studies. The quality of the finished articles is very good. However, teachers do not always plan for the development of basic skills and ensure that pupils build on these as they move through the school. This means that, although pupils achieve well in their tasks, they do not have the opportunity to build on skills they learned earlier and so attain higher standards.
126. Leadership of art and design is very good. Some very effective enrichment and extra-curricular activities enhance provision. For example, good extra-curricular art clubs have enabled pupils to take part in a good range of additional art activities, such as working with mosaics, tapestries and local artists. Parents have also been involved in helping to create murals. The work of pupils in the club is being used as the Christmas card for the local authority. Examples of pupils’ high quality work are on display all around the school and this, and the work from lessons, provides a rich and stimulating backdrop to the school day. Art and design contributes very well to the spiritual and cultural development of pupils. There are examples of African art in Year 3, and Egyptian and Greek links in the older classes. There have been past exhibitions of pupils’ work in the local art gallery, and work with local artists, such as the sculptor Anthony Caro is very good and a significant strength.

## **DESIGN AND TECHNOLOGY**

127. Standards in design and technology are slightly below those expected by pupils in Years 2 and 6, and across the school. There has been no significant improvement since the last inspection. This is because of pupils’ lack of previous experience in designing and making and the lack of some resources to enable teachers to bring about a more rapid development of pupils’ knowledge, understanding and skill. Pupils’ achievement overall is satisfactory and there is evidence of good links with other

curriculum areas. Information and communication technology is beginning to be used competently by pupils but lack of opportunity in previous years has limited their ability to use it more effectively.

128. In Years 1 and 2, all pupils achieve appropriately as they learn to use simple tools. They use design sheets to plan their models, and understand the link between designing and making. During the inspection, younger children were observed making moving parts for a model. They used split pins to create a mechanism that moves as they began to make a bridge for their troll in the story of 'The Three Billy Goats Gruff'. Older pupils in Year 2 write instructions for making models and other items, such as a 'smoothie'. They build with Lego and Duplo and undertake simple cooking activities, although cooking facilities are limited.
129. As they move into Years 3 to 6, pupils begin to link their design and technology to other areas of the curriculum. Their skills are developing appropriately and they make satisfactory gains in learning about designing and making models. In Years 3 and 4, for example, pupils have created Greek shelters as part of their history studies on ancient Greece. They use simple tools to create supports and a roof out of card, showing appropriate awareness of what a shelter needs to provide. Older pupils have worked towards developing a fairground with moving parts. For example, they have made a 'Big Wheel' and a 'Roundabout' that moves one way and then the other. Each group was required to design and make a particular part from their own ideas and experiences. Pupils worked together to achieve the end result and achieved appropriately throughout the topic.
130. The quality of teaching and learning in design and technology is satisfactory, with many good features. Teachers use questions well to extend pupils' knowledge and thinking skills. For example, in one lesson in Years 1 and 2, good questioning about how body parts move led to good understanding about a lever mechanism. Many opportunities were sought to let pupils offer their own suggestions before the teacher offered advice about the sequence of tasks. In another lesson in Year 6, good questioning enabled pupils to apply their skills to a variety of well-thought-out designs for leaflets.
131. Teachers' plans are thorough, with clear aims and intentions, and this leads to good subject-specific content and a varied range of tasks. However, not enough additional experiences are planned to extend and improve standards. Information and communication technology is being used soundly to support teaching and learning. However, there is no opportunity for pupils to use construction kits as part of a club, and there are too few basic building resources across the school. Little food technology is undertaken.
132. Pupils of all abilities are fully included and achieve appropriately.
133. Leadership of design and technology is satisfactory. An appropriate curriculum has been established with effective links to the other areas of learning. There is a clear understanding of the strengths and weaknesses of the provision, but lack of monitoring of teaching and learning has led to some inconsistencies in planned learning opportunities. There is a lack of clarity about what skills pupils have learned in previous classes, and this means that teachers have difficulty building on prior learning and extending pupils' skills further. This is because assessment is not a secure part of the planned provision. Although procedures are in place to identify what groups of pupils have covered, the lack of more specific data leads to repetition of skills and insufficient improvement in standards. Lack of sufficient resources is also a weakness, but a recent audit has identified areas for improvement.

