

INSPECTION REPORT

THE ANTHONY ROPER PRIMARY SCHOOL

Dartford

LEA area: Kent

Unique reference number: 118255

Headteacher: Mr R Straker

Reporting inspector: C. Pittman
18275

Dates of inspection: 10th – 13th February 2003

Inspection number: 247855

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

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INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Type of school: Infant and Junior

School category: Community

Age range of pupils: 5 to 11 years

Gender of pupils: Mixed

School address: High Street
Eynsford
Dartford
Kent

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Appropriate authority: The Governing Body

Name of chair of governors: Mr D Brazier

Date of previous inspection: 19th – 23rd January 1998

INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Team members			Subject responsibilities	Aspect responsibilities
18275	Chrissie Pittman	Registered inspector	Foundation Stage Art and design	Characteristics of the school, Standards: interpretation of the school's results, Teaching and learning, Leadership and management.
19798	Jane O'Keefe	Lay inspector		Attitudes, values and personal development, Care for pupils, Partnership with parents.
17995	Roger Purdom	Team inspector	Mathematics Geography History Physical education	
29988	Lynne Thorogood	Team inspector	Special Educational Needs English Music Religious education	
31218	Tom Allen	Team inspector	Educational Inclusion Science Information and communication technology Design technology	Curricular and other opportunities.

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PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

This popular village school is situated in Eynsford on the outskirts of Dartford in Kent. It is bigger than other primary schools and caters for 311 boys and girls between the ages of four and eleven years in mixed age and ability classes. Most of its pupils are white British and have a wide range of socio-economic backgrounds. The majority come from the immediate catchment area, which is a mixture of owner occupied homes and social housing. The percentage of pupils eligible for free school meals is well below average. The proportion of pupils with a special educational need (SEN), including those with statements of special needs, is close to the national average. Pupils' attainment on entry to the school is average.

HOW GOOD THE SCHOOL IS

This is a very good school with some excellent features. The school has made significant improvement and sustained high standards since the last inspection. Most pupils achieve very well in relation to their prior attainment at age seven. The attention paid to developing children as responsible members of society has led to excellent attitudes to work, relationships and personal development on the part of pupils. The teaching, overall, is very good. The aims and objectives of all the staff are firmly targeted on raising standards. This is having a very positive impact on pupils' learning. The headteacher's excellent leadership places an emphasis on identifying and tackling any perceived weaknesses; this has resulted in a high quality education for the pupils. He is very well supported by his efficient and hard working deputy. The school is well governed, self-critical and cost effective and provides very good value for money.

What the school does well

- The very good teaching promotes standards that are usually well above average. The teaching of English, mathematics and science is particularly good.
- Pupils achieve very well because they have clear targets set for them. The school's provision for pupils with special educational needs (SEN) is very good.
- The headteacher's leadership is excellent. The school is very well managed at all levels, including the involvement of governors who regularly monitor and support the school.
- Pupils' personal development is outstanding; they have excellent attitudes to their learning and in their personal relationships as a result of the very good provision made by the school for pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development.
- There is a very good level of care provided for all pupils and parents are very appreciative of this.

What could be improved

- Improve achievement for more able pupils in the Foundation Stage and in Years 1 and 2.

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

HOW THE SCHOOL HAS IMPROVED SINCE ITS LAST INSPECTION

The school has made very good improvement since its previous inspection in 1998. The headteacher reacts swiftly to perceived weaknesses and this has led to a significant improvement in the quality of teaching, management, curriculum provision and monitoring. Nearly all the weaknesses identified in the previous report have been addressed and changed to strengths. There is now no unsatisfactory teaching; one in three of the lessons seen during the inspection were very good or excellent. Curriculum planning, teaching and learning are now well

monitored and there are good procedures for assessing pupils' achievement. Since the previous inspection overall attainment for eleven-year-olds has been consistently well above average; while standards have been maintained for seven-year-olds in writing and mathematics. More able pupils in Years 1 and 2 are insufficiently targeted to ensure that they make similar progress to those in Years 3, 4, 5 and 6. Similarly, curriculum planning for children in the reception class has come a long way, but pupils still do not have a secure play area with climbing equipment and large wheeled toys to promote their physical development. The school has identified these as areas for improvement and is taking steps to redress the situation. Given the excellent quality of its leadership and the commitment of its staff, the school is well placed to improve even further.

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	A*	A	A*	A
mathematics	A*	A	A	A
science	A	B	A	A

Key

very high A*

well above average A

above average B

average C

below average D

well below average E

Most children, when they start school, are attaining standards in line with expectations, although some are above average. They make satisfactory progress in the reception class and by the time they reach Year 2, their attainment is above average in reading and writing, and at the expected standard in mathematics. By Year 6, pupils are usually attaining standards that are very high (in the top 5% nationally) in English. In mathematics and science they are well above the national average. Standards in the core subjects of English, mathematics and science are well above average when compared to schools in a similar context. Pupils are consistently achieving these excellent results. Boys are out performing girls in reading, writing and mathematics at age seven. At age eleven girls out perform boys in mathematics. Pupils with SEN achieve well. Work seen, during the inspection, confirms the standards suggested by the test results and most pupils are making very good progress overall. Children in Foundation Stage make satisfactory progress; pupils in the infant classes make good progress, although they make better progress in the junior classes because their learning is better targeted and monitored. The school sets challenging targets and is successful in achieving them.

PUPILS' ATTITUDES AND VALUES

Aspect	Comment
Attitudes to the school	Pupils' attitudes to learning, to school and to each other are excellent. They try hard, enjoy learning, are highly motivated and readily take part in all school activities.

Behaviour, in and out of classrooms	Very good. Pupils behave very well in lessons and around the school. They are polite, well mannered and show respect for property. There is very little evidence of oppressive or disruptive behaviour. This helps to create a very good learning environment. There were no exclusions in the last year.
Personal development and relationships	Excellent. Relationships throughout the school are excellent and older children support the younger ones. Most are patient and courteous with a well-developed sense of right and wrong. They show a great deal of respect for the opinions of others.
Attendance	Satisfactory. Pupils are punctual and lessons start on time.

TEACHING AND LEARNING

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

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

The quality of teaching is very good, overall, with some examples of excellent teaching. There was no unsatisfactory teaching. There is a positive ethos for learning in most classrooms. The best teaching is in English, mathematics and in Year 6 where it is particularly effective in meeting the needs of all pupils regardless of the subject being taught. Teaching is satisfactory but less effective in some lessons particularly in the Foundation Stage, and in Year 2, when at times work lacks sufficient challenge for more able pupils. Teachers are knowledgeable and learning targets are clear and understood by the pupils. Teaching in English and mathematics is particularly good because pupils are grouped by prior attainment and the teaching focuses on their needs more effectively. Teachers take good account of pupils' progress and build on the work done by targeting them individually and assessing their work regularly. The skills of literacy and numeracy are taught well throughout the school and very well in Years 4 to 6. This enables a large proportion of pupils to achieve higher than expected standards for their age. ICT is well taught across the school and good use is made of the school's ICT resources. Pupils with SEN receive very effective support in lessons and as a result make good progress. The result of the very good teaching is very good learning where pupils gain new knowledge and understanding faster than expected. Pupils work hard and concentrate well even when the occasional lesson is not particularly inspiring. Older pupils usually have a good knowledge of their learning and know what to do to make it even better.

OTHER ASPECTS OF THE SCHOOL

Aspect	Comment
The quality and range of the curriculum	Good. There is a good range of relevant tasks in all subjects and good opportunities for pupils to use ICT to support their learning. The curriculum is well balanced and considerably enhanced by a range of activities such as music club, choir and chess as well as

	competitive and non-competitive sports and games outside school hours.
Provision for pupils with special educational needs	Very good. Pupils with SEN receive effective support in lessons and make good progress in relation to the targets on their individual education plans.
Provision for pupils' personal, including spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	Very good provision is made for pupils' personal development. The provision for pupils' moral and social development is excellent. Pupils' spiritual and cultural development is very good.
How well the school cares for its pupils	There is a very good level of care provided for all pupils. There are very thorough systems for ensuring the health and safety of pupils and good procedures to assess how well pupils are achieving.

The curriculum is planned well in the infant and junior classes. However, the curriculum for the Foundation Stage is variable. It is good in some lessons where children are encouraged to learn through play and activities are matched to the different capabilities of the children. In others, the work lacks variety, is not such fun, and the higher attaining children are not always sufficiently challenged. There is an inadequate play area for children under five to enhance their physical development.

HOW WELL THE SCHOOL IS LED AND MANAGED

Aspect	Comment
Leadership and management by the headteacher and other key staff	Very good overall. The headteacher provides excellent leadership. He knows what the school does well, where its weaknesses are and how to improve them and has established a good ethos of striving to improve. The management of the school is extremely well focused on improving standards and supporting all pupils.
How well the governors fulfil their responsibilities	Good. The governing body is shrewd, effective and well aware of best value principles. Governors have a good understanding of the school's strengths and weaknesses and fulfil their statutory duties well. They are very supportive of the school and take an active interest in forward planning and its day-to-day work.
The school's evaluation of its performance	Very good. Data is used very well to monitor the school's performance. The School Improvement Plan is very well conceived. It is the result of a thorough process involving audits, monitoring and sharp evaluations of the school's performance. Actions to bring about improvement are planned and implemented without delay.
The strategic use of resources	Excellent. The targeting of funds to areas where there is the most need of improvement has been very effective. The school manages its finances very well, ensuring it gets the best value for money when committing resources or spending school funds.

The school's accommodation is ingeniously used so that all the available space is utilised for teaching and storing resources. Additional support staff are well trained and deployed very effectively. They make a valuable contribution to pupils' learning.

PARENTS' AND CARERS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

What pleases parents most	What parents would like to see improved
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Parents are happy with almost all aspects of the school. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The range of activities provided outside lessons. • The way the school works with parents and the information available about their children's progress.

Inspectors agree with all the positive views expressed by parents. This is a very good school. Although most parents expressed no real concerns about the performance of the school, a few felt they would like to see more activities outside lessons, particularly in Years 1 and 2. Inspectors do not agree this is a necessity but admit that improved provision in this area would enhance the school's very good ethos. The school works very well with parents and this is one of its strengths. A few parents found the new formula for reports demoralising for lower attaining pupils and inspectors agree that this is an area where the school could make improvements.

PART B: COMMENTARY

HOW HIGH ARE STANDARDS?

