

## INSPECTION REPORT

### LEIGH PRIMARY SCHOOL

Leigh

LEA area: Kent

Unique reference number: 118278

Headteacher: Mrs Wendy Wallace-Holman

Reporting inspector: Mrs E W D Gill  
17766

Dates of inspection: 13 –15 January 2003

Inspection number: 247860

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

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## INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Type of school:	Primary
School category:	Community
Age range of pupils:	4 – 11 years
Gender of pupils:	Girls and boys
School address:	The Green Leigh Tonbridge
Postcode:	TN11 8QP
Telephone number:	01732 832660
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Appropriate authority:	The governing body
Name of chair of governors:	Mr Michael Rice
Date of previous inspection:	17 November 1997

## INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Team members			Subject responsibilities	Aspect responsibilities
17766	Eira Gill	Registered inspector	Foundation Stage, science, art and design, music, English as an additional language	How high are standards? How well are pupils taught? How well is the school led and managed? What should the school do to improve further?
9619	Robert Miller	Lay inspector		How well does the school care for its pupils? How well does the school work in partnership with parents?
20951	Philip Littlejohn	Team inspector	Mathematics, geography, history, physical education, educational inclusion including racial equality	How good are the curricular and other opportunities offered to pupils?
1578	Maureen Sinclair	Team inspector	English, design and technology, information and communication technology, religious education, special educational needs	Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development.

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

### **INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL**

Leigh Primary School educates boys and girls aged between four and 11 years. There are 128 pupils on roll and the school is smaller than most primary schools. The school has increased in size since the last inspection. There are 14 children in the reception year and they all attend school full-time. The number of pupils who are eligible for free school meals is lower than the national average. Overall, pupils' attainment when they start school is average and there is a broad range of ability. However, this does vary from year to year. The proportion of pupils with special educational needs is below average compared to national statistics, although the numbers in each year group vary considerably. The number of pupils with a Statement of Special Educational Needs is higher than average for the size of the school. The range of needs currently covers moderate learning difficulties as well as complex emotional and behavioural problems and poor attention skills. The very few pupils who speak English as an additional language are bilingual. The number of pupils from ethnic minority backgrounds is in line with national averages. The school has had a high turnover of teachers during the past two years, but is now enjoying a period of stability with recent appointments of permanent and well-qualified members of staff.

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

Leigh is an improving school and provides a sound quality of education for the pupils. The leadership and management of the school are satisfactory with several strengths. The improved quality of teaching has resulted in higher standards. Inspection findings show that standards have improved since the last inspection in several subjects, with the exception of design and technology where standards are below average. In the end of the Years 2 and 6 national tests in 2002, standards of attainment improved in English in both Years 2 and 6, but declined in mathematics in Year 2. Standards in science remained below average at the end of Year 6 in 2002. The governors fulfil their statutory responsibilities effectively and are highly committed to the school. The school provides satisfactory value for money.

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

- Standards in reading are above average at the end of Year 2.
- Provision for music is a strength of the school and standards are above average. This good provision enriches the curriculum and contributes to the good spiritual and cultural development of the pupils.
- The behaviour of the pupils and the relationships within the school are very good and result in never less than satisfactory learning.
- Good links with parents are having an impact on the progress of their children.
- Very good links with the community have a positive impact on pupils' personal development.

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

- Standards in English, mathematics, science and design and technology need to improve further.
- The use of assessment to inform planning in all subjects except English, mathematics and science.
- Resources in design and technology and history.

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

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

The school was last inspected in November 1997, when it was judged to be giving unsatisfactory value for money. Since then, the school has improved satisfactorily and has the capacity to improve further. Most of the key issues for action identified by that inspection have been addressed effectively with the exception of improving standards in the end of Year 6 national tests in science, and implementing formal assessment systems for subjects other than English, mathematics and science. Although the key issue of the need to monitor teaching has been addressed, monitoring needs to be more rigorous to

further improve standards. Standards of attainment of the current Year 6 pupils have improved from below average in English, mathematics, science and information and communication technology to average and, in music, standards are above average. The school's trend in improvement over the last five years is broadly in line with the national trend and, since the last inspection, the school's performance has improved. The quality of teaching has improved significantly since the last inspection when 30 per cent of lessons were judged to be unsatisfactory. The headteacher and governors have been successful in recruiting a strong and well-qualified team of teachers. The strengths of the school identified in the last inspection have been maintained. The targets set by the school in English and mathematics are challenging, but achievable.

## 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	C	D	C	C
Mathematics	D	C	C	D
Science	B	D	D	E

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

The school's results in the national tests at the end of Year 6 in 2002 improved in English and were maintained in mathematics. In science, results were below average and similar to the previous year. However, the small number of pupils in each year group means that results can vary year on year according to the proportion with special educational needs. Consequently, too much emphasis should not be placed on the results of one year. The findings of the inspection are that standards are average in all three subjects in the current Year 6. In most other subjects, standards are average except in music where attainment is above average, and in design and technology it is below average. The achievement of pupils, including pupils from ethnic minority backgrounds, is satisfactory in most subjects, good in music and unsatisfactory in design and technology. The achievement of pupils with special educational needs is good in English and mathematics because they are supported well by the classroom assistants. The very few pupils who are learning English as an additional language are bilingual and their achievement is the same as that of all other pupils. The appointment of a strong group of teachers and a more focused, strategic leadership has contributed to the improvement in standards since the last inspection. The standards in music are above average due to the significant stability in provision by a very proficient visiting teacher. Standards are below average in design and technology because the high turnover of teachers has affected the management of the subject, which is unsatisfactory. It has been difficult for the school to give equal attention to the management of all subjects with the continual changes.

Most of the present group of reception children are on track to reach the expected levels for all areas of learning by the time they reach statutory school age, and their achievement is satisfactory. In Year 2, standards are above average in reading, speaking and listening and music and average in writing and all other subjects except in design and technology, where standards are below average. The achievement of pupils at the end of Year 2, including pupils from an ethnic minority background, is satisfactory. However, in English and mathematics, the achievement of pupils with special educational needs is good.

## PUPILS' ATTITUDES AND VALUES

Aspect	Comment
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Attitudes to the school	Good: overall, there is a positive attitude to learning in the school although, occasionally, in some lessons, the attitudes of the oldest pupils are satisfactory rather than good.
Behaviour, in and out of classrooms	Very good: this aspect is a strength of the school. There have been no exclusions of pupils during the past few years.
Personal development and relationships	Very good: the school is happy and harmonious with an absence of bullying. There are many opportunities for the pupils to develop personally and to show their initiative.
Attendance	Above average: the majority of pupils arrive punctually.

### TEACHING AND LEARNING

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

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

The quality of teaching and learning is satisfactory overall and just over one half of the lessons were judged to be good. There were no unsatisfactory lessons. Improvement in this aspect of the school is very significant as, in the last inspection, 30 per cent of the lessons observed were judged to be unsatisfactory. Teaching and learning in the reception group is sound and a range of appropriate activities helps the children to grow in confidence and make satisfactory achievement. In Years 1 to 6, the teaching of English and mathematics, including literacy and numeracy, is satisfactory overall and has improved since the last inspection. Teachers have good skills in managing behaviour and, as a result, there are no interruptions in lessons and the pupils' learning is moved forward appropriately. The effective use of classroom assistants results in pupils with special educational needs making good progress in lessons. Basic skills, such as tables and spellings, are taught well and pupils' learning in these aspects of literacy and numeracy is developing appropriately. The opening sessions of both numeracy and literacy sessions are good and ensure that all pupils, including those who are higher attainers, are challenged. However, in the activities sessions, the needs of the higher attaining pupils are not always met in mathematics. In science, the pupils are given little opportunity to show their results from investigations in the form of tables or graphs and this is limiting their numeracy and scientific skills. Very good subject knowledge by the visiting music teacher results in good achievement, particularly in the pupils' ability to read simple notation. The school meets the needs of pupils with special educational needs and those pupils from ethnic minority backgrounds well.

### OTHER ASPECTS OF THE SCHOOL

Aspect	Comment
The quality and range of the curriculum	Sound: the time allocated to English is well above average and is helping to raise standards. In other subjects, such as design and technology, the time allocated is below average and the curriculum is narrower than usual. Good provision for music enriches the curriculum. The contribution of the community to pupils' learning is very good and the parent teacher association and 'Friends of Leigh School' raise very substantial funds to improve the accommodation. Provision for extra-curricular activities is very good.
Provision for pupils with special educational needs	Good: pupils are given effective support by the effective use of specialist teachers and trained assistants, and make good progress.

Provision for pupils' personal, including spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	Good: very good provision in social development that is delivered through lessons and the day-to-day life of the school. Provision for spiritual and moral development is good and, for cultural development, provision is satisfactory.
How well the school cares for its pupils	The school provides good support and guidance for all pupils overall. Procedures for monitoring the pupils' personal development are good. The pupils' attainment in the end-of-year tests are tracked appropriately, but there are no formal systems in place for assessing their progress in subjects other than English, mathematics and science.
How effective is the partnership with parents	Good: a number of parents help in school and on visits. The parent teacher association raises additional funds and the vast majority of parents contribute to their children's learning at home.