## GEOGRAPHY

134. Due to timetabling arrangements, only one lesson was observed during the inspection. Other evidence includes an analysis of the pupils' past and present work and discussions with them and their teachers. This indicates that attainment by the end of Year 2 is close to the national expectations and by the end of Year 6 it is below. This is a similar judgement to the previous inspection. The pupils' learning, including those with special educational needs and for those whom English is an additional language, is mostly satisfactory. This differs from the last inspection which reported learning to be unsatisfactory in the seven to 11 age group. Achievement for all the pupils is also satisfactory due generally to their good attitudes and appropriate tasks set by the teachers.
135. Pupils in Years 1 and 2 have satisfactory recall of subject knowledge and skills. In Year 1 they know how to carry out simple mapping and describe their route to and from school. On a local map of the area they identify features including their own streets and the school. In Year 2 they understand the difference between human and physical features such as shops, houses, rivers and hills. They know the effects that weather and temperature variations have on the type of clothes which people wear. They discuss both attractive and unattractive features in their own locality and give reasons for their opinions, for example the river Ouse looking like the sea when it is in high flood, verging on the school premises. By the end of Year 2 pupils read basic symbols to identify features and establish locations on imaginative maps. To consolidate their mapping skills they use features in books, for example the fictional Scottish island 'Struay', to figure out why settlements are located in areas with specific geographical features such as mountains, bays and rivers. Regular visits to Eastbourne help the pupils to distinguish between inland and seaside features.
136. In the seven to 11 age group mapping skills are not so well developed. Only the higher attainers use four grid references to locate positions on an Ordnance Survey map. In their work on landscapes the majority distinguishes accurately between highlands and lowlands on a physical map. The pupils in Year 4 identify successfully the position of mainland Greece and the Greek islands on a map of Europe. In Year 5 pupils have compared the geographical features of Lewes with the village of Kingston at the foot of the South Downs. The higher-attaining pupils in Year 6, in their study of capital cities, have visited London and constructed maps, inserting some of its main features, such as Green Park, Hyde Park, Trafalgar Square and Covent Garden. Many identify on a globe the main continents, cities, mountains, rivers and oceans. Some pupils talk knowledgeably about features of rivers such as source, tributary and estuary. The higher order skills of analysis to draw conclusions from geographical evidence are lacking from pupils' learning in nearly all classes. Pupils' written work is frequently incomplete and pupils in Year 6 show an unsatisfactory knowledge and understanding in the subject.
137. The quality of teaching is satisfactory. In the lesson seen and from the scrutiny of teachers' files, lessons are soundly planned, which holds the pupils' interest. Effective pace is maintained through a range of activities including, as appropriate, the use of information and communication technology. For example, in a Year 4/5 class good use was made of an enlarged map to introduce the pupils to the concept of scale, skills which they subsequently used well to measure distance on their own individual maps. At the end of lessons skilful questioning establishes the extent to which the pupils have improved their knowledge and understanding and to reinforce key learning points.



138. In the observed lesson the pupils had a positive attitude to work. Most listened carefully and responded well to instructions and questions. Pupils were well behaved and once set a task most applied themselves diligently. They generally work well together either in pairs or groups. They enjoy geographical work, especially when it involves practical activities such as measuring a distance on a map and then using the scale to calculate the real distances.
139. At the time of the last inspection there was no co-ordinator for the subject. That situation is now rectified with the new co-ordinator managing the subject satisfactorily. The policy is up to date, the planning is detailed and the scheme of work is based on the Qualifications and Curriculum Authority's recommended programmes of study. This is a significant improvement since the previous inspection. Resources are good, maintained well and easily accessible to pupils and teachers.