The school's results and pupils' achievements

1. Most children, when they start in the reception class, are attaining standards in line with expectations, although some are attaining above. By the time they reach Year 2, they have made good progress in their learning, and their attainment is above average in reading and writing, and at the expected standard in mathematics. In science, teachers' assessments suggested standards were average. Overall, pupils' attainment at the higher level was estimated to be below average. By the time they leave school at the end of Year 6, pupils are achieving results that are very high (in the top 5% nationally) in English and well above the national average in mathematics and science. This was an improvement on last year. When results are judged against schools in a similar context, attainment at age seven is average in reading and below average in writing and mathematics. At age 11 pupils are attaining results that are well above average in all the core subjects of English, mathematics and science. The percentage of pupils reaching the higher levels was very high in English and well above average in mathematics and science. The school exceeded its challenging targets in English and mathematics.
2. Pupils' achievement overall is very good. Pupils' attainment at 11 years, when judged against their prior attainment at 7 years, is well above average in English and above average in mathematics and science. A good analysis, by the school, of attainment by gender, shows that there is little overall difference in the performance of boys and girls, although girls perform better in mathematics at age 11, and boys perform better in reading, writing and mathematics at age 7. The school has made good improvement in English since the previous year. This upward trend is largely the result of the successful targeting and monitoring of pupils.
3. In the work seen in English, standards for 7-year-olds in speaking and listening and reading are above average, and average in writing. Inspection evidence indicates that current standards in all these areas for 11-year-olds are well above average. Overall achievement at age 11 is very good. Since the previous inspection, the school has made good improvement at Year 2 but dramatically improved standards by the end of Year 6. There are significantly more pupils attaining at the higher levels in Year 6 than in Year 2. The pace of pupils' progress is less marked in the infant classes because more able pupils are insufficiently challenged to achieve the higher levels.
4. In mathematics, standards are above the national average by the end of Year 2 and pupils are making good progress. This is an improvement on the previous inspection. Standards in Year 6 are well above average and pupils are making very good progress. Standards have risen significantly since the last inspection for pupils aged 11. They are making better progress in the junior classes because the more able pupils are better challenged to achieve higher levels.
5. In science the standard of work seen during the inspection is above average at Year 2 although more able pupils are underachieving. At Year 6 standards are well above average and pupils are making very good progress. Standards have been improved significantly since the previous inspection.

6. The National Literacy Strategy is well implemented in the school and is making a significant contribution to pupils' learning. By Year 2, pupils speak confidently about their work using a growing vocabulary. They listen attentively to their teachers and to one another, follow instructions, and readily join in conversations. By Year 6, pupils confidently express opinions in class discussions and speak with clarity and feelings during role-play. The emphasis the school places on reading and the opportunities provided for it is reflected in the pupils' enthusiasm for books. By Year 2, most pupils are independent readers, and levels of accuracy are good. By Year 6, many pupils have an impressive range and depth of reading experience, and they read with fluency and expression. By Year 2, standards in writing are not as high as is possible because the more able pupils are not sufficiently challenged. However, by Year 6, the standard of writing is very good. Pupils write for a range of purposes with an impressive use of vocabulary. Basic skills of literacy are well taught in the infant classes, very well taught in the juniors and applied across the subjects of the curriculum.
7. The Numeracy Strategy has been successfully implemented within mathematics lessons. The use of numeracy in other lessons has not yet been developed sufficiently. Where it is being used in other lessons there is a positive impact on pupils' achievements. The majority of pupils can apply a range of techniques to solve mathematical problems effectively. By the time they leave school, most pupils have developed good numeracy skills. They calculate accurately, both mentally and with pencil and paper, and can explain their methods and reasoning.
8. Standards of attainment in information and communication technology (ICT) are in line with national expectations at the end of Years 2 and 6 and pupils achieve well. There has been very good improvement since the last inspection. For example, pupils in Year 2 know how to control a computer by following a series of commands. Year 6 pupils confidently use Power Point to create a multimedia presentation. They show good understanding of the use of a spreadsheet and formulae to make calculations. Good use of ICT is being made to support other subjects.
9. Standards at both Years 2 and 6 are above average in all other subjects except physical education, where they are well above and geography and religious education where they are in line with expectations.
10. Pupils with SEN make good progress in acquiring basic literacy and numeracy skills to achieve the targets on their Individual Education Plans (IEPs). Over the years a significant proportion of pupils with SEN gain results in line with national expectations in national tests by the end of both Years 2 and 6. Because of the good support they receive they show a very positive attitude to the work and are keen to learn. However, higher attaining pupils are not always sufficiently challenged and do not achieve their full potential, in the infant classes.
11. Since the last inspection, in Years 1 and 2 there has been good improvement in standards of attainment in most subjects, except geography and religious education where they have been maintained. In Years 3 to 6 there has been good improvement in most subjects.

Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development

12. Pupils have excellent attitudes to school and their work and this enables them to make very good progress. The school is a welcoming and happy place which parents say their children enjoy coming to. In almost all lessons pupils are very enthusiastic learners who take great pride in their work. For instance, after a particularly successful and enjoyable

music lesson, pupils in Year 1 spontaneously burst into a round of applause. Pupils listen attentively to teachers and each other and can confidently express their preferences and opinions. This was seen in a Year 4 ICT lesson where pupils were very pleased with the patterns they were creating using a 'Colour Magic' program. They were then confidently discussing ideas for improvements with their partners. Older pupils talk enthusiastically about the good range of clubs provided for them outside school hours.

13. Most pupils behave very well in lessons, which supports their learning well. They listen carefully to their teachers and many hands go up when a question is asked. Very occasionally, however, where teaching is less effective pupils become a little restless and disinterested. Parents expressed their satisfaction with the overall high standards of behaviour in the school. Pupils move around the school quietly and sensibly. They are friendly and polite to visitors. Lunchtimes are orderly and relaxed. Relationships in the school are excellent with both pupils and staff treating everyone with kindness and respect. Older pupils were seen caring for younger ones in the playground and there is a strong family atmosphere around the school. Bullying is rare and there have been no exclusions in the past year. Pupils are confident that should an incident occur they can tell someone and it will be dealt with effectively.
14. Pupils' personal development is also excellent. They are mature and sensible and take responsibility well when doing jobs, such as returning registers to the office. In lessons, pupils listen carefully to each other and spontaneously celebrate each other's successes. Pupils' independence is fostered effectively when tidying up resources and equipment at the end of sessions. They work well in pairs and small groups. For example, in a Year 3 literacy lesson, pupils worked very well in pairs when studying the use of adjectives in one of Aesop's fables. The parents' feel that the school helps pupils to become mature and responsible.
15. Attendance at the school is satisfactory and in line with other schools nationally. Last year's figures were lower than usual due to an unusually high number of absences because of illness. There were no unauthorised absences [in the past year] and lateness is rare. Registers are completed promptly and efficiently at the beginning of each session. Most lessons start on time. Attendance is carefully monitored by staff and the importance of good attendance is regularly stressed to parents in newsletters and the brochure. Parents know the importance of informing the school promptly if their child is unwell. Good use is made of the services of the education welfare officer should there be a concern about a pupil's attendance or punctuality.

HOW WELL ARE PUPILS TAUGHT?

16. The teaching is very good and ranges from satisfactory to excellent. The teaching in most of the lessons seen was good, very good or excellent. Just under one in five lessons was satisfactory. There was no unsatisfactory teaching. This is a considerable improvement on the quality of teaching observed at the time of the previous inspection when 1 in 10 lessons was unsatisfactory.
17. Teaching is excellent or very good in a significant number of lessons in the school, most notably in English and mathematics. Teaching is satisfactory but less effective in some lessons throughout the school but particularly in the Foundation Stage, where it is sometimes too directive, and in Year 2, where more able pupils are not always challenged enough. There are certain features that are common to many of the very good lessons and they provide clues to ways in which the satisfactory lessons could be improved. The start of the most successful lessons is particularly significant. The beginning of the lesson is usually brisk, lively and challenging; it immediately makes

pupils think. In mathematics, where many of these lessons are found, there is always a demanding 'mental starter' to engage pupils in thinking about numbers and the relationship between them. The teacher is indicating, from the outset, that he or she expects pupils to work hard, but also that there is enjoyment and satisfaction to be gained from such learning.

18. Teachers' high expectations, obvious from the start, are maintained as lessons continue. In an excellent mathematics lesson in Year 1 pupils were encouraged to work out for themselves how to make symmetrical shapes. A great sense of fun was inspired by the teacher and the lesson encapsulated a real love of learning in the pupils. All the pupils, regardless of ability, achieved a good standard.
19. Once teachers have gained pupils' full attention they keep up the momentum, often with a series of short, focused tasks so that there is no opportunity for pupils' concentration to flag. This was demonstrated in an excellent geography lesson with Year 3 where the teacher turned a seemingly uninspiring topic into a very enjoyable learning experience. Usually there is little need for obvious management of pupils; behaviour is very good and there are excellent relationships, based on mutual respect, between pupils and teachers. In an exceptional design and technology lesson in Year 5, pupils of all abilities displayed excellent learning skills in the way they planned, designed, tested, modified and improved their products. The teacher encouraged discussion and the sharing of ideas so that all the pupils took pride in their own and other's achievement. When necessary, however, teachers are quick to notice and deal with any straying of attention or lack of effort. Most teachers monitor and adapt their planning to take account of pupils' progress and capabilities.
20. Lessons usually provide a very good atmosphere for learning. Pupils have the confidence to try things out, attempting an ambitious answer or putting forward an opinion, secure in the knowledge that the reactions of both teacher and fellow pupils will be sensitive and supportive. The teachers also use resources very effectively in their lessons. This is best illustrated in Year 6. Here the planning encompasses all the aspects of learning and the work is disguised effectively as 'having fun'. Resources are inventive and make the pupils' learning more meaningful. The activities are interesting, whatever the subject, and pupils are totally captivated. In one of several outstanding lessons in Year 6 the teacher provided a drawing of a 'tramp', and by skilful questioning proceeded to draw out of the pupils, words and sentences to illustrate the feelings of someone who is ignored and rejected in the street. Pupils then had to write about the emotions of a character without identifying the character. They then read each other's work and the reader had to 'work out the character'. The learning that occurred in the lesson was of a very high order for pupils of all abilities.
21. The teaching of pupils with SEN is very good. The teachers know their pupils well, and use the IEPs in lessons effectively. Learning support assistants are well trained, carefully briefed and have positive working relationships with both teachers and pupils. Pupils are given work that is well matched to their needs in English, mathematics and science lessons.
22. The results of the very good teaching are standards that are well above average. Pupils join the school with average levels of attainment; they leave with results that are usually well above average. This is very good achievement. Pupils of all levels of prior attainment achieve very well at the school. Every year there are examples of lower attaining pupils, including those with special educational needs, leaving the school having achieved well in the National Curriculum tests (SATs).