### HOW WELL THE SCHOOL IS LED AND MANAGED

Aspect	Comment
Leadership and management by the headteacher and other key staff	Sound: standards of attainment in English and other aspects of the school have improved under the leadership of the headteacher. The assistant headteacher works part-time and her contribution to school improvement is limited. Not all subject leaders are fully effective due to the high turnover of staff.
How well the governors fulfil their responsibilities	Good: there is an effective, stable group of governors who are involved in all aspects of the school. They are supportive, energetic and have been innovative in raising substantial funds to improve the accommodation.
The school's evaluation of its performance	Sound: the headteacher has implemented appropriate methods to analyse the end of year national tests and identified weaknesses on which to work. The quality of teaching has improved substantially from a low base in the last inspection as a result of monitoring. Nevertheless, monitoring needs to be more rigorous to improve standards and teaching further.
The strategic use of resources	Good: the school uses its resources to promote sound learning for pupils, such as the spending on classroom assistants, which has proved to be efficient use of money. The school has shown initiative bidding for 'seed' money to contribute towards funding for the new school hall.
Accommodation and facilities	Satisfactory overall: during the inspection the school hall was demolished and will be replaced. The governing body has worked hard to improve the building since the last inspection.
Staffing	Sound: the assistants are effective and give good support to pupils with special educational needs. The present team of teachers is well qualified, experienced and working hard to improve standards. There has been a high turnover of teachers that has led to difficulties in managing subjects.
Resources	Satisfactory overall: unsatisfactory in design and technology and history.
How well the school applies the principles of best value	Sound: the governing body compares the national test results with those of other schools and the school is careful to seek a range of estimates when ordering or seeking contracts.

## PARENTS' AND CARERS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

What pleases parents most	What parents would like to see improved
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Their children like school and are making good progress. Parents believe that the school is well led and managed.</li><li>• Teaching is good and parents feel comfortable about approaching the school.</li><li>• The school expects their children to work hard and behaviour is good.</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• The consistency of homework.</li><li>• The range of activities outside lessons.</li></ul>

The inspection team broadly agrees with the positive views of parents. The team also agrees that homework needs to be more consistent. However, the team has judged that the range of activities outside lessons is very good for this small school.

## **PART B: COMMENTARY**

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

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

1. Children enter the reception class with average levels of attainment and a wide range of ability. In the reception year, most children are achieving satisfactorily and are on course to meet the Early Learning Goals in all the areas of learning, except for physical education where it was not possible to make a judgement. The children are confident and contribute sensibly when they are sitting around their teachers. All the children enjoy listening to stories and they are particularly enthusiastic to explore the free activities arranged for them in the classroom.
2. The findings of the inspection are that standards of attainment have improved since the last inspection in several subjects. The results of the national tests at the end of Year 2 in 2002 showed that pupils attained above average standards in reading, average standards in writing and science and below average in mathematics. At the end of Year 2, the current pupils should attain above average standards in reading and speaking and listening and average standards in writing, mathematics and science. As the number of pupils in each year group is small it is difficult to make comparisons between different year groups. The performance of one pupil can cause a significant variation in the percentage of pupils attaining the required level from year to year. There is no significant difference in the performance of boys and girls. In most other subjects, standards are average except in music, where they are above average and in design and technology where they are below average. No judgement can be made on standards in physical education at the end of Year 2 because no lessons were observed. The achievement of all pupils, including pupils from minority ethnic backgrounds, is satisfactory in most subjects, good in music and unsatisfactory in design and technology. The achievement of pupils with special educational needs is good in English and mathematics because they are supported well by the classroom assistants.
3. In the end of Year 6 national tests in 2002, standards of attainment improved in English to average, and average standards were maintained in mathematics. In science, standards had not improved from 2001 when they were below average. These results are very similar when compared to similar schools. Inspection findings are that standards are average in all three subjects and this is an improvement from the previous inspection when standards were below average in English, mathematics and science. In all other subjects, standards of attainment are average except in music where standards are above average, and in design and technology, where standards are below average. The achievement of all pupils, including those from minority ethnic backgrounds, is satisfactory in most subjects, good in music and unsatisfactory in design and technology. The achievement of pupils with special educational needs in English and mathematics is good because of the good support they receive from classroom assistants. The very few pupils who are learning English as an additional language are bilingual and their achievement is the same as all other pupils. The targets set by the school for English and mathematics are challenging, but achievable. The trend in the school's performance over the last five years is broadly in line with the national trend. Since the last inspection, the school's performance in the national tests has improved.
4. The reasons for the improvement in attainment at the end of Year 6 in most subjects since the last inspection, are likely to be the result of the appointment of a strong group of teachers and a more focused strategic leadership focused on raising standards.
5. The strengths in literacy and numeracy across the school are that teachers are now ensuring that the pupils are taught the basic skills more effectively. In particular, the shared and guided reading initiatives have helped to improve standards in English as well as the focus on encouraging better writing from the boys. In numeracy lessons, the opening sessions include quick-fire questioning and this is moving the pupils' learning forward effectively. A weakness in numeracy lessons is that not enough attention is paid to meeting the needs of all pupils and the higher attainers, in particular, are not challenged enough. In both literacy and numeracy, there are few examples of these skills being taught in other subjects of the curriculum.

6. The results of the national tests in 2002 at the end of Year 2 showed that boys outperformed girls in reading and mathematics, but there was no significant difference in writing. At the end of Year 6, the girls outperformed the boys and, most significantly, in science. During the inspection no discernible difference was observed in the attainment of boys and girls and, with such small year groups, the difference in attainment of just one boy or girl has a significant effect on percentages.

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

7. The previous inspection judged pupils' behaviour and attitudes to be good. The behaviour has improved since the last inspection and is now judged to be very good. This aspect continues to be a strength of the school, especially the absence of bullying and sexism. Pupils say that the incidents of bullying are rare and none was seen during the inspection. Pupils are careful to respect the feelings of others, as demonstrated by their kind acceptance of pupils with a range of educational needs and their willingness to help. Pupils are very positive about each other's efforts; for instance, spontaneously clapping achievements during assemblies. Boys and girls work well together in class and no altercations were seen in the playground. No exclusions have occurred during the past few years. Relationships with members of staff and each other are very good and this makes a great contribution to the harmonious and friendly atmosphere. Pupils are very appreciative of this aspect of their school life, confirming their parents' views that they are enjoying their school days.
8. Children in the reception group sit quietly and listen attentively when in whole-class sessions. They join in with the group activities provided with enthusiasm, and persist for extended periods of time at an activity. Their behaviour is usually good and all children have an awareness of the good expectations set by their teachers. When working together, they co-operate well and support one another in their learning. The children learn to develop initiative and take responsibility for themselves well. The children work independently within the classroom, are friendly and confidently exchange ideas with the adults.
9. Pupils with special educational needs have good attitudes to their learning, responding well to support within the class and when withdrawn for extra help. They are helped to feel part of the school as the result of good relationship between staff and pupils and amongst the children themselves. Although there are a number of pupils with quite complex problems they are an integral part of the school and generally, their attitudes, values and behaviour are not noticeably different from those of other pupils. They benefit from the caring and inclusive atmosphere that is a feature of the school.
10. The pupils show good attitudes and enthusiasm for their school. Overall, pupils demonstrate good levels of effort and concentration in lessons and it is evident that they enjoy their lessons. The attitudes of the oldest pupils are satisfactory overall, although occasionally they were good; for example, in information and communication technology and history lessons. In general, there is a positive attitude to learning throughout the school, which is encouraged from Year 1 upwards. Pupils' response to the teaching of music and art was frequently very good or better, reflecting the quality of the teaching. These subjects, as well as physical education, were cited as favourites by the pupils.
11. Behaviour is very good and a strength of the school, affirming the views held by parents. The good behaviour reflects the good moral development provided by the school. The great majority of pupils are open, well mannered and polite to adults and each other. Pupils move around the school in an orderly manner and walk through the village for their lunch in a similar fashion. They show respect for property; for example, by taking care to throw crumbs into a waste bin whilst tasting bread as part of a design and technology project. Pupils understand and comply with set routines and rules very well. Their behaviour around the school, in assemblies and in the school playground is normally very good, although the small playground lessens the opportunities for large-scale activities. Pupils enjoy the games and equipment provided by the school, although they stated, in discussion, that there were not enough.

12. The pupils' personal development and their relationships with each other and adults in the school are very good and reflect the very good provision for social development. A number of carefully structured opportunities are provided to help the pupils' personal development. Pupils respond very well to these and this makes a major contribution to the high levels of confidence and maturity seen throughout the school, as does the very good range of extra-curricular activities. Pupils enjoy taking responsibility for such things as returning registers and helping younger children to read. They participate in the school's 'eco-committee' and gain confidence from knowing that their contributions to discussion are valued. However, there is no school council that would enable them to further develop their autonomy and initiative. They relate to the local community well through their links with the local church and the concerts organised for groups of people in the community.
13. Attendance is above average and has been maintained since the time of the previous inspection. In the last school year, it was around 96 per cent and above the level of most schools nationally. It makes a good contribution to the standards achieved by the pupils. Absences are usually due to the occasional illness or medical appointment, although a number of parents insist on taking their children on holiday in term time.