## HISTORY

140. It was only possible to observe one lesson during the inspection due to timetabling arrangements. Judgements are therefore based on an analysis of the pupils' past and present work and discussions with them and their teachers. Evidence indicates that by the end of Years 2 and 6 attainment is in line with national expectations. This is similar to the findings of the last report. Taking account of prior attainment and the work covered over time, pupils, including those with special educational needs and those for whom English is an additional language, make satisfactory progress. Pupils also achieve satisfactorily due mainly to good planning supplemented by visits from local historians to speak about and dramatise events from past periods. There is limited evidence of pupils using information and communication technology to enhance their work but their learning is encouraged through the use of media presentations.
141. The pupils begin to develop their sense of chronology from an early age. In Year 1 the pupils demonstrate effectively their understanding of past and present when they compare photographs of themselves now and when they were two or four in relation to a time-line measuring their growth from birth to the age of seven. When they study the events of 5<sup>th</sup> November they associate Guy Fawkes with a man who lived a long time ago. In Lewes the Gunpowder Plot is remembered annually with bonfires organised by five different societies and preceded by processions in which many of these pupils take part. During such functions the pupils are taught to think about historical events and look for reasons why things happen. Many higher-attaining pupils recall the major events in the lives of famous people such as Florence Nightingale. By the end of Year 2 they use photographs and examine artefacts to compare the dress style, vehicles and buildings of former times with those of the present.
142. By the end of Year 6 the pupils demonstrate a satisfactory understanding and knowledge of the periods which they have studied, for example the Victorians, Tudors, Ancient Greeks, Romans and Vikings. Pupils in Years 3 and 4 begin to learn how democracy works when they study the different systems of government in Sparta and Athens, especially in respect of education and how males and females were treated differently. In Years 4 and 5 many pupils explain animatedly the influence which gods such as Zeus, Hades and Asclepius on the Ancient Greeks and whose exploits were often recounted as plays in the open air theatres. Pupils in Year 6 competently use primary source material such as newspapers and artefacts to learn about life in Victorian times. During a conversation with an inspector, a group of Year 6 pupils recalled how industrial, domestic and school life has changed since then, taking particular glee in describing vividly the exploits of young chimney sweeps and the austere conditions found in Victorian schools. They know that Thomas Paine, the

political writer, was born in Lewes. Historical understanding is enhanced further when pupils relate events to places they visit such as Anne of Cleves' house while learning about King Henry VIII. However, written work is limited and usually factual, and only higher attainers are willing to speak during class or group discussions when they are requested to reason and justify their contributions. While progress in factual learning is satisfactory for all pupils, the opportunity to interpret historical sources as they mature and get older is not so apparent.

143. Discussion with pupils and observation of the one timetabled lesson indicate that they have a good attitude to history. They enjoy visits to places of historical interest. The pupils are well behaved, respond quickly to the teachers' questions and once on task work with sustained concentration. This was exemplified well in a Year 4/5 lesson where pupils learned about Ancient Greek beliefs by studying pictures of temples. They are particularly supportive in group work and the majority takes pride in what they do, although the amount completed is often limited.
144. In the lesson observed the teaching was good. It was planned well and the learning objectives shared clearly with the pupils. Praise and encouragement were used well, thereby enhancing the confidence and self-esteem of the pupils. Good class management, skilful questioning and intervention ensured that all the pupils made good progress. However, an analysis of the pupils' past work indicates that overall teaching within the school is satisfactory.
145. The conscientious and enthusiastic co-ordinator manages the subject well. She works hard to maintain a good range and quantity of resources. There is an up dated policy, detailed plans and a long-term framework in place, which ensures full coverage of the National Curriculum programmes of study. The teachers' plans are reviewed by the co-ordinator on a regular basis. She has monitored teaching and learning in some classes, offering verbal feedback to the teachers involved.

## **INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY**

146. During the inspection only two lessons were observed, one of which focused mainly on design and technology. Other evidence includes an analysis of the pupils' past and present work and discussion with them and their teachers. Judgements based on this indicate standards close to national expectations by the end of Year 2 and below by the end of Year 6. This is similar to the findings of the last inspection. The results at the end of Year 6 are due mainly to limited higher order skills resulting from a lack of resources in previous years. This is now mostly rectified with the installation of a full networking system of 13 computers between the five classes. However, based on low prior attainment, pupils' progress, including those with special educational needs and those for whom English is an additional language, is satisfactory. Pupils also achieve satisfactorily due to overall satisfactory planning and their own eagerness to succeed. Nevertheless, there are limited opportunities for the pupils to learn consistently specific information and communication technology (ICT) skills, especially in the seven to 11 age range.
147. A pleasing feature is the use of ICT across other areas of the curriculum. For example, the pupils in Year 2 use word-processing skills to type up simple sentences such as "I like Action Man" on the computer and print them out, while pupils in Years 4 and 5 construct graphs, representing different ways of transport, during geography lessons. Computer programs are used satisfactorily to help pupils with special educational needs, as observed in a Year 5 lesson on constructing sentences for playscripts.