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

23. The quality and range of learning opportunities provided by the school are good. It covers the statutory requirements of all National Curriculum subjects and religious education. The quality of the curriculum has improved since the previous inspection. There are now good quality schemes of work for all subject areas. Resources for subjects have been increased and improved. Updated policies are now in place including those for health and sex education and a clear programme of policy review.
24. The curriculum offered by the school is broad and balanced and meets fully all statutory requirements. Religious education is planned according to the locally agreed syllabus. Provision for personal, social and health education is very good. There is a well developed health education programme and appropriate areas concerned with sex education and drug abuse are incorporated into the teaching programme through direct teaching and personal and social health education.
25. The school's provision for pupils with special educational needs is very good. Provision is well managed and pupils are very well supported by the Special Educational Needs Co-ordinator who is ably supported by well trained assistants. Assessment takes place regularly and individual education plans are revised frequently. Movement up or down the levels or removal from this category are considered at regular intervals. The identification of exceptionally able pupils is a recent development, and their needs have yet to be reflected in curriculum planning in most classes, although in Year 6 the most able are offered an extended curriculum in literacy, numeracy and science.
26. The strategies for teaching literacy skills are good and are effective in achieving high standards. There is an effective policy for literacy across the curriculum. All teachers follow the National Strategy for Literacy and this is having a positive impact on pupils' learning. Learning objectives are detailed for each lesson and at the end of each lesson, pupils evaluate whether these objectives have been met. Literacy is well used in other subjects. Strategies for teaching numeracy across the curriculum are good following the school policy for numeracy across all subjects. All teachers follow the National Numeracy Strategy. Planning and teaching strategies are good and indicate how pupils in each year group will develop their skills over the year. However, numeracy is insufficiently used in other subjects.
27. The provision for extra-curricular activities is very good. A very good range of activities and clubs enriches pupils' learning. The pupils have the opportunity to join a variety of clubs at the end of the school day. Over the year these include: keep fit club, drama, cricket organised by Kent Cricket Club, football coaching by staff of the local secondary school, rugby, netball, athletics and cross country. During lunchtimes pupils have music, choir and recorder groups. The curriculum is also enriched by educational visits to places of historic and cultural interest and visitors are an important feature of the curriculum. During the inspection Year 6 pupils visited the National Gallery and Year 5 pupils participated in a Shakespearean performance by a visiting troupe. Pupils in Year 5 enjoy a residential educational trip to Norfolk and Year 6 to Buckmore Park in Kent. Each year group makes visits to extend their learning experience, for example, to Dover Museum, to a local farm, and the Lullingstone Environmental Park.
28. Equality of access and opportunity is very good. The school provides equality of access for all pupils and works hard to ensure that pupils with special educational needs have access to all aspects of school life. Achievements are acknowledged at celebration assemblies. No pupil is excluded from school activities including educational visits due

to inability to pay. Boys and girls have equal opportunity to take part in sports such as football and cricket in mixed teams. In order to ensure equality of opportunity for all, the school has made very good provision for pupils with special educational needs. The staff know each pupil and each is treated as a valuable member of the school community. It doesn't take long to recognise the school as a very caring organisation.

29. Provision for personal, social and health education is very good. The staff provide good role models for pupils. The very good relationship between pupils and staff helps to create a caring atmosphere in which pupils develop respect for one another and feel valued as part of the community. Drugs awareness and sex education are developed well through lessons.
30. The school has good links with the local community, which provides important opportunities to contribute to pupils' learning. For example, harvest donations are taken to the Ellenor Hospice and at Christmas the school hosts a party for senior citizens. Pupils from the school take part in the Sevenoaks Cross Country Competition and Country Dancing in the summer. Links with the wider community include fundraising for a Malawi village. During the inspection a representative from the Romania Appeal for Sick Children led the school assembly and collected the funds raised for the Appeal. The school works in partnership with the parents in celebrating special days and many parents attend assemblies on special occasions. Several parents help on educational visits, with lessons such as art, supporting pupils' reading as well as being general assistants in the classroom.
31. Good, constructive relationships are fostered with partner institutions. There is very close liaison with the adjoining Kindergarten. In Year 5, pupils visit the secondary school of their choice but a high proportion go on to the Grammar Schools which do not offer open days.
32. Overall, the school's provision for pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is very good. Spiritual development is fostered very well through the use of assemblies which use topics such as 'The Good Samaritan' to consider the importance of helping each other. In religious education lessons pupils reflect on other's beliefs such as Sikhism and Hinduism. Through art pupils are able to consider other cultures. Pupils in all classes are taken on local walks where appreciation of the wonders of nature is encouraged.
33. The outstanding provision for pupils' moral and social development is clearly reflected in the very good behaviour and excellent relationships found in the school. Pupils are challenged to consider moral issues when studying, for instance, World War Two where Year 5 pupils have written very movingly about how life must have been for a soldier in that conflict. The school's behaviour code works very well. Pupils are made very aware of what is expected of them and both respect and value the system of sanctions and rewards. Adults in the school provide very good role models, treat pupils with a lot of respect and they, in turn, respond accordingly. Social development is excellent in the school. Pupils are constantly encouraged to work together productively, for instance in a Year 5 literacy lesson where pupils worked closely in pairs, praising and encouraging each other, when writing a play script. Both Years 5 and 6 are able to take part in residential trips whose activities focus on the personal development of pupils providing many opportunities for problem solving and working together. The School's Forum, which enables pupils to have their say on the school, is not yet fully in place. However, the school is gradually increasing the more formal opportunities for older pupils to work with younger ones.

34. The provision for cultural development is very good. Pupils have many opportunities to widen their cultural experiences through the very good range of visits and visitors that the school provides. Regular visits take place to museums, theatres and art galleries. In one recent trip to see Shakespeare's *A Midsummer Nights Dream*, pupils took their own parents with them. Due to the very good preparation they were given in classrooms beforehand, they were able to then explain and fully discuss the play with their families. Visitors to the school have included theatre groups, whose work with pupils has ranged from plays by William Shakespeare to Jamaican Folk Tales. All the texts used in literacy lessons are carefully monitored to ensure that they represent a wide range of cultures. In the reception year, children are able to dress up in costumes from around the world. In many lessons a range of cultures are explored, for example, in a Year 6 history lesson about life in Ancient Greece pupils were able to consider many things about another culture. The school is fully inclusive in all its policies. It goes out of its way to combat racism and helps pupils to appreciate the richness and diversity of cultural traditions in our society today.

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL CARE FOR ITS PUPILS?

35. This is a very caring school where staff know the pupils very well. This ensures their general well-being, which in turn helps them to make good progress in all areas. Relationships are excellent throughout the school and parents are particularly happy with the attitudes and values the school promotes. Every class has its own rules which are agreed by the pupils themselves. Procedures for monitoring and supporting pupils' personal development are very good.
36. The school's procedures for promoting and monitoring behaviour are very good. Good behaviour and consideration of others is celebrated each week in special assemblies, and rewarded through various means such as 'house points'. This is highly valued by the pupils. The school has very good systems for monitoring pupils whose behaviour may be causing concern. Very effective procedures are in place for dealing with child protection. The headteacher is the person designated to deal with any concerns and the school follows local guidelines for dealing with this sensitive area. The headteacher ensures that all staff are regularly reminded of the necessary procedures to follow should they have any concerns about the welfare of a pupil. The school also has effective policies for sex and drugs education. The premises are appropriately maintained by the site manager, and annual risk assessments are undertaken by the headteacher and governors. No health and safety concerns were apparent during the inspection. Good procedures are in place for dealing with sickness and accidents. Pupils are very happy with the care they receive and say they feel well looked after.
37. Procedures for assessment are good overall, and have been maintained since the previous inspection. Careful note is made of what the children can do when they start school in their personal, social and emotional development, and in their literacy and numeracy skills. Teachers use this information well to plan work which builds on specific skills and helps children make good progress in these areas of learning. Teachers and support staff in classes in Years 3 to 6 monitor progress closely in English and mathematics through daily assessments, and this helps them to plan to extend skills, knowledge and understanding further. The daily assessments in the Foundation Stage, Years 1 and 2 and the non-core subjects, however, are not as well developed and do not always inform future planning and teaching. In English and mathematics procedures are good. Very careful assessments are made to develop pupils' skills in literacy and numeracy, and give very clear information about how each child in the school is doing. Assessments take place on a regular basis, and attainment is measured closely against school benchmark statements, pupils' targets and National

Curriculum levels. Systems are manageable and effective. Every pupil's progress is carefully tracked, and targets are set using information on pupils' entry to the school and other tests, including National Tests at the end of Year 6.

38. Assessment procedures are used less effectively within the organised Year 1 and 2 classes. The school tracks pupils as they progress through the school to measure the accuracy and realisation of targets. The analysis of data from the end of Year 2 assessment tests gives a positive indication of the individual, group and class progress in these subjects. However, teachers are not looking closely enough at pupils' daily work to ensure that what is achieved is used to change what is taught next, particularly in the case of the more able pupils, whose work is not always well matched to their individual capability.
39. There is very good use of assessment procedures to identify pupils with SEN. The data obtained is used very well to provide well-targeted support for pupils with learning needs, particularly in the areas of literacy and numeracy. The special needs co-ordinator maintains a comprehensive register of pupils with SEN and the school meets well the requirements outlined in pupils' statements of Special Educational Need and the Code of Practice.

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL WORK IN PARTNERSHIP WITH PARENTS?

40. The school benefits from a very strong partnership with its parents. Most parents are very pleased with the care and education their children receive at the school. This has a very positive effect on pupils' progress. There is an 'open door' policy and teachers are always accessible to parents after school. Parents value this. The headteacher is highly visible around the school and available to talk to parents should they have a concern. The home-school agreement is well established and valued. A regular number of parents and members of the local community help in classrooms each week providing useful support to teaching staff. Parents of pupils with special educational needs are fully involved in the reviews of their children's progress. They are consulted before pupils are placed on the special needs register and the procedure is explained to them. They are then kept fully informed of their children's progress.
41. The impact of parents' involvement on the work of the school is excellent. The very effective parent teacher association regularly organises fund raising and social events which are strongly supported by parents. Significant amounts of money are raised by these events which support the further development of the school and its resources. The school provides very useful information to the parents in the form of the prospectus, newsletters and general letters. Parents of pupils in Reception and Years 1 and 2 are given extra information displayed outside their children's classrooms. The governors' annual report meets all the legal requirements for its content. Consultation meetings with teachers are held twice yearly and parents find these very informative. Meetings giving information on the curriculum are held regularly although some parents felt they would like more of these. Written annual reports on pupils are issued in the summer term. These provide brief comments on the work pupils have covered and show grades for effort and progress in all subject areas. However, these are rather impersonal in nature and, as some parents commented, can be very disheartening for a child who is not achieving at a high level.
42. There is a high degree of parental satisfaction with the school in almost all areas. Most parents appreciate what the school does for their children and particularly value the 'happy family atmosphere' provided. Parents themselves strive hard to support the school and are always keen to help in any way they can. One parent regularly helps to

man the school office at lunch time and very good help is provided by many parents after school with the extra-curricular clubs, outings and residential trips. Relationships between the school and its parents are very good.