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

14. The quality of teaching and learning is satisfactory overall. In one half of the lessons observed, teaching was good and, in just less than one half, satisfactory. In the two music lessons observed, teaching was very good. There were no unsatisfactory lessons and this is a significant improvement in teaching from the last inspection when 30 per cent of teaching was judged to be unsatisfactory. This improvement is due to the appointment of a strong team of permanent teachers who, although recently appointed, are working together effectively to improve standards.
15. The quality of teaching and learning for children in the reception group is satisfactory in most areas of learning. Teaching could not be judged for the children's physical development as no lessons were observed. The teachers and classroom assistant know the children very well as individuals and have developed warm relationships with them. The children feel happy and secure in school and have developed good attitudes to learning. Planning is satisfactory and is matched to the recommended Early Learning Goals. However, the time spent on different aspects of lessons needs to be reviewed as the children were observed sitting for far too long on the carpet in one lesson. The management of the children is good and this results in good behaviour.
16. The quality of teaching and learning for pupils with special educational needs is good. This is an improvement on the judgement made at the time of the previous inspection, which stated that the only good teaching was when the oldest pupils were withdrawn from class. Teachers and learning support assistants plan effectively together to ensure that lesson activities match the pupils' education plans. The targets set are realistic and usually achievable and promote pupils' involvement. In literacy and numeracy lessons, learning support assistants provide good support in the whole-class sessions as well as in small group and one-to-one work. At times, teachers' plans for whole-class teaching incorporate good strategies to help those who are experiencing difficulties. For example, they ensure that a comprehensive word bank is available. Older pupils are aware of their targets.
17. In Years 1 and 2, the quality of teaching observed in lessons was satisfactory overall and this is an improvement from the last inspection when teaching for these year groups was judged as unsatisfactory in some subjects. Teaching in the lessons observed was judged to be good in English and art and design, and very good in music. In other subjects, teaching was judged to be satisfactory except in design and technology where teaching was judged to be unsatisfactory overall. In physical education, no judgement could be made as no lessons were observed. There are several strengths in teaching and learning in these year groups. The strengths in teaching include good use of classroom assistants and parents to support the pupils, and this had an impact on their learning that was good in a few lessons. Good resources organised by the teachers and used effectively in lessons impacted on the pupils' good progress in lessons. The teachers' enthusiasm was infectious and the pupils were motivated to work hard and complete their tasks. The management and control of the pupils were always good. Weaknesses in

teaching for these year groups are few and are mainly because planning is not always thorough. Often, there is not enough time left for the final session of lessons and opportunities were lost because there was no focus on what the pupils had learned in the lessons or no preparation for the next lesson in the unit of work. Occasionally, in some lessons, such as mathematics, pupils were given work that was too difficult and made little progress.

18. In Years 3 to 6, the quality of teaching and learning is satisfactory overall. This is a significant improvement from the last inspection when teaching for these year groups was judged to be poor. Teaching is satisfactory in most subjects, except in music where it is very good. In design and technology, the quality of teaching is judged to be unsatisfactory overall, although in the lesson observed teaching was satisfactory. There are several strengths in teaching. Management and control of the pupils in these year groups are consistently good and this results in a calm, working atmosphere with pupils working at an appropriate pace. Good attention is given to teaching the basic skills in English and mathematics with structured sessions for teaching reading every day, and good opening sessions in the mathematics lessons that include quick-fire questioning. In these opening sessions, the higher attaining pupils are given every opportunity to make progress and their learning is good.
19. In Years 3 to 6 also, the teaching of spelling has improved with all teachers ensuring that spelling is given attention each week. The teacher's excellent subject knowledge in music ensures that pupils make good gains in their learning, particularly in their knowledge of notation. Weaknesses in teaching include a lack of focus in planning of ensuring that the higher attaining pupils are given challenging tasks in the activity sessions in lessons. In addition, the final sessions of lessons are not always used appropriately to focus on what the pupils have learned or might be learning next. In science, planning is weak throughout the school as there was very little evidence in the work scrutiny to show that pupils were being taught the essential scientific and numerical skill of how to show the results of their investigations by drawing charts or graphs. There was evidence in the work scrutiny of mathematics to show that not enough attention is being given to the teaching of shape and space and handling data. The work scrutiny indicated that the use of too many commercial worksheets throughout the school in several subjects is not helping pupils of all abilities to make appropriate progress.
20. The teachers' use of information and communication technology is satisfactory. The school has a sufficient number of computers in each classroom and the co-ordinator is very supportive and holds a weekly clinic for any member of staff who needs to become more proficient at delivering the curriculum to pupils. Most staff are proficient and confident. Pupils' skills in information and communication technology are developed appropriately in English, mathematics, art and design, history and science. Little evidence was seen of pupils using other technology; for example, a video camera, digital camera or tape recorders.
21. The teaching of literacy and numeracy is satisfactory overall with several strengths. Basic skills are taught well by most teachers and the school has initiated several improvements in the teaching of literacy. There is now a much greater focus on improving the spelling skills of the pupils. In addition, the writing skills of boys have been a focus for teaching and this has had an impact on improving writing generally. However, because the teaching of phonics and other aspects of English have not been given enough attention in the past, the teachers of the Years 5 and 6 pupils are challenged to compensate for lack of progress in English throughout previous years. Teaching in the opening sessions of the numeracy lessons is good with focused questioning on different groups of pupils. However, in the activities session of lessons the higher attaining pupils are not always challenged enough. Teachers use the time at the end of the lesson effectively to assess pupil learning. Marking, although satisfactory, could be more focused on writing comments that would help pupils to improve their work. The use of booster classes for the Year 6 pupils could be developed further to benefit more pupils. During the inspection week, only three pupils were included in the group.

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

22. The school meets the requirements of the National Curriculum and the agreed syllabus for religious education. The length of the teaching week meets minimum recommended requirements in Years 1 to 6. The allocation of time to teaching English is well above average and has contributed to the improvement in standards of attainment. In some other subjects, such as art and design and design and technology in Years 3 to 6, the allocation of time is below average and, as a result, the curriculum is rather narrower than is usual. The breadth, balance and relevance of the whole curriculum together with the quality and range of learning opportunities are satisfactory overall. The provision of music, however, is a strength of the school and the expertise of the visiting specialist teacher enriches the pupils' learning. Medium and short-term planning does not always reflect the needs of all pupils and, in some subjects, pupils are given the same work in a few lessons regardless of their ability. As a result, higher attaining pupils, for example, are not given enough opportunities to show what they can achieve if challenged. Due to the good support pupils with special educational needs receive from learning assistants, they make good progress particularly in English and mathematics.
23. The quality and range of learning opportunities for children in the reception class are satisfactory. Planning is detailed, but does not always focus on how long specific sessions should be. Sometimes, the children are kept sitting on the carpet for too long. Plans follow the recommendations of the curriculum guidance for the Foundation Stage and are based around themes; for example, the story of Cinderella.
24. Curricular provision for pupils with special educational needs is good overall. The school has implemented the new Code of Practice well, although it has yet to involve all pupils in the setting of targets. The curriculum makes good provision for pupils with special educational needs because of the early identification of problems and the accurate matching of learning needs to appropriate activities and support. The school uses external specialists very well to implement and underpin the detailed and systematic programmes. Overall, the quality of the pupils' individual education plans is good; they have short-term, specific targets. Pupils with a Statement of Special Educational Needs are provided with an education that reflects their requirements. Good use is made of national initiatives to enhance teaching and learning for those pupils who are being supported for a very short period. Well-trained classroom assistants ably implement a programme that stresses the structured development of reading and writing through a focus on letters and sounds. The school partly meets access and disability criteria. There are good links with the secondary schools, with a planned induction and arrangements for the transfer of information.
25. The National Literacy Strategy has been implemented satisfactorily overall and English is appropriately resourced. The quality of teaching in literacy has improved and there is now much more emphasis on the teaching of the basic skills. In addition, grammar and punctuation are taught with more focus. There has also been a significant effort in improving the writing of the boys and this is having an impact on improving standards. Pupils' literacy skills are not being developed sufficiently in other areas of the curriculum and the use of too many commercial worksheets in some subjects results in higher attaining pupils, in particular, not being challenged sufficiently to improve their literacy skills.
26. The implementation of the National Numeracy Strategy has been satisfactory overall. Teachers are confident in the opening sessions of the numeracy hour and have acquired the skills of quick-fire questioning. In addition, in these opening sessions teachers have learned how to ask specific pupils questions that challenge pupils of different ability and help them to move forward in their learning.
27. Overall, the aims of the school and their implementation show a good commitment to equality of opportunity and this is usually reflected in all aspects of school life with the exception of ensuring that all pupils are given work that will meet their needs. This is the result of a lack of assessment systems that would guide planning in subjects other than mathematics, English and science. In addition, there is evidence that pupils have few opportunities to learn that we live in a diverse multicultural society. Nevertheless, all pupils are given good access to the very good opportunities for attending activities that take place after school.