148. Pupils in Year 1 learn mouse control and know how to use the space bar, delete and arrow keys. Higher attainers use word-processing to write simple stories and the majority successfully calculates simple addition and subtraction by following computer program instructions. By the end of Year 2 many save, retrieve and print their own work. They also use click and drag skills effectively to illustrate patterns and pictures, often incorporating colours.
149. By the end of Year 6 average and higher-attaining pupils are competent in a range of skills and are familiar with a variety of programs. They combine text and pictures, working independently, using help sheets when necessary. Some use the Internet to make multimedia presentations, as observed in a Year 6 English lesson researching water in respect of non-chronological writing features. Their experience of handling graphics to enhance written reports is limited, although pupils in the Year 3/4 class have produced pamphlets, some in colour, outlining a playscript of 'Little Red Riding Hood'. Higher-attaining pupils in Years 4 and 5 type, edit, align, save and retrieve work as well as change colour, font and size. By the end of Year 6 the majority of the pupils has a satisfactory knowledge of word-processing but not of handling data or use of spreadsheets. Higher attainers highlight, change text, import pictures and place emphasis on layout. The majority access and send e-mail, and pupils in Year 6 correspond electronically with a school in Boston, USA, and missionaries in Mongolia. Some Year 6 higher attainers have given a PowerPoint presentation on the 'Leavers' Service' in church. In the seven to 11 age range there is little evidence of the use of control, modelling or sensors. The school acknowledges this and on receipt of more funding has plans to rectify the matter.
150. The pupils enjoy ICT lessons and their attitudes are good. Most talk enthusiastically about the subject and are eager to show what they can do, for example use different search engines to access information about the Ancient Greeks, as observed in a Year 4/5 history display. A relatively small number of pupils use computers at home and these are very happy to help their peers in class, as noted during a Year 4/5 English lesson about the features of playscripts. They are well behaved and sustain concentration well, exemplified during a Year 2 control lesson using programmable robotic toys.
151. In the two lessons observed, the teaching in one lesson was good and in the other it was satisfactory. Teachers have good subject knowledge and the Year 2 lesson had a clear focus on the specific skill, to program a robotic toy, to be taught. A Year 6 lesson the planned use of ICT to demonstrate how mechanisms make the model of a fairground move was very limited due the pupils' limited prior knowledge and understanding. Teachers are becoming more confident and secure in the use of new equipment. Overall classes are managed effectively.
152. The subject is led and managed well by an enthusiastic co-ordinator. She provides effective support for colleagues and helps to raise standards through training for the whole school and helpful documents. Recent training led by the Local Education Authority's advisory team is beginning to have a positive impact. A system is in place to assess each pupil against the attainment targets of the National Curriculum programmes of study. There is a detailed policy and scheme of work and the planning ensures that there is provision for appropriate coverage and continuity. The co-ordinator reviews teachers' plans on a regular basis and has initiated a working partnership with a local Beacon school. The school has its own web site designed by the pupils, staff and governors.

## MUSIC

153. Due to the school's timetable it was not possible to make clear judgements on all the strands of the music curriculum. During the inspection the focus for music was on singing and performing. This was linked to the school's nativity productions in school and within the community. By the age of seven, pupils' standards of attainment are in line with national expectations. Pupils' achievement is good. By the age of 11, pupils attain levels at least in line with national expectations and frequently higher in singing. Achievement and progress are good. This is an improvement since the last inspection, particularly by the age of 11. Pupils with special educational needs and those for whom English is an additional language achieve well and make good progress. Their attainment is similar to that of other pupils and there are no marked differences.
154. By the age of 7, pupils are beginning to recognise musical instruments in a composition by Mozart. They know the names of common instruments such as tuba, clarinet and violin and confidently describe the sounds they make such as high, low, long or short. They use knowledge gained from previous lessons to identify specific sections of the orchestra such as brass and woodwind. In practical work they represent sounds using their arms and hands to show duration and pitch. In written work, pupils are beginning to represent sounds and notes in different ways and to describe their signs and symbols. Pupils sing with feeling and expression in assemblies and follow tunes well. In lessons they are provided with the opportunity to sing in a range of styles. Pupils enjoy listening to music from different periods and are beginning to learn the names of different composers. This is enhanced by the inclusion of music at appropriate times in other lessons. Teachers' records show that pupils achieve at least satisfactory standards in playing tuned and untuned musical instruments.
155. By the age of 11, pupils sing well and with enjoyment. A significant number of pupils sing very well, particularly boys. When singing in assemblies, pupils develop increasing confidence singing solo and in trios to add feeling to hymns. In class, pupils sing well in groups, confidently following tunes and words and adjusting their own performance through listening to others. Most pupils sing clearly and have good control of pitch and dynamics. However, whilst all pupils practise, rehearse and give good performances singing in unison, no singing included two-part or harmony. Teachers' records show that this is included within the syllabus but a judgement could not be made. Pupils are aware how their singing adds to the overall effect. Through review and plenary sessions they suggest ways in which their own and others' work could be improved. A good example was seen when a pupil suggested altering the position of some words in a Christmas song to indicate a pause or a longer note. Judgements on standards in other areas of the music curriculum could not be made. Teachers' records indicate that it is in line with national expectations.
156. Overall, the quality of teaching is good and never less than satisfactory. Throughout the school there is a consistent approach to planning and teaching and this makes a positive impact on standards and achievement for all pupils. Planning includes clear learning intentions and resources. Information and communication technology is used successfully to support teaching and learning, for example the use of keyboards. Lessons are introduced well and generally the pace is good with pupils kept on task. In the best lessons, teachers' knowledge and understanding are very good and their enthusiasm for the subject is conveyed well to pupils. They work hard to ensure that all pupils make progress and achieve the learning intentions. Pupils in Year 6, for example, are encouraged to refine and perfect their singing. The teacher's enthusiasm ensures that all are inspired and motivated to do their best. Where teaching is less successful teachers do not allow opportunities for pupils to practise and perfect rhythm