HOW WELL IS THE SCHOOL LED AND MANAGED?

43. The feature that stands out in the leadership of the school is the complete absence of complacency in all areas of its work. The headteacher provides excellent leadership. Parents say that the headteacher is never satisfied, and is always seeking to improve the school; this is certainly true. He is respected by his staff and trusted by the pupils. This is one of the main reasons for the success of the school and its increasingly good reputation in the community. He is well supported by his hard-working and efficient deputy. The staff make a cohesive unit. They believe that they are very well supported by senior colleagues in their efforts to raise standards. Monitoring reports show that the school is self-critical and evaluative of its practices. There are many examples of this approach in action. Each year there are reviews of the national tests where co-ordinators are held accountable for examination results in their subjects. In areas where there have been relatively less successful results, such as the achievement of more able pupils at Year 2, the school is quick to take effective action.
44. Very effective monitoring is clearly defined by the headteacher and governors. It is aimed at helping the school to be clear about how well the teachers teach, and how well the pupils are learning. This includes the monitoring of subject co-ordinators. There is a good balance of expertise amongst the staff, and their very good subject knowledge enables them to review the impact each subject is having on pupils' achievements and progress. Curriculum co-ordinators produce 'position statements', which are then put into the school's improvement and management plan, so that priorities can be established over the long and short term. A thorough review of the school's curriculum planning has led to improvements in the standard of ICT. The headteacher, senior staff and governors have undertaken a school-wide evaluation, with a focus on improvement. This has given a clear educational direction to the work of the school. It welcomes external assessment of its work and performance. Recently it has achieved the Investors in People Quality Standard.
45. The governors are knowledgeable, experienced and very committed to the needs of the school and its pupils. With the help of regular reports from the headteacher, they monitor the school's strengths and weaknesses well. This gives them a clear insight into the work being done and the progress that the pupils are making. The resources of the school are satisfactory. They are well used and easily accessible. In particular, ICT resources have been improved so that all the pupils have regular access to computers, and new technologies such as the Internet. Teaching assistants are well trained and provide an excellent resource.
46. Financial planning is very good and the budget is used very well. The school's strategic improvement plan is very well set out. It identifies the right priorities and success criteria which are arrived at through careful audits, reviews and effective monitoring. Targets for improvement are clearly costed so that governors and staff are able to judge their effectiveness. The targeting of funds to areas where there is the most need of improvement has been very effective, ensuring the budget is used very efficiently.
47. The impact of the leadership and management is a school where high standards are regarded as the norm; academic standards, overall, are well above average and the personal development of pupils is excellent. This is a very effective school and it provides very good value for money.

WHAT SHOULD THE SCHOOL DO TO IMPROVE FURTHER?

To raise further the standards of work and the quality of education provided, the governors and senior management team should:

Improve achievement for more able pupils in the Foundation Stage and in Years 1 and 2 by:

- providing more challenging activities and individual choice within a structured setting for more able children in the Foundation Stage,
- improving the standards attained by more able pupils in Year 2 by more focused targeting and monitoring throughout the infant phase.

(Paragraphs: 1,3,4,5,6,10,17,38,43,49,50,57 and 67.)

The following minor weakness should be considered for inclusion in the governors action plan.

Provide a secure play area with large wheeled toys and climbing equipment for children in the Foundation Stage.

(Paragraph: 49)

PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS

Summary of the sources of evidence for the inspection

Number of lessons observed

61

Number of discussions with staff, governors, other adults and pupils

20

Summary of teaching observed during the inspection

	Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
Number	7	13	26	15	0	0	0
Percentage	11	21	43	25	0.0	0.0	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 more than one percentage point.

Information about the school's pupils

Pupils on the school's roll	Nursery	YR – Y6
Number of pupils on the school's roll (FTE for part-time pupils)	/	311
Number of full-time pupils known to be eligible for free school meals	/	21

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Special educational needs	Nursery	YR – Y6
Number of pupils with statements of special educational needs	/	0
Number of pupils on the school's special educational needs register	/	29

English as an additional language	No of pupils
Number of pupils with English as an additional language	6

Pupil mobility in the last school year	No of pupils
Pupils who joined the school other than at the usual time of first admission	19
Pupils who left the school other than at the usual time of leaving	7

Attendance

Authorised absence

	%
School data	5.1
National comparative data	5.4

Unauthorised absence

	%
School data	0.0
National comparative data	0.5

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

Attainment at the end of Key Stage 1 (Year 2)

Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 1 for the latest reporting year	Year	Boys	Girls	Total
	2002	16	29	45

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		Reading	Writing	Mathematics
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	14	14	13
	Girls	28	28	27
	Total	42	42	40
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	93 (93)	93 (98)	89 (93)
	National	84 (84)	86 (86)	90 (91)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	14	15	14
	Girls	29	29	29
	Total	43	44	43
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	96 (98)	98 (93)	96 (100)
	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)

Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 2 for the latest reporting year	Year	Boys	Girls	Total
	2002	20	20	40

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys	19	18	20
	Girls	20	19	20
	Total	39	37	40
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	98 (89)	93 (89)	100 (94)
	National	75 (75)	73 (71)	86 (87)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys	14	18	19
	Girls	18	18	20
	Total	32	36	39
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	80 (91)	90 (91)	98 (94)
	National	73 (72)	74 (74)	82 (82)

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

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	133	1	0
White – Irish	0	0	0
White – any other White background	4	0	0
Mixed – White and Black Caribbean	0	0	0
Mixed – White and Black African	0	0	0
Mixed – White and Asian	1	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	0	0	0
Asian or Asian British – any other Asian background	0	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	0	0	0
No ethnic group recorded	152	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)	13.05
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	22
Average class size	29

Education support staff: YR – Y6

Total number of education support staff	9
Total aggregate hours worked per week	137

Financial information

Financial year	Apr 2001 – Mar 2002
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	£
Total income	650961
Total expenditure	651960
Expenditure per pupil	2096
Balance brought forward from previous year	6447
Balance carried forward to next year	2448

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)	1
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	311
Number of questionnaires returned	150

Percentage of responses in each category

	Strongly agree	Tend to agree	Tend to disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know
My child likes school.	55	41	4	1	0
My child is making good progress in school.	52	43	3	0	2
Behaviour in the school is good.	53	47	0	1	0
My child gets the right amount of work to do at home.	33	58	7	0	2
The teaching is good.	62	32	2	0	4
I am kept well informed about how my child is getting on.	25	55	16	0	3
I would feel comfortable about approaching the school with questions or a problem.	62	35	3	0	0
The school expects my child to work hard and achieve his or her best.	69	29	1	0	1
The school works closely with parents.	27	56	15	0	1
The school is well led and managed.	59	38	0	0	3
The school is helping my child become mature and responsible.	51	45	1	0	2
The school provides an interesting range of activities outside lessons.	39	39	17	0	5

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

AREAS OF LEARNING FOR CHILDREN IN THE FOUNDATION STAGE

48. Most children when they start school are achieving standards that are average; some are attaining above. By the time they reach Year 1, they will be reaching the Early Learning Goals for children of five years old, and would have made satisfactory progress from their starting point.
49. The school has successfully improved the quality of provision since the previous inspection. All six areas of learning are now catered for, although the school is still in the process of providing a safe play area with climbing equipment and large wheeled toys to promote the children's physical development. Teaching has been improved. There is no unsatisfactory teaching, and the support staff work closely together as a team. Teaching ranges from good to satisfactory and is satisfactory overall. Children are made to feel secure and happy, and they settle well into school routines but they make only satisfactory progress in their learning. This is partly due to the fact that assessment procedures are underdeveloped. There are simple, formal records of children's progress over time, but they are not consistently measured against the six areas of learning to ensure that lesson preparation is well matched to children's capability and that children are making adequate progress on a daily basis. English and mathematics are planned and taught well throughout the reception classes, although the teaching in the other areas is sometimes too directive, and does not motivate children to learn independently. This aspect was a weakness at the time of the last inspection.
50. In the good lessons, there is a clear link between the activities the teacher plans and what the children learn. Explanations are careful and well paced, and make sure that all children are involved in the activities. Teachers generally have a good knowledge of the Foundation Stage curriculum and a good understanding of how each of the Stepping Stones leads to the Early Learning Goals. Children are encouraged to learn through play and activities are matched to the different ages and capabilities of the children. However, in some [satisfactory but] less effective lessons, the planning is too rigid, the work lacks variety and isn't such fun, and the more able children are not always sufficiently challenged to become independent learners. Most, but not all, children have pre-school experience in the Nursery. This helps them settle quickly into the reception class and teachers effectively build on previous learning. Children join in enthusiastically with the rest of the school for assembly and other school activities. Good liaison between the teacher and support staff ensures success in planning for these children. The accommodation is used effectively to enable children to move freely and have access to a range of interesting and challenging activities.

Personal, social and emotional development

51. When children first come to the reception class, they are leaving their parents with more confidence and are beginning to feel safe and secure at school. They realise that the other children have needs, but there is not a high level of involvement with others and many still do not have a positive self-image. Some can dress independently, explore

their own environment, initiate interactions with other people and begin to take control of themselves. By the end of the Foundation Stage, the majority are sensitive to the needs of others and know the difference between right and wrong. Teachers ensure that there are good levels of support for the activities set during the day to develop co-operation. Children are increasingly prepared to take turns and to share resources. Friendships are quickly developing and most children are happy and secure in the school environment. Teaching is good overall. For example, in a good ICT lesson pupils made good progress, considering others, following instructions and working confidently with adults.