28. Although a significant minority of parents who responded to the pre-inspection questionnaire do not feel that the school provides an interesting range of activities outside lessons, the inspection team disagrees. Leigh is a small school and yet the headteacher and teachers organise a very good variety of extra-curricular clubs that provide pupils with a wide range of experiences and enrich the quality of the curriculum. Pupils can choose from race walking, netball, art club, chess club and rugby as after-school activities and gardening and tennis at lunchtime. All clubs are very popular and well attended, and, for example, the art club was attended by 31 pupils during the inspection week. In addition, the residential visit to the field centre at Sayers Croft for pupils in Year 6 gives pupils opportunities to develop their outdoor activity skills in physical education as well as developing their social skills. This year, the pupils will be attending the residential centre for four days instead of two.
29. The school organises a number of visits and visitors, which enhance learning opportunities for pupils. During the inspection a speaker from 'Action Aid' described to pupils how the money they contributed was being used to educate a child in an Indian village. Musicians and artists have visited the school on several occasions.
30. The school makes good provision for personal, social and health education (PSHE). PSHE lessons and circle time are taking place across the school. PSHE is proving to be a good tool in raising pupils' self-esteem and in supporting behaviour management. Governors have approved a suitable programme for sex education taken by the school nurse, and a drugs awareness programme is organised and provided by an ex-policeman as part of the health education programme.
31. Overall, the provision for pupils' personal, including spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good.
32. Provision for pupils' spiritual development is good. Pupils are given opportunities to explore a range of beliefs. They are encouraged to consider values and beliefs and to reflect on their own experiences. The school encourages respect for others, and this aim is met. The school's ethos provides a climate in which, 'Sharing, caring and learning together', is central and the contributions of all are valued. In the Years 1 and 2 class a pupil showed delight at the praise he received for his artwork and said he was pleased because he had put a lot of effort into it. The school provides a daily act of worship. During assemblies, use is made of a range of opportunities to support spiritual development. A Christian group gave an excellent presentation in assembly that fully met the requirements of an act of collective worship. Prayer reflected caring and consideration for others and the story of 'Daniel In The Lion's Den' stressed the virtues of bravery and courage in adversity. Once a week, an award assembly enables pupils to celebrate their work and receive a certificate. This is an opportunity for pupils to feel proud of what they have achieved and it raises their self-esteem.
33. Provision for pupils' moral development is good. Positive moral attitudes are promoted throughout the school. Discussion is used effectively to enable pupils to develop an understanding of the difference between right and wrong. PHSE and circle times are used effectively to understand the needs, attitudes and feelings of others. Adults provide very good role models and are consistent in implementing the school's behaviour management policy. Throughout the school, the system of rewards and positive encouragement has a positive impact on the pupils' attitudes and behaviour. All pupils are aware of the school rules.
34. Provision for social development is very good and this leads to very good relationships throughout the school. The school has an 'eco.- committee' in which representatives of each class seek to find ways in which the school can be more conscious of saving energy. The school won a bronze medal for their efforts in the previous year. Year 6 pupils have opportunities to exercise leadership and responsibility; for example, as prefects and 'buddies' to younger pupils, and to listen to younger pupils read. The residential visit in Year 6 provides good social occasions where pupils learn to be part of a group representing the school. This sense of identity within a group is enhanced by such activities as belonging to the many clubs that the school provides or representing the school in football or netball. The relationships between pupils, and between pupils

and all adults are very good. The programme of visits and visitors has a positive impact on developing pupils' social skills and they relate well to other people and develop good attitudes to their learning.

35. Provision for pupils' cultural development is satisfactory and there have been improvements since the last inspection. Pupils have opportunities to learn about other cultures as part of their studies of the major world faiths in religious education. The pupils follow the Kent Agreed Syllabus, but there are few visits into school by leaders of other religions other than Christianity. In areas of Western culture, such as music, history, art and design and literature, provision is satisfactory. In assemblies, the teachers play music for pupils as they enter the hall and are informative about the composer. An assembly on 'Action Aid' gave pupils a very good insight into the culture of an Indian village and the significant difficulties the villagers experience finding water. An informative display in the entrance to the school about the Aboriginal culture in Australia is the result of an Australian week organised by the school last term. The ethos of the school is good in providing equal opportunities and encouraging respect for others and the pupils' own cultures are celebrated. However, there is a need for the school to prepare the pupils more for living in the multicultural society that is found in Britain.
36. The contribution of the community to pupils' learning is very good and remains a significant strength of the school since the last inspection. The growing number of opportunities to develop pupils' personal development includes the support by members of the community to run the gardening club as well the members of the tennis club allowing the pupils to use the courts. There are strong links with the local church and a Christian group is a regular visitor to the school assemblies. The village green and surrounding area are used regularly for history and geography projects. Artists and craft workers come into school and hold exhibitions and demonstrations of their work. Pupils in all year groups visit museums and castles elsewhere in the county of Kent and those in Years 5 and 6 have a residential visit to an activity centre in Norfolk. The 'Friends of Leigh School' is a group made up of local residents, ex-pupils, parents, grandparents and 'well-wishers' who raise very substantial funds towards ongoing building work at the school. In addition, the 'friends' help individual pupils to improve their reading skills as well giving support to teachers in other areas of the curriculum.
37. There are satisfactory links with partner primary and secondary schools. There is a regular meeting of a primary school cluster group to discuss matters of mutual interest. A sporting link has developed with a boys' secondary school and Year 6 pupils have the opportunity to visit a number of secondary schools in the area for the purpose of deciding to where they wish to transfer when they leave the school.

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

38. All staff in the school support pupils well in their personal development and are good role models. The school is providing a caring, happy and supportive environment. Parents are pleased with the level of support in the school, seeing it as a caring community where the headteacher and all teachers are approachable if there are problems. The good support and guidance provided by the school is effective in ensuring that attendance is above average and the behaviour of the pupils is very good. The procedures for monitoring and supporting pupils' personal development are good and those for monitoring pupils' academic performance are satisfactory overall.
39. Good procedures are in place for ensuring the safety and welfare of the pupils. During the inspection, the school hall was being demolished and alternative arrangements had been made for the children to eat lunch and have their physical education lessons in the village hall. The school had made every effort to ensure that the pupils' safety during their walks to and from the village hall was upheld at all times. The headteacher and teachers accompanied the pupils as well as the midday supervisors, and the pupils behaved very well.
40. The provision for first aid is sound with a trained member of staff in charge of several first-aid boxes placed in those spots around the school where they will be needed. Appropriate records are kept and parents informed quickly if their child has had an accident. The headteacher is also trained as

a first-aider. All staff have had training in how to administer appropriate medication in the event of a pupil suffering a severe reaction to a nut allergy. Regular health and safety inspections of the school are carried out by the headteacher together with a member of the governing body, and the school caretaker checks the smoke and fire alarms weekly. The school has full wheelchair access for disabled persons. The health and safety policy has recently been reviewed and agreed by the governing body. In addition, the school follows the local authority's guidelines for carrying out risk assessments throughout the school. Midday supervisors are kept well informed when there are concerns about a child and supervision during the lunchtime period is good.

41. Procedures for child protection are satisfactory. The headteacher is the designated officer and the school follows local procedures. The policy provides an appropriate outline of possible concerns. Three of the governors have had child protection training, but training for the teachers has yet to be organised. Links with outside agencies, such as the school nurse and specialist advisers for pupils with special educational needs, are good. The teachers ensure that pupils are made aware of health and safety issues during lessons, such as physical education.
42. There are sound procedures for promoting attendance and punctuality. Registration and follow-up procedures are well established and registers meet statutory requirements. The school attempts to dissuade those families who take holidays in term time from doing so. The educational welfare officer is readily available to help when the school is experiencing specific problems.
43. Good arrangements for promoting high standards of behaviour, including measures to prevent bullying, have been developed after consultation with parents, staff and the pupils. There are simple rules for the pupils, rewards for good behaviour and sanctions for dealing with misbehaviour. Most pupils are very well self-disciplined and there is very little need for staff intervention in applying these procedures. The school does not, however, have a restraint policy or incident book, which is a requirement.
44. The school's arrangements for monitoring personal and social development are good and this is an improvement since the last inspection. The parents of all new pupils meet all the staff involved with their child and information is shared. Formal arrangements, including teachers' records and summaries in pupils' reports, convey a detailed knowledge of the child. There are written records of parents' evenings so that the school and home can act in unison. Achievements, such as swimming certificates, are celebrated and noted, as are pupils' efforts in ensuring that their house wins points. The teachers and support staff are part of a caring community that informally monitors pupils' accomplishments and difficulties, thereby contributing well to their personal development. Good relationships and a supportive environment enable the pupils to develop their personal skills and older pupils play a role in helping the younger ones.
45. Children in the reception class are well cared for and it is evident that they feel at ease. Assessment and the keeping of records are satisfactory. Baseline assessment is carried out when the children enter the reception class and the results are used to track the progress that individual children make. Each term, the children are assessed on specific literacy and numeracy objectives.
46. The care and support of pupils with special educational needs are good, reflecting the strategic planning of the headteacher and governors. The teachers and learning support staff know the pupils they work with well. The school ensures that pupils have every opportunity to take part in all school activities. The contributions of the pupils with special educational needs are recognised and fully appreciated, such as when they are appointed house captains. A good range of tests is used to pinpoint areas of concern that have been highlighted as a result of teacher assessment. These judgements form the basis of individual education plans, which all pupils on the special educational needs register have. They are regularly updated and informed by the continuous assessment of performance. Additional tests and external specialists are very well utilised to inform planning, but pupils do not take a very active part in discussing and formulating them. Records are well maintained and organised.