in small groups. There is too much whole-class work, with the result that some pupils become bored and distracted. At these times teachers have to work hard to bring the class back on task.

157. The management of the subject is very good. There is a clear policy and scheme. The music co-ordinator maintains a very good overview of the subject and is aware of strengths and weaknesses. She has made a very good impact on the development of music throughout the school and the significant contribution that music makes to the life of the school and spiritual development. She makes a positive contribution to extra-curricular music, ensuring that as many pupils as possible join in with musical performances at different stages in the school year, frequently writing and composing the music herself. She has ensured improvement since the last inspection.

## **PHYSICAL EDUCATION**

158. Due to the school's timetable, it was not possible to observe any teaching of physical education in Years 5 and 6. Judgements on attainment for 11-year-olds are based on discussions with pupils and teachers, planning, records and photographs. By the age of seven and 11 standards are in line with national expectations and pupils make good progress. There has been a slight improvement since the last inspection due to the increased variety in extra-curricular activities and the focused support provided by a local Beacon school. Pupils in Key Stage 2 have achieved well in local athletics competitions and won the small schools' runners-up trophy. Pupils with special educational needs make good progress and their achievement is good.
159. During the inspection the focus was on dance and movement. In all lessons pupils and teachers are appropriately dressed. Lessons commence and finish with relevant warm-ups and cool-down activities. Most pupils use these sessions well and even the youngest are beginning to understand the importance of warming up gradually and relaxing after exercise.
160. By the age of seven, pupils' learning is developed well because they listen attentively to instructions and watch demonstrations carefully. They respond well to teachers' questions and work safely and well together. When practising movements it is clear that they have gained knowledge and understanding from previous lessons on shadows and applied this to their new work. They twist, turn and stretch with increasing skill and move in imaginative ways. During review sessions pupils answer teachers' questions well and make specific observations, such as slowing down or speeding up according to the speed of different counts. Sequences develop logically and pupils co-operate well in pairs and within groups to perform a series of connected sequences. Achievement and progress by pupils in Year 1 are good. In their dance lesson based on the theme 'Three Billy Goats Gruff' pupils competently explained why they should warm up sensibly. They use large and small steps well to represent large Billy Goat and baby Billy Goat. They enjoy showing what they have learnt to the class in demonstration and reviews. Pupils jump confidently and safely and know how to land on the balls of their feet and bend their knees. Better jumpers swing both their arms to gain greater momentum. By the end of the lesson, pupils effectively combine all the skills they have practised to move like 'ugly' and 'frightening' trolls.
161. By the age of 11, from all available evidence, pupils' attainment is overall in line with national expectations. Teachers' records show that pupils attain appropriate levels in each aspect of the physical education curriculum. By Year 6, most pupils can swim competently at least 25 metres. In gymnastics and athletic sessions they connect skills together and apply them successfully when competing against other schools.