Communication, language and literacy

52. Children make good progress and most are in line to achieve the expected levels in language and literacy by the end of the Foundation Stage. By the time they are in Year 1, children say 'please' and 'thank you' and take part in conversations with each other. They make up their own stories and rhymes. Most are keen to explore the meaning of new words and are happy to talk in a school situation to people that they do not know. Speaking and listening skills are average when children first come to the school, although they do not speak clearly with confidence and control until they are well into the reception class. Here they develop well and most can express themselves clearly, using simple sentences by the time they leave. By the time they enter Year 1 most listen attentively and talk about their own experiences with an increasing vocabulary, and the majority can make up their own stories. They clearly enjoy books, understanding how they work. Most associate sounds with letters, and recognise simple words. Teaching is good. It is well planned to introduce children to the significance of letter sounds, so that by the time they leave the reception class most are able to identify the initial sounds in rhyming words. All children understand that writing conveys meaning. When they first come to the reception class they know that books and the computer carry information, but very few can retrieve any of it. By the time they leave reception most understand the use of words to convey meaning and are aware of the different purposes of writing, and are beginning to use it as a means of communicating. Sound planning enables children to make appropriate progress. In a satisfactory literacy lesson, appropriate questioning and a good use of time enabled some of the children to write their family name and others to learn to name "Z" and distinguish the sound. Most of the children are well on the way to achieving Level 1 in their reading. More able children have already achieved it.

Mathematical development

53. Attainment in the mathematical area of learning is average. Children achieve better in this area of learning, due to well planned, appropriate activities which hold their interest and enable them to make good progress. Resources are used well to allow plenty of practical mathematical experience. In lessons the teacher demonstrates high expectations of work and behaviour. The teaching of numeracy is good. On entry to the school, most children can count with some numbers in correct order, although they cannot compare two groups of objects to say whether they are the same number or match shapes. By the end of the Reception Year, most children can recognise and count numbers to ten, and confidently use language such as 'big' or 'little'. Higher-attaining children are secure in their understanding of 'long', 'short' and 'small' and use their knowledge correctly. Most can sort, match and order; some can sequence. All are familiar with counting rhymes and songs. Teaching in the reception classes is satisfactory overall. It is predominantly good in one and satisfactory in the other. In the good lessons, planning is thorough, more able children are appropriately challenged, and the teacher uses questioning very successfully to encourage pupil participation and understanding.

Knowledge and understanding of the world

54. When they come to the school, most children can join construction blocks together to build and balance. They explore objects, talk about what they see and show an interest in ICT. It is very difficult to get them to talk about significant things that have happened to them, but they do express feelings about personal events like the birth of a sister or brother. They do not comment on the obvious differences between living things or ask questions about how things work. A few know some features of the locality, but the majority have not mastered the skills of cutting, joining, folding or building. None the less, they make progress in their knowledge and understanding of the world, and the indications are that, by the time they are ready to start Year 1, most will have achieved the Early Learning Goals in all aspects of this area of learning. Teaching is good. In an ICT lesson, pupils were able to manipulate the mouse, open a programme, close a file and "log off." Teachers used questioning effectively to promote speaking and listening skills and involved pupils in a demonstration to encourage interest and enthusiasm. To promote children's understanding of the world around them effectively, some teachers prepare interesting and motivating activities. Because the lessons are 'fun', children want to learn.

Physical Development

55. This is an area of learning where all children reach the Early Learning Goals by the time they move to Year 1. However, there is no enclosed outdoor play area with climbing equipment and wheeled toys. Physical skills are more successfully developed during sessions in the hall. Teachers' use of time and management in this area is variable and ranges from just satisfactory to very good. In a good lesson, the teacher's good planning and choice of activities created a good learning environment where all abilities were well challenged. Children managed to find spaces well, and listen and respond quickly to instructions. Most could experiment with different ways of moving. The teacher's praise and encouragement resulted in positive improvement. All the children were provided with plenty of opportunity to develop their skills. In the lesson that was satisfactory but less effective, the teacher's knowledge of how these young children learn was shaky, her planning was limited and the activity was too directed. Most of the children, particularly the more able, did not find the activity very interesting and little learning took place. In the classroom children use and manipulate construction and play equipment with growing confidence and dexterity. However, when they first come to the school only a minority is confident at balancing, or using scissors. They usually need help with healthy practices in relation to eating, sleeping or hygiene. Good pencil control is developing in their attempts at writing.

Creative development

56. When joining the reception class, most children can differentiate marks and make 3-dimensional structures. Most use imagination in play with others and can sing a few simple songs. When they leave the reception class, most children show an increasing ability to use imagination in activities, and represent ideas in a variety of ways. The majority can use a wide range of materials to express feelings and ideas, and they readily explore colour, sound and texture in two dimensions. There are good activities to develop children's confidence. Teachers' records show that children are achieving in line with the expected level in artistic development. The majority can make a considered

choice of colours and mix paints effectively to acquire the correct shade. For example, they have enjoyed creating self portraits in paint and wax crayon. Some children demonstrate good modelling skills. The provision of good resources allows children the opportunity for a wide range of experiences. For example, the role-play area enhances learning most effectively by providing children with a good forum to engage in imaginative play. In music, children enjoy singing a range of songs from memory and express and communicate their feelings with a range of musical sounds. Teaching is good in this area of learning.

ENGLISH

57. Since the previous inspection, the school has maintained standards at Year 2 but significantly improved them by the end of Year 6. In the junior classes all pupils, and particularly the higher attaining pupils, make very good progress because of high teacher expectations and challenging activities which encourage them to work at a higher level. The pace of pupils' progress is less marked in Years 1 and 2 because opportunities for more able pupils to progress to the higher levels are limited. Throughout the school pupils with SEN make very good progress because of the high quality support given by teachers and learning support assistants. There is no variation between standards attained by boys and girls.
58. By the age of 7, pupils are confident in talking about their work, using a growing vocabulary. They listen attentively to the teacher and each other. Pupils speak clearly and confidently and willingly initiate conversations. They are very polite in saying 'Good morning' to visitors. Teachers ask open questions, which encourage pupils to offer extended responses. In a good Year 2 lesson, the teacher followed up pupils' responses by asking 'How do you know that?' This elicited further explanations and discussion. In the junior classes pupils continue to make very good progress with their speaking and listening skills. They are confident in initiating discussions with adults. In the older classes drama and role-play make a positive contribution to listening and speaking. Listening skills are good because teachers make lesson introductions exciting and stimulating, particularly when reading stories or giving explanations. Pupils follow instructions accurately and sensibly. Pupils' speaking and listening skills are particularly strong in paired and small group work. For example, in a music lesson when pupils planned a group composition there was a high quality discussion, where everyone was prepared to listen and value each other's opinions.
59. Progress in reading in Years 1 and 2 is good. Pupils are successfully taught the early reading skills, particularly the use of letter sounds and picture clues. By the end of Year 2, pupils read accurately and fluently. They use their knowledge of sounds and letter blends to read new words. They enjoy reading and talk confidently about the books they read. They know and explain the terms 'author' and 'illustrator', and talk about books they read outside school. In Years 4, 5 and 6 progress in reading is very good. Pupils enjoy reading quietly to themselves and to an audience. For example, in a Year 5 class pupils settle to quiet individual reading in the period before registration and many are totally absorbed in their books. In Year 4, pupils are confident in reading from a large shared text to the rest of the class and in reading out their own work. In Year 6, reading skills are very well developed. Pupils read accurately, fluently and with good expression. One Year 6 pupil adopted a range of voices and accents when reading aloud from a book containing dialogue between several characters, showing considerable skill in engaging the listener with the text. Younger pupils are confident in explaining the differences between fiction and non-fiction, and are aware of the terms 'publisher', 'index' and 'contents'. Pupils in the junior classes give reasons for why they like a particular book or author, for instance, 'I like the Harry Potter books by J.K. Rowling because I like

magic and adventure' or 'I prefer non-fiction books'. Pupils talk confidently about the plot and characters and show good recall of the story so far. They make realistic and well thought out predictions about what may happen next in a story. They apply their reading skills successfully in other subjects and are confident in using reference books, CD-ROMs and the Internet for researching information.

60. In writing, pupils' attainment in Year 2 is similar to that seen in most other schools. Pupils write successfully for a range of purposes. They develop independence in spelling and often use dictionaries without being prompted by the teacher. In some classes writing tasks and the activities planned to improve writing skills, such as grammar or punctuation exercises, are the same for average and above average groups of pupils. The expectation is simply that the higher ability groups will complete more work or will work more independently. This restricts the standards achieved by the more able pupils. In the junior classes pupils enjoy writing for a variety of purposes and audiences. The quality of their factual and imaginative writing is of a high standard. By Year 6, pupils use a range of strategies to lead the reader through a narrative, linking paragraphs well and using such devices as structuring short sentences to build up a feeling of suspense. Writing in the style of an author such as Kipling provides a high level of challenge, to which the more able pupils rise successfully. One pupil's writing includes this sentence: 'The mussels muscled away, the lobster lobbed away and the fish just fished away.' Mastery of the technical skills of punctuation, including speech marks, exclamation marks and question marks, is shown in written work. A more able writer uses the semi-colon accurately to punctuate compound sentences and brackets and dashes to indicate asides. These writing skills are used successfully in other subjects such as science and religious education. Skills in ICT are used successfully in English, particularly in word-processing stories and factual writing. Pupils in Year 6, routinely exchange their writing with a partner as part of the drafting and editing process, and comment on each other's work. This improves their skills of evaluating writing, thus improving the quality of their work.
61. The school adopts a cursive style of handwriting which develops from a print script to a joined style by the end of Year 2. By the end of Year 6, the majority of pupils has a neat, joined and legible writing style. However, progress is variable because some teachers are insufficiently rigorous in teaching the prescribed style and in reinforcing the expectations for well-formed and joined script when pupils write in literacy and in other lessons. When writing, pupils, particularly in some of the younger junior classes, revert to printing or a mixture of print and cursive handwriting. Handwriting is good in classes where the teachers offer an accurate model of the school style and demonstrate letter formation and joining.
62. Teaching is good in Years 1 and 2 and very good, overall, in Years 3 to 6. Pupils enjoy their literacy lessons and work hard because they are involved and interested in their own learning. Teachers share the lesson objective with pupils, and remind them of their learning targets. In lessons, pupils work with good application and concentration and produce good quality work in the time allowed. Teachers remind pupils how much time they have left to complete tasks, ensuring that a good pace of working is sustained. The teaching of literacy is good in the infant classes and very good in the juniors, with some excellent lessons. This has a significant impact on the high standards being achieved. Teachers are enthusiastic and confident in their teaching and this is reflected in the pupils' very positive attitudes in lessons. Lesson introductions are a significant strength, with teachers showing very good skills in explaining and demonstrating. Teachers' reading skills are a very good model for pupils as they read with good expression, which captures the attention of the class. As an alternative to using a shared text to introduce a lesson, one Year 5 and 6 teacher used a piece of music to encourage pupils to reflect

upon mood and atmosphere in an imaginary location. Their responses and the range of vocabulary they offered and then used in their writing were very imaginative, and the writing was of high quality. Teachers use resources well to support pupils' learning. There is an expectation that the pupils should use dictionaries and thesauruses, and most do so independently. Teachers make good use of learning support assistants to support lower ability pupils and those with SEN, who take a full part in the lesson and achieve well in relation to their ability. Teachers' marking is helpful in showing pupils how to improve their work, but in some classes marking consists mainly of praise. Whilst this is appropriate in most cases, it does not help the pupils to understand what they have to do to make their work even better.