47. The previous inspection identified assessment and recording of pupils' academic progress as a weakness. It is now satisfactory and represents an improvement. The assessment of the pupils' attainment in the end-of-year optional and national tests throughout the school is satisfactory and identifies weaknesses that are then followed up by the co-ordinators of English, mathematics and science. The assessment also enables the school to predict the targets for pupils in English and mathematics at the end of Year 6. The identification of specific weaknesses has resulted in the school implementing procedures to ensure that teachers include those areas of weakness in their planning. As a result, the teaching of English has improved and is having an impact on standards particularly at the end of Year 2. In addition, an in-depth analysis of the spelling results led to new teaching and learning strategies throughout the school. However, in science, this aspect of assessment has not been as positive and the weaknesses identified have not yet been addressed effectively by the school.
48. The use of assessment to inform planning is unsatisfactory overall. The assessment procedures used by the school to record the pupils' achievement at the end of a unit of work are in place for English, mathematics and science. However, in mathematics, this data is not being used selectively to ensure that the needs of all pupils, particularly the higher attainers, are met. The procedures for science were implemented last term and have not had time to have any impact on standards. In other subjects, there are no formal procedures for assessing the progress of the pupils at the end of a half term or unit of work. As a result, most teachers do not plan sufficient challenge in some subjects for those pupils who are attaining above average standards.
49. The school is intent on introducing short-term targets for pupils in English, mathematics and science, which would fine-tune the monitoring of pupils' progress, as well as increase the pupils' responsibility for their own learning. This has begun to happen in English in some classes, but not all. For example, Years 1 and 2 pupils have their literacy targets on cards that they can place on their table when doing work in all curriculum areas. Year 6 pupils have them in the beginning of their books and were able to discuss them with a visitor, but this was not the case in all classes. The quality of marking is satisfactory, but could be improved. Work is normally marked regularly and frequently and provides pupils with an indication of how well they have done and with encouragement to continue. However, it does not consistently indicate to pupils how they might improve their work.

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

50. The school's partnership with parents is good and parents consider this a good school. Judgement on this aspect of the school has been maintained since the last inspection. Parents indicated in their response to the questionnaire and in the pre-inspection meeting that they are happy, overall, with what the school provides and achieves. Most parents have signed the home-school agreement. The members of the village community are very supportive of the school and this is clearly indicated by their very good response to helping in the school and to the appeal for funding the new school hall.
51. A small number of parents, however, are unhappy with the homework arrangements and the provision for extra-curricular activities. Inspection findings are that whilst there is a homework policy outlined in the school prospectus, not all staff are consistent in its application. Extra-curricular provision, however, is found to be very good in this small school. Clubs are organised at both lunchtimes and after school, on most days of the week.
52. Liaison with parents of pupils with special educational needs is good. The classroom assistants and the class teachers link well with parents, although the liaison with the special educational needs co-ordinator is more difficult as she works part-time. Parents are made aware of the targets set in the individual education plans and most work in close partnership with staff to help their children. They are involved in the regular review procedures. Parents are generally pleased with the school provision.
53. Induction procedures for children who are starting school are good. Parents and children are invited into school to meet the children who already attend, as well as the teachers and assistants. A

more formal meeting is organised for parents by the headteacher when the procedures of starting school and how parents can help their children are explained thoroughly. Afterwards the parents are encouraged to chat informally with the staff.

54. The contribution of parents to their children's learning is good. A large number of parents attend consultation evenings and help in school listening to pupils read and with an assortment of other activities including school trips. There is a parent-school association that raises additional funds for the benefit of the school and pupils. These include learning resources such as library books, religious artefacts and information and communication technology equipment. The vast majority of parents contribute to their child's learning at home.
55. The quantity of school information is good. There are regular newsletters sent to parents and these complement the school notice board. The governors' annual report and school prospectus are informative, but lack certain legally required information. The end-of-year academic reports are good and helpful to parents in identifying their child's strengths and weaknesses and setting realistic future targets. The school has started to send letters out each term informing parents of the forthcoming curriculum topics.

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

56. The leadership and management of the school are satisfactory overall with several strengths. The assistant headteacher works part-time only and, as a result, her contribution to school improvement is limited. However, she gives support to the headteacher as the co-ordinator for special educational needs. The headteacher has a clear vision for the school that includes raising standards and building a strong team of teachers. The school's aims and values are reflected well in the good ethos that is very evident throughout the school and is the result of good provision for spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. The high turnover of teachers has resulted in a greater workload for the headteacher than is usual and only two of the classroom teachers (both part-time) have been working in the school for longer than one year and a term. The co-ordination of subjects, for example, has not been easy to manage in this small school with frequent changes of managers and, as a result, the co-ordination of design and technology is unsatisfactory. Nevertheless, the headteacher and governors have been successful in appointing an experienced, well-qualified and hard working team of teachers. They have also ensured that the new teachers have been given professional training on how to be successful managers of their subjects. The delegation of responsibilities is good and most co-ordinators have initial qualifications in the subject they manage. However, co-ordinators who have been recently appointed have yet to make a significant impact on standards and development in their subjects.
57. The headteacher has been in post for one year and, on her appointment, identified that several school systems needed to be improved or implemented in order to improve standards. For example, medium-term plans for all the foundation subjects have been written since her appointment as well as a thorough analysis undertaken of the end-of-year national tests in Years 2 and 6. The arrangements for mixed age group classes are good and ensure that there is no difference between the work and standards of year groups split between classes. Additional literacy lessons have been organised for those pupils who need an extra boost and training in this aspect has been provided for the classroom assistants. The quality of teaching and learning of spelling has improved significantly under the headteacher's leadership, with effective procedures put into place. She has also ensured that the teachers are now focused on what they intend pupils to learn in each lesson and that pupils are also aware. The headteacher has also reinstated the teaching of swimming for all Years 3 to 6 pupils as well improving sporting facilities in after-school clubs.
58. Procedures for monitoring, evaluation and the development of teaching have been implemented satisfactorily since the last inspection when 30 per cent of teaching was judged to be unsatisfactory. The quality of teaching has improved significantly from this low base as a result of successful recruiting procedures. The headteacher carries out the monitoring of lessons, as most teachers need to establish themselves in the school and increase their co-ordination skills. The English co-ordinator has monitored the pupils' exercise books in order to judge improvement in

skills and progression. The headteacher monitors lessons regularly in English, mathematics and science and has been successful in improving several aspects of teaching and learning. However, a few areas of weakness identified; for example, in science, have not been addressed sufficiently by the headteacher in her monitoring feedback to have an impact on the pupils' investigatory and numeracy skills. The systems in place for managing the performance targets of the headteacher and teachers are satisfactory and, despite the constant change in teachers, the cycle of performance management is well organised. There is evidence that a few targets are not always monitored with rigour and this is affecting the impact of performance management on standards.

59. The school's priorities for development are appropriate and the methods by which they are to be achieved, through the school's development plan, are outlined in detail. The headteacher has sensibly changed the date of review and preparation of the plan so that budgetary requirements will be planned more efficiently. Each co-ordinator has written an action plan that is included in the overall school plan and there are links with personal performance targets. Costings are included, but the success criteria identified are not always linked to raising standards sufficiently; neither are they measurable. The emphasis in the plan seems to be more on management issues rather than raising standards.
60. The special educational needs co-ordinator provides satisfactory leadership. This is a very new appointment and the co-ordinator works part-time and is also a class teacher. There has not yet been the opportunity to strongly focus on any new initiatives. Systems to monitor and evaluate all aspects of the special educational needs provision need improving; for example, there is a register of pupils, but a detailed analysis of movements on and off the register has not been completed. The co-ordinator has received training for her new role and the training of the specialist classroom assistants has been good, although other staff have not been involved. The governor with special responsibility for this aspect of the school is kept well informed by the co-ordinator with whom she has a good working relationship. Funds allocated to pupils with special educational needs are used wisely and effectively and the school further contributes from its own resources. There is no specialist accommodation and resources are generally adequate.
61. The governing body fulfils its statutory duties well and is able to account for the performance of the school with the support of the headteacher. All statutory policies are in place and the policy promoting racial equality is contributing to the good attitudes and behaviour observed during the inspection. The governors have high levels of expertise and are very well organised and thorough. Very clear systems, such as arrangements for carrying out their roles as visitors to the school, membership of specific committees and effective terms of reference have an impact on their effectiveness. Practically all the governors attend training sessions organised by the authority and have shown initiative by arranging their own training in the school on; for example, understanding the data generated by the end-of-year national tests. This has had an impact on the best value principles of comparison and challenge. Governors are very supportive of the school and attend all the social events as well as those evenings that are organised to inform parents about aspects of the curriculum.
62. Most governors are long serving and a very stable group. There are no vacancies and one governor attended the school as a small boy and this enables him to have a very special knowledge of the history of the school. Governors meet frequently and the link governor for special educational needs plays an effective role in having an overview of the progress of the pupils. The minutes of meetings give good evidence that the governors, as a group, engage in effective strategic development planning. Each committee has written a development plan that is incorporated in the school development plan. The governors are open to new ideas and they have been very successful in bidding for 'seed money' for the new hall project. The 'Community' committee has shown energy and initiative to foster 'The Friends of Leigh', and members act as interested parties in the school and have been very effective in raising funds to improve the accommodation.
63. Financial planning and management are good and the governors' committee for finance is meticulous in its approach. The committee has recently approached the authority for clearer budget sheets that give them the information they require in a more practical, but still efficient, layout. Members of the committee decided to pay the authority to prepare the budget and this has

proved to be of practical help to school staff as well as being more efficient. The headteacher reports to the committee regularly and governors ensure that the right priorities are allocated appropriate funding. Nevertheless, resources for design and technology and history are judged to be unsatisfactory in the school particularly in the number of books available for pupils' research. This is affecting the pupils' ability to move forward in their learning. The school makes effective use of additional grants for pupils with special educational needs and other specific purposes and this has an impact on the good progress made by pupils with special educational needs in English and mathematics. The school uses technology appropriately to enhance its efficiency. The school's accounts, attendance records and information about pupils' levels of attainment are kept on central software systems. The school has a carry-forward of just over five per cent of its budget. This is planned to ensure that the costs of the new hall are met.