They satisfactorily play net, striking/fielding and invasions games. Due to financial constraints, knowledge, skill and understanding in outdoor and adventurous activities are limited to a short weekend within the locality. Pupils in Years 3 and 4 move well to music in a series of sequences based on the theme 'The Pied Piper'. They listen attentively to their teacher and a commercial tape and then move in a series of three sequences to represent realistic rats or pipers. However, pupils lack some confidence changing their movements as the style and mood of the music changes. Pupils analyse their performance and comment sensibly in review sessions. As the lesson progresses, pupils modify and refine their performance based on the effective intervention of their teacher. Pupils' learning is good and they achieve well and make good progress.

162. At the time of the last inspection the attitudes and behaviour of a few pupils in Key Stage 2 caused some concern. During the inspection the attitudes and behaviour of all pupils were at least good and sometimes very good. Their positive attitudes make a significant contribution to their learning and achievement. Pupils are enthusiastic and keen to join in. They show respect for their teachers and each other and change sensibly and quickly.
163. Teaching is good and sometimes very good. This is an improvement since the last inspection. Teachers' planning identifies clear learning intentions and lessons develop logically and support good learning. Each activity ensures that pupils make progress no matter what their ability. Teachers work hard to ensure that all pupils take an active part in lessons and enjoy their work. They encourage pupils to join in with demonstrations, answer questions and, for the less confident, guide and support them during practical tasks. In all lessons the pace is good and teaching assistants are used well to support learning. They make a valuable contribution to lessons and pupils' learning because they are actively involved and know each pupil well.
164. The co-ordinator is a physical education specialist and she is having a positive impact on raising standards. She has enlisted the support of a local Beacon school and has encouraged the development of a wide range of sporting extra-curricular activities. She monitors planning and provides support to colleagues. This is having a positive impact on pupils' achievements and learning and in ensuring that there is development of skills as pupils progress through the school. Resources for the subject are good and the accommodation, which includes a large flat playing field, is used well throughout the year.

## **RELIGIOUS EDUCATION**

165. Due to the school's timetable, it was only possible for one lesson to be observed. Judgements are made from this lesson, the scrutiny of work, displays, teachers' planning and discussion with teachers and the Section 23 inspector.
166. Standards of attainment are above expectations found in the locally agreed syllabus for religious education for pupils in Key Stage 1 and Key Stage 2. Achievement and progress are good. The attainment of pupils with special educational needs is similar to that of other pupils. Standards of attainment have improved significantly since the last inspection.
167. Year 2 pupils are developing their understanding of major religious festivals such as Easter and Christmas and explain what they know and understand well. They understand that other religions and faiths have different beliefs and they find out about these and respect them. Pupils are encouraged to accept differences and to care for

one another. Written work is still not as good as oral work but pupils have gained in knowledge and understanding and therefore their learning is frequently good. Pupils' work makes a positive contribution to their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. Pupils are keen to answer questions and enjoy explaining what they know and understand about Jesus and how special he is to their lives and how special they are. This is reinforced through opportunities to answer questions in assemblies and acts of collective worship.

168. Standards of attainment in Year 6 have improved since the time of the last inspection. Whilst oral work is still better than written work, pupils' knowledge and understanding are much better and they know the importance of faith in their lives. They explain clearly the major religious events in the Christian calendar and show respect and understanding for other religious beliefs. They are supportive of pupils from different ethnic groups who have different beliefs from their own. Progress and achievement since the infants are good. Where attainment is above expectations in Years 3 and 4, pupils are fully involved in their learning. They listen well to the theme of The Good Samaritan and make very good statements and judgements when comparing different people's attitudes at that time with those found today. They draw well on their own experiences and observations. Pupils' answers in discussion work reflect very good thinking. In dramatisations, developing the theme of attitudes, they work well and clearly convey tension and mood.
169. The quality of teaching seen is very good and an improvement since the last inspection. Teachers have good subject knowledge which they use well to deliver exciting lessons to inspire and motivate the pupils to do well. Whilst there is frequently little emphasis on written work, the style of teaching ensures that pupils make at least good progress in their learning and achieve well. Teaching assistants are deployed well to work with small groups and individuals and this makes a positive contribution to pupils' learning and the standards they achieve. Throughout the school staff maintain a caring and supportive attitude to pupils which enhances the Christian way in which relationships are maintained and underlines many of the themes developed through religious education.

170. The subject continues to be managed very well. The co-ordinator monitors the development of the subject well and this has contributed positively to improvements. Throughout the school the development of religious education adds greatly to pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. Resources are good and are used well to support teaching and learning.