63. The subject is effectively led and managed. The co-ordinator is aware from an analysis of pupils' work, including the results of the National Curriculum tests and additional optional tests that standards in writing in the younger classes need to be improved. As a result, she has purchased new resources for writing and implemented a monitoring programme to track progress. The co-ordinator has a good grasp of standards, quality of teaching and curriculum and resource needs from monitoring lessons and teachers' planning. Library provision has been improved recently, and is now good. Resources for literacy are up to date, well organised and of good quality.

MATHEMATICS

64. Standards in mathematics are above average by the end of Year 2 and well above average by the end of Year 6. The school has made good improvement at Year 2 and very good improvement at Year 6. This indicates an upward trend since the 2002 National Curriculum test results.
65. By the end of Year 2 pupils are competent when working with numbers up to two digits. They use written methods when using three digit numbers. They have a good knowledge of place value up to 100, with some pupils solving problems involving three or four digit numbers. They know about number bonds and number skills are developed successfully through a variety of activities. Pupils can use different strategies for calculating results mentally. They know how to partition numbers, for example, $63=60+3$ and they use mental recall for their tables. They work out sums which show patterns of similar calculations, for example, $3+5=8$; $13+5=18$; $63+5=68$. They can measure accurately, for example when drawing lines. They know some of the properties of different two- and three-dimensional shapes, such as the number of corners, faces and edges. They are learning some important mathematical vocabulary, for example, in front of, behind, beside, below. They do some work on simple bar graphs, for example, looking at the birthdays in the class. The previous inspection highlighted the need to develop opportunities to use mathematical skills to investigate real-life situations. Some work has been done to address this issue, but this is still under developed.
66. By the end of Year 6, pupils gain more confidence in their number work. They multiply and divide numbers by 10, 100 and 1000. They use multiplication and division to solve mathematical problems. They have a good knowledge of multiplication tables. In oral and mental calculations they use a range of strategies to work out the answer. They learn to calculate percentages and work with fractions, for example, changing mixed fractions to improper fractions. They are beginning to understand what equivalent fractions are, for example, one-third is equivalent to two-sixths. They are developing their measuring skills. They use and interpret a range of data, turning it into graphs. Pupils recognise two- and three-dimensional shapes and describe their properties. They are learning to solve mathematical problems involving numbers, money and measures. They measure angles accurately using a protractor and name the different angles, for

example, acute, obtuse and reflex angles. They are learning to work out problems using algebraic equations and the importance of using brackets in working out complex problems. A scrutiny of pupils' work shows a very comprehensive coverage of the curriculum. Pupils do, however, have insufficient opportunities to use computer software across the curriculum.

67. Pupils are making good progress in Years 1 and 2, and across Years 3 to 6 progress is even more rapid. This is a good improvement on the previous report. The daily class sessions of mental arithmetic are effective in helping pupils to practise and apply their knowledge. There are no marked differences between boys and girls. Pupils with SEN make good progress with the help of good classroom assistants. They are well integrated in the classes. Higher attaining pupils are not being sufficiently challenged in Years 1 and 2 on a regular basis.
68. Teaching and learning are good throughout the school, although more able children are better challenged in Years 3 to 6. This is an overall improvement in teaching since the previous inspection. All teachers were implementing the structure, content and principles of the National Numeracy Strategy well. The teaching is supported by good knowledge and understanding. This good knowledge enables the teachers to make the learning 'fun'. Teachers often make good use of questions and answers to reinforce the teaching. This helps pupils to learn to listen. The teaching of basic skills is good in Years 1 and 2 and very good in Years 3 to 6 and enables pupils to access the mathematics curriculum more easily. Teachers' planning is very good throughout the school and this ensures clear learning objectives which are shared with the pupils. The use of time and resources is good, for example, when using protractors for measuring angles accurately. Assessment criteria in each lesson are clearly set out in the lesson plans, and this helps to inform planning for the next lesson or topic. There are good assessment procedures in place and a considerable amount of data has been collected on pupils' performance to enable teachers to improve those performances in the future. Plenary sessions are well used to give pupils the opportunity to explain what they had achieved during the lesson. Pupils' acquisition of new knowledge and understanding is good throughout the school. All pupils are given equal opportunities to succeed. Pupils apply very good effort to their work and their interest and concentration are very good.
69. There is a very good range of resources which is well used across the curriculum. However, information and communication technology is not used effectively to enhance the curriculum. Numeracy is insufficiently used in other subjects.
70. The subject is well led by a very enthusiastic co-ordinator. She is strongly committed to improving all aspects of the subject. There are very good strategies for monitoring and evaluating the subject and for the development of teaching. She controls a budget well, in order to maintain a good supply of resources.

SCIENCE

71. The quality of pupils' work seen during the inspection indicates standards above expectations by the end of Year 2 although more able pupils are underachieving. Pupils' attainment by the end of Year 6 is well above the national average. Pupils make very good progress from the end of Year 2 till they leave at the end of Year 6. There is no significant variation in attainment between pupils of different backgrounds or between boys and girls. Pupils with SEN achieve well. All pupils including those with SEN make good progress by the end of Year 2 and very good progress by the end of Year 6 because of the very good quality of support they receive. There has been good

improvement in the subject in the infant classes and very good improvement in the juniors since the previous inspection.

72. By the end of Year 2, pupils are familiar with the experimental and investigative approach to science. They practise the skills of scientific enquiry, observing carefully, making predictions, testing and recording their results. For example, in a Year 2 lesson pupils used ramps of the same inclination to test how far model cars would travel on different surfaces. They knew all variables had to be the same except the various surfaces in order to ensure fair testing. The distances were recorded in numerical form and translated into bar graphs which formed the basis of discussion and evaluation. Pupils in Year 1 are familiar with the main properties of selected materials and tabulate them according to whether they can be bent, squashed, stretched, squeezed, expanded, reshaped or solid. They listen to sounds around the school and list different ways in which sounds are made. By the end of Year 2 they have had a balanced coverage of all the Attainment Targets in the science Programme of Study.
73. Pupils in Year 3 build on the foundations laid earlier investigating hand sizes of boys and girls between the ages of 4 and 7 noting common characteristics and variations shown on their age/size graph about the ages and sizes of the class. Year 4 pupils combine knowledge of material properties with investigative techniques by experiments to show which of five different materials would be the best insulator for keeping liquids warm. The temperature changes at 5 minute intervals were recorded and displayed on line graphs in order to make valid comparisons. By the end of Year 6, pupils are working at a high level of scientific understanding covering topics such as ecosystems, interdependence and adaptations, properties of light photosynthesis and food chains. Scientific vocabulary is effectively applied, for example, when dissolving solids distinguishing between solutes, solvents, solution, suspension and separation.
74. Pupils throughout the school have a very positive attitude to science. They particularly enjoy performing experiments. Year 5 pupils showed great enthusiasm for their work on forces when measuring weight in air compared to weight in water and were amazed at the difference. They apply their scientific knowledge of forces in their design and technology lesson when making water rockets and show good understanding of the force of gravity.
75. The quality of teaching overall is very good. Teachers have very good knowledge and understanding of the subject which enable them to stretch the imagination of the pupils and fire their enthusiasm for the work. All work is well planned with the necessary resources available so that no time is wasted during lessons. The very good relationships between staff and pupils help to create an enjoyable atmosphere for learning where excitement in discovery is encouraged. In Year 6, pupils are directed to make their own decisions as to how best to conduct their experiments thus developing the skills of independent learning. Ongoing assessments as well as termly tests serve to monitor the progress of each pupil, set targets and influence planning for the next stage of learning.
76. The very good management of the subject is remarkable considering the co-ordinator has only taken over responsibility this academic year. Very good systems are in place for monitoring the subject and lesson observations help to spread good practice and maintain high standards. Very good improvements have been made since the last inspection in updating the scheme of work, increasing resources and engaging in professional development.

ART AND DESIGN

77. Pupils' attainment is in line with expectations by the end of Year 2, and above expectations at the end of Year 6, and their achievement is good. From the time pupils start school, they are encouraged to experiment with paint and colour, to explore pattern, to work from observation and imagination, and to respond to examples of art in the world around them. Reception children have enjoyed painting their names with their fingers. They have also drawn themselves from observation in wax crayon and created self-portraits in poster paint. They use computers effectively. Most of the pictures were lively and showed their enthusiasm for the project.
78. By the end of Year 2, pupils' attainment, especially in drawing and sketching, is at the expected level. This competence in using dry media, pencils, charcoal etc, stands them in good stead in the junior classes. Pupils' attainment in other aspects, such as painting, shows an average range of skill and understanding. There is sound development of practical skills in some classes, although this depends largely on the subject expertise of the teacher. For example, Year 1 has created vibrantly coloured firework paintings from their lessons on colour mixing and matching. Year 2 have effectively made paper from pulp. The oldest pupils in Year 2 have learnt to use a larger range of materials and show increasing control of tools. They enjoy 'ageing' their wax crayon pictures by crinkling them and going over them with paint and use pastels to create authentic looking 'cave paintings'. Their 3-dimensional insects and paintings in the style of Jackson Pollock and Paul Klee are particularly effective.
79. By the end of Year 6, pupils are competent at colour mixing and matching, using pastels, and are able to use a variety of media, like charcoal, to achieve the results they want. Year 3 has experimented with clay to make 'scarab beetles' and Egyptian collars. Year 4 has used a 'Colour Magic' IT programme to create colourful repeating patterns. They have also experimented with wax resist to produce effective paintings in the style of Salvador Dali. Year 5 has completed effective paintings in vibrant colours in the style of Gauguin and well depicted printing in the style of Lowry. Pupils are learning to evaluate their work. There is a readiness to question, adapt and modify their own work and learn from their own mistakes. Standards achieved in painting are within the average range. Their drawing of shoes from observation, using tone and shading, shows good skill. Some higher attainers in Year 6 show competence in drawing with ink and blowing it to depict a wintry scene with trees. They have constructed impressive Ancient Greek vases in clay-like material called 'mudrock'. They are beginning to compare methods and modify and improve their work to meet their intentions. Pupils with SEN make appropriate progress overall and use the skills they acquire in other subjects.
80. The quality of teaching is good. Most teachers have a good understanding of the subject, although some lack confidence in certain areas of learning, and need more training in how to teach art skills. Where teachers' planning is good, it gives details of learning objectives and careful attention to the development of skills and techniques. In a good lesson in Year 3, the teacher's good planning and use of time and resources enthused pupils to not only stay with the task of drawing a recorder from observation, but encouraged all abilities to show their skill in hatching and shading to produce better reproductions. Teachers are responsible for their own assessment but most are not assessing and recording pupils' individual progress in art regularly enough. Although good learning is taking place at both key stages, there is insufficient monitoring of the quality of teaching, assessment and the standards being achieved. Examples of good learning and progress include a clear development in pupils' observational skills and in

their understanding of artistic elements. The use of information and communication technology for graphic work is under developed through the school.