64. The high turnover of teaching staff has affected aspects of the school's work, particularly the aspect of co-ordination of subjects, which has suffered from a lack of development. Recently appointed teachers are given good, helpful, informal support by the headteacher and the informative staff handbook gives them practical guidance. However, more rigorous monitoring would help the headteacher to quickly establish what needs improving in teaching practice that relates directly to the school improvement plan and performance management targets. The newly appointed staff are well qualified to take on their new responsibilities as co-ordinators and this is unusual in such a small school. All the assistants working with pupils give good support and are having an effective impact on the progress of the pupils with special educational needs. The office and caretaking staff ensure that the school runs very smoothly in its day-to-day routines and is very clean.
65. The accommodation is satisfactory overall. During the inspection week the 'Iron Room', built in the 19<sup>th</sup> century as a soup kitchen, was demolished and the new hall will be built within six months. This will improve considerably the facilities for sport, assemblies, parents' meetings and functions. Although visitors need to walk through some classrooms to arrive in specific locations, the remainder of the accommodation is satisfactory. The addition of a new classroom with toilets has improved the teaching areas considerably. Externally, the playgrounds are too small and particularly restrict the older pupils playing football, for example. However, in the warmer months, the pupils use the village green for playtimes and sporting facilities. There is no outside learning environment for the children in the reception group and this does impact on the range of activities usually experienced by children of this age. Nevertheless, they enjoy their playtimes with the older pupils and are very energetic and involved in playground games.
66. Resources are satisfactory overall, although the resources for design and technology and book resources in history are unsatisfactory and this is affecting the pupils' attainment in these subjects.

## WHAT SHOULD THE SCHOOL DO TO IMPROVE FURTHER?

67. In order to raise standards, the headteacher, governors and staff should:

- (1) improve standards in English in Years 1 to 6 and the quality of teaching in English in Years 3 to 6 by ensuring that:\*\*\*
  - opportunities for pupils in Years 3 to 6 to practise their speaking and listening skills are planned for in lessons; for example, through drama and debate;
  - the quality of the pupils' writing is improved by concentrating more on teaching the skills of punctuation, the use of correct tenses and the grammar of complex sentences;
  - planning includes appropriate time for the plenary session of lessons in English so that attention can be given to the gains made in learning;
  - teachers plan the use of literacy skills in other subjects more consistently and effectively;
  - the library is used more effectively so that pupils develop further their skills of reading for information;
  - homework is consistent and challenges all the pupils.(paragraphs 17, 19, 25, 80, 82-88, 114, 118, 137)
- (2) improve standards and the quality of teaching in mathematics by ensuring that:\*\*\*
  - assessment of pupils' work informs the planning for lessons so that all pupils, particularly the average and higher attaining pupils, are given work that will offer them a challenge;
  - mathematics lessons are based more on the National Numeracy Strategy with less use of commercially produced worksheets;
  - the quality of marking improves so that pupils are given guidance about what they need to do to develop further their knowledge and skills in mathematics;
  - teachers plan the use of numeracy skills more effectively in other subjects, particularly in science.(paragraphs 5, 17, 19, 21, 22, 27, 49, 91, 94, 95, 102, 134)
- (3) improve standards in science by ensuring that:\*\*\*
  - planning includes appropriate opportunities for pupils to display the results of their work in the form of charts, tables and graphs;
  - the use of commercial worksheets is reduced;
  - teachers are given professional support when planning activities based on the national scheme of work;
  - pupils are expected to consistently explain why they are making a specific prediction and how they are making their test fair.(paragraphs 29, 47, 99, 100, 101, 102)
- (4) improve standards in design and technology by ensuring that:
  - the scheme of work and medium-term planning covers the curriculum as well as allocating the appropriate teaching time for the subject;
  - teachers' expertise is improved, particularly in the design and evaluation aspects.(paragraphs 2, 22, 108, 109, 111)
- (5) ensure that there are effective systems in place in all subjects for assessing and recording pupils' progress and using the information to plan what pupils need to learn next.  
(paragraphs 48, 96, 107, 114, 119, 124, 129, 134, 139)
- (6) improve resources in design and technology and history to ensure that teachers have the appropriate tools to deliver the curriculum and move the pupils' learning forward.  
(paragraphs 66, 111, 118, 119)\*\*\*

\*\*\* This indicates that the area for improvement has already been identified in the school improvement plan.

## PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS

**Summary of the sources of evidence for the inspection**

Number of lessons observed	28
Number of discussions with staff, governors, other adults and pupils	15

**Summary of teaching observed during the inspection**

	Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
Number	0	2	14	12	0	0	0
Percentage	0	7	50	49	0	0	0

*Care should be taken when interpreting these percentages as each lesson represents more than three percentage points.*

**Information about the school's pupils**

<b>Pupils on the school's roll</b>	YR – Y6
Number of pupils on the school's roll (FTE for part-time pupils)	129
Number of full-time pupils known to be eligible for free school meals	6
<b>Special educational needs</b>	YR – Y6
Number of pupils with statements of special educational needs	4
Number of pupils on the school's special educational needs register	20
<b>English as an additional language</b>	No of pupils
Number of pupils with English as an additional language	2
<b>Pupil mobility in the last school year</b>	No of pupils
Pupils who joined the school other than at the usual time of first admission	4
Pupils who left the school other than at the usual time of leaving	5

**Attendance**

**Authorised absence**

	%
School data	4.2
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)**

	Year	Boys	Girls	Total
Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 1 for the latest reporting year	2002	9	12	21

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		Reading	Writing	Mathematics
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys			
	Girls	12	11	11
	Total	20	18	19
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	95 (87)	86 (83)	90 (91)
	National	84 (84)	86 (86)	90 (91)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys			
	Girls	12	11	1
	Total	20	19	20
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	95 (83)	90 (91)	95 (96)
	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	8	6

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys			
	Girls			
	Total	11	10	12
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	79 (71)	71 (71)	86 (88)
	National	75 (75)	73 (71)	86 (87)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys			
	Girls			
	Total			10
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	50 (71)	57 (76)	71 (76)
	National	73 (72)	74 (74)	82 (82)

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

WHERE PARTS OF THE TABLE ARE LEFT BLANK, THIS IS BECAUSE THE NUMBER OF PUPILS IS LESS THAN TEN AND INDIVIDUAL PUPILS COULD BE IDENTIFIED.

**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	103	0	0
White – Irish	0	0	0
White – any other White background	8	0	0
Mixed – White and Black Caribbean	0	0	0
Mixed – White and Black African	0	0	0
Mixed – White and Asian	3	0	0
Mixed – any other mixed background	2	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	0	0	0

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

**Teachers and classes**

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

Total number of qualified teachers (FTE)	6.17
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	21
Average class size	28

**Education support staff: YR – Y6**

Total number of education support staff	6
Total aggregate hours worked per week	126

**Financial information**

Financial year	2001/02
Total income	300,940
Total expenditure	313,270
Expenditure per pupil	2,526
Balance brought forward from previous year	29,798
Balance carried forward to next year	20,080

*FTE means full-time equivalent.*

**Recruitment of teachers**

Number of teachers who left the school during the last two years	5
Number of teachers appointed to the school during the last two years	5
Total number of vacant teaching posts (FTE)	0
Number of vacancies filled by teachers on temporary contract of a term or more (FTE)	0
Number of unfilled vacancies or vacancies filled by teachers on temporary contract of less than one term (FTE)	0

*FTE means full-time equivalent.*

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

**Questionnaire return rate**

Number of questionnaires sent out	128
Number of questionnaires returned	58

**Percentage of responses in each category**

	Strongly agree	Tend to agree	Tend to disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know
My child likes school.	60	38	2	0	0
My child is making good progress in school.	50	47	3	0	0
Behaviour in the school is good.	52	46	0	0	2
My child gets the right amount of work to do at home.	31	45	19	5	0
The teaching is good.	55	38	2	2	3
I am kept well informed about how my child is getting on.	54	34	10	2	0
I would feel comfortable about approaching the school with questions or a problem.	62	31	5	2	0
The school expects my child to work hard and achieve his or her best.	57	38	2	0	3
The school works closely with parents.	48	33	14	2	3
The school is well led and managed.	36	52	0	2	10
The school is helping my child become mature and responsible.	45	43	10	0	2
The school provides an interesting range of activities outside lessons.	32	38	22	3	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**

68. Children are admitted to the reception class at the beginning of the autumn term. Their entry into school full-time is phased in order to allow them to settle in. Usually, all children are in school full-time before half term in the autumn term. Several children have attended nursery or pre-schools. The assessment made of children on their entry into schools shows an average level of attainment for their age with a broad range of ability. However, this does vary from year to year. Two experienced teachers who work part-time share responsibility for the group of children and, together with a helpful, enthusiastic classroom assistant, they have established a warm, caring environment where children feel happy and secure. There are good relationships between the adults and the children. This, in addition to thorough planning and assessment, results in children making appropriate progress overall in lessons.
69. The quality of teaching and learning for children in the reception year in all areas of learning is satisfactory overall and this is in line with the findings of the last inspection. All aspects of the relevant programme of work for children of this age are in place, although the time slots for teaching children directly need to be reviewed so that they do not spend too long sitting on the carpet. By the time the children are ready to start in Year 1, the majority will attain the Early Learning Goals in all the areas of learning. It was not possible to make judgements about the quality of teaching or attainment in the physical development area of learning as no direct teaching was observed. Children with special educational needs are identified soon after they start school and they achieve satisfactorily. They are fully included in all areas of the curriculum and receive good support. The achievement of all children is satisfactory. At the time of the inspection, there were 14 children in the reception class together with a very few Year 1 pupils.

**Personal, social and emotional development**

70. All the children achieve appropriately in their personal, social and emotional development and, by the time they leave the reception class, most of them will attain the national expectations in the Early Learning Goals in this area. Their behaviour is good and most of them play well alongside other children and co-operate with others during play in the 'castle' play area. When teaching is good, the children are interested, concentrate and are motivated to learn. The quality of teaching and learning is appropriate in this area, although there are strengths in the high expectations of behaviour. Good classroom routines have been established that the children respect. The children are encouraged to choose from a variety of activities in a sensible, ordered way, although there is no structure in place to ensure that each child covers an appropriate range of activities throughout the week. For example, some children enjoy playing with the construction toys continually and others prefer the role-play activities in the 'castle'.

**Communication, language and literacy**

71. The quality of teaching and learning in this area of learning is satisfactory and there are strengths in the teaching of phonics. In the lesson observed, good teaching ensured that the pupils very much enjoyed the games they played to push forward their knowledge of the beginning sounds of words. Their learning was good in this session. Most of the children will meet the national expectations in the Early Learning Goals in this area and, in speaking and listening, their skills are better developed than in reading and writing. All the children listen well to their teachers and most can speak clearly and with confidence. Most can recognise individual letters by their sounds and are beginning to recognise some familiar words. More than one half of the children can use a word bank to find words because they are confident with the beginning letter sounds and the endings of words. Fewer children can read simple sentences independently. The children's writing skills are less well developed than their speaking, listening and reading skills. Most of them are still at the stage of making marks or writing letter strings, and only a few children can write short, familiar words and make phonetically plausible attempts at more complex words. The teachers encourage the children to write freely, copy write and trace over letters and words. However, the modelling of

writing for the children to copy is not always of a high enough standard and is not helping the children to make progress in their writing skills.

### **Mathematical development**

72. It is likely that most children will meet expectations in the Early Learning Goals in this area of learning by the time they enter Year 1. A few children can count up to 20 and are able to do some simple addition with guidance. They copy write their numbers and most are beginning to write their numbers unaided, although they sometimes reverse their numbers. More than one half the children are beginning to develop an appropriate understanding of mathematical language and use words such as 'longer than' and 'shorter than' when making comparisons of length. However, there was very little work recorded in their mathematics books of any practical activities that they had experienced in relation to shape and measures. Too many commercial worksheets are given to all the children without regard to their individual needs. The children are provided with an appropriate range of practical experiences such as building towers of cubes to represent a specific number and arranging magnetic numbers in order.
73. The more formal activities for mathematics are introduced to the children through the framework for teaching numeracy. The quality of teaching and learning is satisfactory overall, but there are weaknesses in this area of children's learning that relate to a lack of challenge for the higher attaining children. For example, the group tasks consisted of fairly limited activities, such as cutting out numbers and gluing them into their books in the correct order. There was little focus on improving the children's mathematical skills by the teacher who moved around making sure that the children were involved in their tasks. Planning for numeracy lessons could be improved so that the children are not sitting on the carpet for 45 minutes before being able to get on with their activities.

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

74. The children enter the reception class with an average general knowledge, which the teachers build upon satisfactorily and help the children to learn more about the world about them. A scrutiny of their books showed that a few children were able to draw a simple map of how to walk to the school from their homes and had learned how transport had changed over time. They are beginning to learn about Christianity from their visits to the church and also a little about other religions. Teaching and learning in this area of learning are satisfactory and there are strengths in the science element. In the lesson observed, the quality of teaching and learning was good. The lesson was well planned and organised with good use of support staff. As a result, all the children moved forward in their understanding of different materials and enjoyed handling and sorting the many objects available. By the end of the lesson, most children were able to talk about the properties of the materials they had handled and the higher attaining pupils were challenged to place the objects into the appropriate sets, such as 'hard' or 'soft', 'rough' or 'smooth'. An appropriate range of construction toys and materials are available in the classroom for the children to explore and use their skills to make models. However, during the inspection, the children were not given opportunities to develop their information and communication technology skills, although this element of the knowledge and understanding area of learning is referred to in the planning documents. It is probable that most children will meet the Early Learning Goals in this area of learning by the end of the reception year.

### **Physical development**

75. There was no opportunity to observe lessons in physical development and there is no special outdoor area for the reception children. Both playgrounds are very small, but the children were observed at playtimes and lunchtime when they played happily with each other and pupils from older age groups. Although it is not possible to make a judgement about whether or not they will meet the Early Learning Goals in this area of learning, it is safe to say that the children show confidence when running around the playground and have an awareness of space and of other pupils using the space. In the classroom, the children can handle scissors, pencils, paintbrushes

and other tools safely and with increasing control. No judgement can be made on the quality of teaching and learning in this area of learning.

### **Creative development**

76. The children enjoy being in the role-play area that is organised to be the 'castle' connected to the story of Cinderella. The children are eager to dress up in the various clothes available as Cinderella, the ugly sisters and other characters, and use their imaginations freely acting out the various roles. There are writing materials available for them to write invitations to the ball, for example. However, this is an activity preferred and dominated by the girls as there were very few clothes for the boys. The boys took over the model toy castle complete with knights and weapons and were lost in their imaginations discussing who was winning the jousting and battles. The range of artwork on display included painting based on aboriginal artwork where the children had experimented with pastels, paintings of the adults in the class, pictures using fabrics and other materials to create pictures for the role-play area and printing. There were very few examples of the children creating models in three dimensions. The children can sing simple songs from memory and the planning documents show that there are good opportunities for the pupils to develop creatively in music and dance. It is likely that most children will meet the Early Learning Goals in this area of learning and the indications are that the quality of teaching and learning is satisfactory.

### **ENGLISH**

77. Inspection findings are that standards of attainment in English, including literacy, are average in Year 2 and this is an improvement from the last inspection when reading and writing were judged to be below average. Pupils' attainment in writing is average, but above average in reading and in speaking and listening skills, which were deemed to be average in the previous report. The results of the national tests at the end of Year 2 in 2002 reflect these judgements. When compared to all schools nationally, and to similar schools, pupils' results in reading were above average. There has been good improvement since the last inspection. Pupils' achievement is good and this includes those pupils with special educational needs. No significant differences were found between the standards of boys and girls.
78. The attainment of Year 6 pupils is average, representing an improvement since the last inspection when standards were below average. The inspection findings broadly mirror the results of the 2002 national tests at Key Stage 2. However, an increase in the number of pupils with special educational needs in Year 6 suggests that the school will probably not be as successful as it was in 2002 in attaining higher levels. Overall, pupils' achievement is satisfactory, although the achievement of pupils with special educational needs is good when compared to their prior attainment and learning targets. Past results have shown a small difference between the performance of boys and girls, although this was not apparent during the inspection. The school has analysed these differences and implemented strategies to increase the quality of writing of boys.
79. Speaking and listening skills are above average in Years 1 to 2. The teacher sets very high standards that ensure that pupils are attentive in class. They are taught not to interrupt and to wait their turn. Very good relationships create an atmosphere where pupils are confident to talk and express views. Good teaching extends vocabulary and enables pupils to express ideas clearly. The teacher skilfully prompts the pupils to extend their vocabulary and ensures that all the class, including those with special educational needs, benefit. Pupils use words such as 'gorgeous' to describe a Raja's bride and 'brilliant' and 'successful' when evaluating the outcome of a story. In other subjects of the curriculum, the pupils in these year groups are confident to ask appropriate questions for further explanation of a task.
80. The speaking and listening skills of the pupils in Years 3 to 6 are average. Many of the youngest pupils in Year 3, however, were confident contributors to a discussion on the character of 'Heartthrob' in the book 'Kasper in the Glitter'. In other classes there were missed opportunities for pupils to offer in-depth contributions to discussion. A few teachers are skilled at acting out character sketches from fiction, but are not always effective to ensure that the pupils are active

participants. The pupils in the Years 5 and 6 class presented their research in history satisfactorily, but generally, few opportunities are given to pupils in Years 3 to 6 to increase their fluency in vocabulary across the whole curriculum. Planning does not include opportunities for role play or drama or to address a range of audiences. There is no school council that would allow the older pupils to play a proactive role in leading discussions. Pupils gain an appropriate understanding of the technical vocabulary in mathematics and science that increases their fluency. Their knowledge of English terminology used in lessons is sound. For example, most pupils can define terms such as synonyms and use them appropriately. There is no systematic recording of pupils' attainment in this aspect of literacy.