81. The subject co-ordinator is committed to reviewing the scheme of work and plans the art curriculum well. However, there is no whole-school overview to monitor pupils' progress, consequently assessment does not adequately inform curriculum planning. Standards have been improved since the previous inspection.

DESIGN AND TECHNOLOGY

82. Standards at the end of Years 2 and 6 are above average. All pupils, including those with SEN make good progress. Pupils plan their work carefully and produce appropriate designs; they understand the importance of accurate measurements and of choosing appropriate tools and materials. They handle tools carefully and show respect for property. The school has made good improvements since the time of the last inspection report. There is a very comprehensive scheme which details which product is to be investigated, designed and made in which term and in which class. This ensures good continuity and progression.
83. In Years 1 and 2, the pupils develop their designing and making skills by working with a wide range of tools and recycled materials to construct boxes, houses to illustrate topics being studied in other subjects and moving vehicles. They develop skills in joining materials together using different agents and techniques. They skilfully design, cut and paste to make a variety of playground structures. They gain experience with textiles in making puppets of various designs, skilfully demonstrating the impact of colour and texture. In the making of Joseph's Technicolor dream coat they evaluate the work of one another and make alterations to improve the finished product. Each unit of work in design and technology includes the aspects of designing, making and evaluation, including attempts to improve.
84. The foundation in food technology laid in Year 2 is further developed when pupils in Years 3 and 4 decide on the fillings they use for making a variety of sandwich snacks, make them and evaluate the results. Examination and disassembling of commercial packaging help to reinforce the skill of net construction and careful measurements. The construction of moving monsters and alarms provides opportunities to use batteries to effect movements. Strong links are established with other subjects, for example, the construction of homes linked to the history of Tudor times. Pupils in Year 5 select appropriate materials to design and construct water rockets, make accurate measurements, use scale drawings, test different parts, explain malfunctioning, modify and improve their work. In Year 6 they design air raid shelters with accurate measurements including the angle of joints and discuss with partners the best method of ensuring rigidity in construction. In handling tools they observe rules for safety and handle tools with care. In a Year 6 lesson observed the pupils demonstrated good skills in cutting angles of 45 degrees and even joints at an angle of 80 degrees with accuracy. This supported their work in mathematics and the use of computers using logo to construct a variety of triangles.
85. The quality of teaching is good overall as reflected in the high standards and quality of finished artefacts/products. Teachers successfully plan design and technology projects, sometimes linked to other subjects such as the topic of forces in science when making water rockets. The quality of the finished work shows that teachers have high expectations and these are conveyed to pupils. Both teachers and pupils value finished products and this contributes to pupils' sense of achievement and value. Teachers provide opportunities for pupils to use their initiative in their design which encourages independent learning. They acquire good basic skills which contribute to their personal development. This was evident in a Year 6 lesson from the enthusiasm of pupils who

were able to excel at this activity beyond their own expectations. The very good relationships between staff and pupils ensure that the pupils make maximum effort to reach the high standards expected of them.

86. The management of the subject is good. The co-ordinator has a clear vision for the subject, monitors the planning of each year group to ensure that the subject is being planned well, and evaluates the finished products. However, the monitoring of teaching is underdeveloped. Teachers' planning includes assessment opportunities, but at present there is no consistent format for the tracking of skills as pupils move through the school.

GEOGRAPHY

87. During the inspection only one lesson was seen in Year 2 and two lessons at Years 3 and 4. The subject is taught in blocks alternating with history. Judgements on standards, teaching and pupils' learning are based on planning, an analysis of pupils' work, displays around the school and discussions with the subject co-ordinator, teachers and pupils.
88. By the end of Years 2 and 6 standards are in line with national expectations and pupils are making satisfactory progress. There has been satisfactory improvement since the previous inspection at age 7 and 11.
89. By the end of Year 2 pupils are able to use a simple map to locate places around the school and in their local area. They map important features that they see on their way to and from school. Pupils discuss aspects of the environment which make the environment pleasant or otherwise. They are beginning to use geographical language to describe places, for example, a river, a hill and different shops. Pupils understand aspects of how their lives are different from life on an island. Through their study of the island of Struay they know that modes of transport are different and that children have differing things to do on the island. They understand about people on the island and their jobs and can contrast these with life in Swanley. They learn to identify where places are and recognise particular characteristics, for example, Durham with its university and cathedral.
90. By the end of Year 6 age of 11 pupils are able to draw and label maps of their classroom and school environment. They discuss ways of making the school environment better, for example, the use and location of litter bins around the playground to deal with the problem of rubbish. Pupils describe positions and directions using north, south, east and west and plan a route using these compass points. They study the local weather, using weather reports and measure rainfall and temperature. They learn about satellite receiving stations, for example, Dundee. Often pupils download maps from the Internet to help in their study and locate places around the world on a world map, for example, Johannesburg, where the World Summit took place last year. They use the Internet to research information on mountains around the world and discuss places that are in the news, for example, South Africa.
91. From the work analysis pupils make satisfactory progress. There are no significant differences between boys and girls. Pupils with SEN make good progress. In the lessons seen, however, pupils make good progress overall. They are acquiring knowledge and skills and they ask questions to reinforce their knowledge. They learn from each other as they share ideas. Pupils are becoming aware of geographical issues, for example, the effects of human activity on the environment, and are able to record evidence in simple research work. Pupils are developing basic skills and

knowledge but the timing of geography topics through the year makes it difficult to sustain the progressive development of geographical skills and understanding.

92. Teaching is good overall. Teachers' good knowledge and understanding, together with the teaching of basic skills, are strengths. The management and expectations of pupils' work and behaviour are good. A variety of methods were successfully used in the lessons although opportunities to develop pupils' writing skills are often missed. Pupils with SEN were incorporated successfully into the lessons and given every opportunity to learn alongside others. Teachers do not assess against the National Curriculum Attainment Targets, and there is little analysis of assessment results. This means that there is little idea of the strengths and weakness of the subject, and this does not help further planning of the curriculum. Although higher attaining pupils are given some extended work, this needs to be more consistently applied particularly in the infant classes.
93. The leadership and management of the subject are satisfactory but teaching is insufficiently monitored. There is a good range of resources that are available for use throughout the school. The use of information and communication technology to enhance the curriculum is under-developed.

HISTORY

94. During the inspection only a limited number of lessons were seen. The subject is taught in blocks alternating with geography. Judgements on attainment, teaching and pupils' learning are based on planning, scrutiny of pupils' work, displays around the school and discussions with the co-ordinator, teachers and pupils. By the end of Years 2 and 6 standards in history are above national expectations. This is an improvement on the previous inspection.
95. By the end of Year 2 pupils are able to discuss the differences between toys today and those in the past. Year 1 pupils brought in different toys and produced a time line, for example the oldest toy was 1880 with the latest one being made in 2000. Pupils are learning about their school houses, Chartwell, Ightham, Knole and Penshurst, all of which are places of local interest. They make displays using models, pictures and maps. Pupils are given good opportunities to practise their creative writing skills in describing these places. They learn about the Great Fire of London. They also look at the life and work of Florence Nightingale and compare hospitals now with those in her day. They are able to talk about the comparisons. They look at what transport was like in the past and make comparisons with today.
96. By Year 6 pupils have improved their history skills. They learn about the Romans, looking at a Roman town and province, Roman soldiers and a Roman villa. They learn about Roman dress, Roman roads and Roman feasts. They find out about Ancient Egypt, looking at the pyramids. They make displays that show the types of houses that were lived in. They produce a time line of the old kingdom to the present day. There is a good link with design and technology in making scarab beetles which were worn by the Egyptian Pharaohs. They also make models of small Egyptian boats. They use the Internet to research information about famous Victorians. They look at life in Victorian times, for example, working in mines. They visit the Ragged School Museum which gives them some first hand ideas of what school life was like. Pupils learn about the Second World War, making collages and a timeline. They also make advertisements which were used in those days. Another good link with design and technology is seen in the shelters which pupils make. Pupils discover some of the characteristics of Ancient Greece and compare it with Greece today. They look at Greek gods and learn about the

importance of the Olympic Games. They look at the Greek alphabet and see how it links in with our language today. In a Year 6 lesson pupils attempted, with some success, to decipher a statement written in Greek. There are good links with literacy as pupils are encouraged to use their creative skills in writing. Progress is good across the school. There are no significant differences between boys and girls. Pupils with SEN make good progress and are well integrated into the lessons.

97. Teaching overall is very good. Very good subject knowledge is a strength of the teaching and this enhances the teaching of basic skills. Planning is very good and pupils are well challenged. A very good variety of teaching methods are used and the management of the pupils is very good. The use of time and resources is very good. All these factors lead to the pupils' learning being very good. Their acquisition of knowledge and understanding is excellent, as is their acquiring new skills in history. They make very good efforts in their lessons and the pace of learning is usually very good and they are able to talk about what they have learned. The learning of pupils with SEN is good.
98. Leadership and management of the subject are good. The co-ordinator is very enthusiastic to see the development of the subject across the whole school. There are clear schemes of work to cover the curriculum. Monitoring and evaluation of the teachers' planning are satisfactory. The monitoring of teaching is underdeveloped partly because the co-ordinator does not have enough time.

INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY

99. The standard of attainment in information and communication technology (ICT) is in line with expectations at the end of Years 2 and 6. The good support given by teachers and learning support assistants ensures that pupils make good progress. Pupils with special educational needs also make good progress in this subject, so that by the time they leave the school, they have satisfactorily developed appropriate skills, knowledge and understanding in ICT. Since the last inspection, provision overall has improved considerably. An ICT suite has been established with a sufficient number of computers for the class to work in pairs; the optional national scheme of work has been adopted and modified in line with staff expertise; assessment procedures are being developed, and teachers' confidence and competence are improving. Teachers are more confident as a result of training. Very good use is being made of computers to support and enhance teaching and learning in other subjects of the curriculum.
100. In Year 1, pupils show familiarity with the keyboard functions and many skilfully use a mouse for pointing, selecting, dragging and moving items around the screen. For example, they use the 'My World' program to move toys around the screen, make up different faces, import and attach pictures of houses gardens and objects to create their ideal home. Using 'First World' software they word process short sentences, using upper and lower case, punctuation marks and a variety of font styles and sizes. They communicate their findings of their favourite things using computer generated block graphs to good effect. In Year 2, pupils use 'Talking First Word' and 'Textease' programs that communicate information by entering text and use the keyboard successfully to delete, backspace, change the font, alter the size of print, introduce colour, save and print their work. Using an art program called 'Colour Magic', pupils select specific tools to draw shapes and fill with favourite colours. 'Roamer World' is effectively used in providing experience of control technology and making things happen.
101. Pupils in Year 3 successfully interrogate databases as seen in a lesson when they selected appropriate fields of information to answer questions on the feeding habits of chosen birds. They clearly understand the difference between the terms 'file,' 'record'

and 'field'. This is further developed in Year 4, in the use of branching databases. In Year 5, pupils merge text and graphics effectively, move, rotate and resize graphics and show awareness of their audience. They know how to construct graphs and use them to illustrate different aspects of collected data. By the end of Year 6, pupils successfully use 'Power Point' to create a multimedia presentation. They show good understanding of the use of spreadsheet and the use of formulae to make calculations. The use of the Internet to access information is well established and E-mail is competently used.

102. The quality of teaching is good throughout the school with examples of very good teaching. The teachers are sufficiently knowledgeable to guide the pupils' learning forward. They have increased confidence since the completion of the teachers' training programme (NOF) and this is having a positive impact on learning. The pupils are acquiring new skills, as for example, in multimedia presentations. The pace of lessons is very good and this makes pupils eager to learn. They are given clear, step by step instructions on procedures and as a result no time is wasted in lessons. Lessons are well planned so that learning proceeds logically from the known to the unknown and the pupils make good progress. Very good use is made of computers to enhance the teaching of all other subjects, for example, acquiring information in designing and making water rockets, Victorian times, databases in science, story writing and so on.
103. In the absence of the co-ordinator the subject is well managed by another member of staff ably supported by the headteacher. The systems in place ensure that the work is well covered, and the headteacher maintains a good overview of the work throughout the school. The scheme of work has been updated and the pupils work, teaching and learning is monitored well.

MUSIC

104. Standards by the end of both Years 2 and 6 are above average. This is good improvement since the previous inspection. Teaching is good. The subject co-ordinator maintains good standards and encourages pupils' interest and enthusiasm. The scheme of work covers all elements of the National Curriculum for music. It provides clear guidance for non-specialist teachers and ensures that pupils develop and progress in their learning of musical skills and knowledge. Singing in assemblies gives an opportunity to sing as a whole school community. Work in lessons makes a contribution to pupils' spiritual, social and cultural development.
105. Throughout the school pupils achieve good standards in singing. They sing enthusiastically, melodically and with clear enjoyment. All pupils have opportunities to develop their composing skills. In a Year 6 lesson on developing cyclic rhythmic patterns, pupils work in mixed ability groups with percussion instruments. The most able musicians use the musical skills they have to support the less accomplished members of their groups. The teacher circulates offering support and advice, such as, 'You would probably be better with a conductor – try it!' All pupils achieve a good standard; groups listen to each other's 'compositions in progress' and offer useful evaluative comments, using appropriate musical terminology correctly. Pupils use graphic notation appropriately and devise their own scores. In an infant class music lesson pupils are challenged to produce increasingly complex rhythms and pulses. All pupils including the less able are helped to succeed by the sensitive intervention of the teacher and a good level of support from a voluntary helper. Their achievements are good and exceed expectations for pupils of this age.
106. Pupils have good opportunities to listen to music. In a Year 5 lesson, they listen to contrasting sections of Holst's Planet Suite, and discuss the different 'moods' the music

evokes. The teacher encourages them to offer a range of vocabulary to describe the contrasting pieces, and this is used effectively in a creative writing lesson later.

107. Many pupils take up the opportunity to learn to play a musical instrument, and are taught by music teachers from the Local Education Authority's peripatetic service. The music co-ordinator and a colleague run recorder groups, which are very popular. Choirs and music groups are formed to support the school's regular concerts and dramatic performances for parents. These opportunities provide an enhanced musical education and additional practice in reading music for those pupils who are interested. All pupils receive consistently good provision. Most pupils in the school achieve well in singing, performing and composing because of the emphasis on teaching musical skills and techniques.
108. The management of the subject is good. The co-ordinator has recently revised the schemes of work and policy document. Resources for music are readily accessible for use by staff and pupils. There is a good supply of books, musical instruments and recorded music. These increase pupils' awareness of the diversity of society by including western and non-western music. Pupils have occasional opportunities to perform at out of school venues and to attend concerts and performances. This enhances the music curriculum for those who participate.

PHYSICAL EDUCATION

109. During the inspection only two lessons were seen. Judgements about standards, teaching and pupils' learning are based on discussions with the co-ordinator, teachers and pupils and photographic evidence.
110. By the end of Year 2 standards are above the national expectations. They are well above by Year 6. This is an improvement across both key stages since the previous inspection. All pupils make good progress, including those with SEN. There is no significant difference between boys and girls.
111. By Year 2 pupils understand the need to warm up prior to physical activity. They also know the importance of cooling down after exercises. Pupils can throw and catch balls of different sizes. They work well together when doing exercises. They are learning to create and use space in their own movements, for example, during a dance lesson seen with Year 1/2 when the pupils were going through different routines to music. They show a range of movements. Pupils know the importance of team games and are given opportunities to develop various gymnastic skills, such as travelling, balancing and springing actions. They learn how to link a series of movements, for example, turning, travelling sideways, backwards, up and down. Pupils in Year 2 have swimming lessons at a local swimming baths.
112. By Year 6, pupils are given a wide range of very good opportunities to explore games, gymnastics, dance and athletics. Pupils in Year 3 continue with their swimming lessons. There is good provision for the teaching of swimming at a local swimming baths. In Years 5 and 6 pupils are introduced to outdoor pursuits. Pupils have good control of their body movements. They demonstrate a range of stretching and jumping exercises. There is a wide variety of team games including 'kwik cricket', netball, football, hockey, rounders and basketball. The netball team has excelled itself in an inter-school tournament against independent schools. Cross country forms an important part of the curriculum. Pupils learn the required skills of rugby in an after-school club. There is a wide range of after-school clubs and many opportunities for pupils to be involved with sports agencies outside school. There are inter-house sports which provide keen

competition across the school. Pupils are developing their athletic skills well in running and jumping and other track and field events. Pupils in Years 5 and 6 are given opportunities to develop outdoor pursuit skills. For example, they learn about log rolling, undergo logistical challenges and learn the basics of orienteering. They use a map and compass to navigate and have to crack codes and cryptic clues. They are learning to work together as a team. During the Year 6 residential trip, pupils are introduced to canoeing, sailing, rock-climbing, abseiling and orienteering. They learn all the safety codes that go with these activities. All these opportunities add a positive dimension to the total curriculum. There is equal access for all pupils to the curriculum.

113. Teaching is good, overall. The teachers made good use of the time available, setting clear goals for the pupils and having high expectations of them in terms of behaviour and effort. A variety of teaching methods were used, including encouraging the pupils to comment on each other's performance. Pupils' learning is good. They are acquiring new skills and show their increasing knowledge and understanding. They enjoy the subject and the effort they put into it is very good. Their interest and concentration is very good. They are able to share with each other and this helps them to understand how well they are doing. Pupils' attitudes to physical education are very good, as is their behaviour. Their personal development is also very good, for example, in Year 6 there are monitors who help to put equipment out and ensure that it is put away safely. All pupils have a good awareness of the need for safety.
114. The subject is well led by an enthusiastic co-ordinator whose enjoyment of the subject is infectious. Monitoring of teaching and assessment are insufficiently developed. The improvement since the last inspection is good.

RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

115. The school is continuing to maintain sound standards that are similar to those seen in the previous inspection. Standards are in line with the local Agreed Syllabus. There is an improvement in the quality of teaching in the junior classes, which was variable at the time of the last inspection. It is now consistently good. The subject co-ordinator ensures that the curriculum follows the guidelines of the locally agreed syllabus. This gives pupils in all classes enough opportunity to study different practices, beliefs and moral issues in suitable depth. Careful planning ensures there is good progress in acquiring knowledge and understanding of different religions, cultures and beliefs.
116. By the end of Year 2 pupils' knowledge and understanding of the subject is satisfactory. They listen to stories from different religions, identify the main message in the story and link it to their own actions. For instance, a Year 1 pupil wrote, 'I must be like the good Samaritan if I see someone who is hurt.' By the end of Year 6 pupils have a secure knowledge of Christianity and other world religions. They make thoughtful responses to stories and consider why people make different choices and believe different things.
117. As they progress through the school pupils successfully develop their understanding of the similarities and differences between a range of religions such as Christianity, Islam, Judaism, Hinduism and Sikhism. Carefully prepared lessons ensure that pupils understand and respect different customs and practices, and know the importance of symbols such as a cross or Star of David. They understand the importance of ceremonies and festivals in different religions and cultures. For example, the importance of baptism in Christianity. A talk from a visitor who had been baptised by total immersion as an adult, helped them to appreciate the significance of the ceremony to Christians. In Year 3, pupils know about the Hindu festival of Divali and how it is celebrated. In Year 4, pupils know about the importance of symbols in Sikhism, and in

Years 5 and 6, pupils investigate the dietary laws and other aspects of Islam. By Year 6, pupils have a clear understanding that all religions have a set of rules by which believers live. They apply this knowledge to their own code of conduct in school. Work in personal and social education in addition to time assigned to religious education gives pupils time to think and reflect. This enables them to develop their own ideas about themselves, their beliefs and their religion, and makes a positive contribution to their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development.

118. The support for pupils with special educational needs is effective. It enables them to take a full part in religious education lessons and participate in discussions. One of the strengths of the subject is the links made with literacy. The majority of pupils in the junior classes have well-developed literacy skills so their written work is well presented and of a good standard. Effective research skills enable older pupils to use printed and Internet sources to investigate topics further. Throughout the school pupils record their response to stories, which helps to strengthen their understanding and improve their writing skills.
119. Management of the subject is satisfactory, and the co-ordinator has updated the curriculum plans recently in line with local and national guidelines to ensure the pupils experience a balanced programme of religious education. However, the policy document is out of date and in need of revision and development. Assessment and monitoring within the subject are insufficiently developed. Visits to the local church and from local clergy enhance the provision for the subject.