81. Standards in reading by the end of Year 2 are above average. Pupils learn to read with good expression because of the teachers continual modelling of the correct approach. Pupils enjoyed a game of guessing whether the teacher's intonation implied a question and learned quickly in an atmosphere of fun. Pupils in the Years 1 and 2 class take their books home daily and parents play an important role in their children's success by hearing them read regularly. There are helpful and positive comments in the home-school diary. A particular strength of the school is the help provided by the local community who also listen and support young readers. The co-ordinator has organised seminars to explain the school's reading policy so that all adults can have the same approach. Pupils are taught letter sounds and the sounds made by various groups of letters in a structured manner. They use these skills to read unfamiliar words and are usually successful. The higher attaining readers frequently correct their own mistakes. Year 2 pupils had good recall of the stories that they were reading and were confident in explaining the story and predicting the ending, including the lower attaining pupils who could talk with confidence about what might happen to the characters in the story. Pupils know the difference between fact and fiction books.
82. The standard of reading at the end of Year 6 is average overall, although there are a few very good readers. There is a wide range of ability in this group of pupils. The teacher is trying hard to raise standards by teaching reading in groups each day in short, focused sessions and ensuring that pupils use dictionaries and book reviews. However, this thrust is new and has not yet had a major impact on standards attained by the older pupils in the school. In the past, lower attaining readers have not always benefited from an emphasis on phonics, although all teachers have now received training. The relatively few higher attaining readers made good references to an author's strategies for indicating the passage of time. One of the higher attaining pupils was able to explain clearly some of the characters in 'Lord of the Rings' and make an informed judgement about future events. A number of pupils are still not skilled at reading with expression and responding to the punctuation in the text.
83. Standards in writing by the end of Year 2 are average. Pupils can write for a range of purposes. They produce poetry and write simple letters and stories. Careful teaching ensures that they know the importance of an opening that engages the reader. There is a helpful gallery of their ideas for openings that were imaginative and demonstrated a good vocabulary. They included, 'Once upon a time, long ago, when the world was not always as it had been, rivers flowed uphill as well as downhill'. However, not all pupils can produce extended writing that would be expected for their age, and their use of punctuation is satisfactory, rather than good. For example, speech and exclamation marks are not used effectively or in the appropriate places. Only a few pupils use a range of connectives to make their sentences more interesting. Standards in handwriting are average, although there are signs of steady progress with more pupils producing neat work with letters correctly positioned. However, few pupils regularly attempt to join letters and a significant minority were not yet physically adept at holding a pencil and writing with reasonable speed. The pupils' ability to spell is average, although their work indicated a recent spurt in attainment, reflecting a current focus on strengthening this aspect of English. They are gradually improving their ability to spell more unusual words, such as 'inadequate' and 'nonsense'.
84. Standards in writing at the end of Year 6 are average. Pupils write in a range of styles and formats that include their own OFSTED reports, scripts, newspaper articles and instructions. There is a wide range of attainment, with one third of the class having to work hard to reach the appropriate standards for their abilities. Pupils had written thoughtful character profiles of 'Grumpy' in 'Snow White', with good use of connectives to maintain interest. However, the impact of examples of

other written work was reduced because of the inability of several pupils to use simple tenses correctly. This is despite the fact that grammar is consistently taught and reinforced by many exercises that are completed satisfactorily. In general, punctuation is sound, although very little advanced work was seen, such as the use of colons and brackets. Spelling in Year 6 is improving as a result of regular homework, although, often, all pupils are given the same lists to learn, which does not challenge the higher attaining pupils. The school's recent focus on improving this aspect of the curriculum is having a positive effect. The poems written by the Years 4 and 5 pupils, which highlight the essence of a shape or silhouette, were pleasing. Standards of the Year 3 pupils are above average and they are making good progress in their creative writing, including well-punctuated and constructed plays. Their poetry was enlivened by a sense of humour and many powerful adjectives.

85. The quality of teaching and learning is good in Years 1 to 2. This is a significant improvement since the last inspection when it was judged to be unsatisfactory. In Years 3 to 6, teaching is satisfactory, although there are several strengths. Again, this is a significant improvement from the last inspection. Relationships are very good and teachers have good classroom management skills. Consequently, pupils can concentrate on their work without interruption. The calm and purposeful atmosphere is a significant factor in the good progress in learning that occurred in several lessons. Good questioning tests pupils' understanding of texts effectively and the majority of pupils move forward appropriately during the lessons. Planning is satisfactory overall, but not enough time is given to the final sessions in Years 3 to 6 to review work thoroughly. In a few lessons only, pupils were involved as active participants and this resulted in a zest for the subject exemplified by the spontaneous sighs of regret at the end of a Years 3 and 4 lesson. Good questioning and modelling of reading in this lesson ensured that the pupils were totally engrossed in the story and their learning was good. Pupils with special educational needs make good progress as the result of effective support from the skilled classroom assistants and the good deployment of the specialist teacher for those pupils with more severe difficulties.
86. Weaknesses in teaching in English are few. Too little emphasis on independent learning skills and research led to pupils being less involved in learning than they could have been. These factors partly explain why gains in learning over time have been satisfactory rather than good. There is a lack of challenge in some of the homework, especially for the higher attaining pupils. Teachers mark their work conscientiously, but not all give enough detail about what pupils need to do to improve their writing and ensure that it happens. In addition, there is not always a rigorous approach to the marking of the final drafts of written work.
87. The National Literacy Strategy has been introduced appropriately and latest developments piloted, although several initiatives have been initiated during the last year. Aspects such as shared and guided reading have helped to improve results, especially for Years 1 and 2 pupils. Pupils throughout the school are now taught grammar and punctuation in a structured manner. Their standards in reading have improved as the result of the school's comparatively recent focus on the teaching of phonics. Basic skills are beginning to be taught across the curriculum and standards are satisfactory. There are a very few examples of pupils being taught literacy skills in other subjects. For example, in science, they write reports of their experiments and in religious education they write descriptions of the Christmas service. However, there is a culture of teachers using far too many commercial worksheets in several subjects and these limit the pupils' ability to write freely and improve their skills.
88. There is very little room in the school for designated rooms such as a library. However, the school has created a library in a small space that doubles as a classroom for teaching pupils who need additional help. The library cannot function as a centre for research and independent learning skills, having only one laptop computer and limited CD-ROM facilities. Although older pupils have been taught the classification system and knew how to find books, the library is not extensively used. There are no timetabled lessons for pupils to become involved in the library. Work has already begun on updating the stock and reclassifying the books.
89. The subject co-ordinator is experienced and well qualified. Her leadership is good and has been instrumental in raising standards. Several initiatives have resulted in good improvement in the

subject. The allocation of time to the teaching of English is well above the national average and has resulted in a strong focus on improving English. Analysis of spelling and existing practice resulted in more effective strategies for teaching spelling and standards have improved. Strategies for improving writing standards have also been initiated. All teachers have attended courses such as 'Grammar for Writing'. Monitoring of the subject is in place and the school is aware that this needs to be more rigorous as the very new team of teachers becomes more established. The range of assessment data is now beginning to inform future planning. English is satisfactorily supported by information and communication technology and, for example, pupils increase their communication skills by using desktop publishing to produce posters that integrate text and pictures.

## **MATHEMATICS**

90. Inspection findings are that standards of attainment in mathematics, including numeracy, in Years 2 and 6 are average. This is an improvement since the last inspection when standards were judged to be below the national average. The achievement of all pupils is satisfactory. The achievement of pupils with special educational needs is good due to the effective support they receive from classroom assistants. Pupils attained below average results in the end of Year 2 national tests in 2002 and the school's results were below when compared with the results of similar schools. However, in the end of Year 6 national tests in 2002, pupils attained average standards. As the number of pupils in each year group is small it is very difficult to make comparisons between year groups and there can be significant variation in the percentage of pupils attaining the required level from year to year. When viewed over the period since the last inspection the school's performance in the national tests has improved and is in line with national trends. There is no significant difference in the performance of boys and girls.
91. The quality of teaching and learning in Years 1 and 2 is satisfactory and is an improvement from the last inspection when it was judged to be unsatisfactory. The teacher's encouraging questions in a lesson for Years 1 and 2 pupils were effective in challenging the pupils to think mathematically in formulating questions, such as whether a number was odd or even. Appropriate questions were used to probe and extend pupils' understanding and pupils were able to explain their methods. Throughout the lesson pupils were kept focused on the lesson objective as a result of good management and control as well appropriate questioning. Good liaison ensured that the classroom assistant was clear about her role during the lesson and pupils with special educational needs made good progress. However, the methods used in the activity session showed a lack of understanding of the needs of all the pupils, as several pupils had difficulty adding and subtracting two-digit numbers.
92. The quality of teaching and learning in Years 3 to 6 is satisfactory overall with several strengths. This is good improvement from the last inspection. There was generally a good emphasis on pace and, for example, in a lesson for Years 3 and 4 pupils, the pupils competed in pairs to count on or back in tens as rapidly as possible. In this lesson, work was well matched to the needs of different groups of pupils and the higher attaining pupils challenged themselves by constructing their own problems. Pupils in this class were immediately given feedback on successfully attaining the lesson objective and given a target card to signify achievement. This is good practice and encourages all the pupils to do their best. All teachers in Years 3 to 6 show good skills in managing and controlling their pupils and this results in no interruptions during lessons. The pupils with special educational needs make good progress in lessons due to the effective support they receive from their classroom assistants.
93. In an example of good teaching in the Years 5 and 6 class the teacher was effective in maintaining a good pace and ensured that questions were well matched to the differing needs of the pupils. As a result, pupils were eager to respond and showed the ability to match numbers with their factors. Good questioning continually reinforced the learning objective throughout the lesson. Learning was good and pupils' understanding of reducing a number to its lowest factors increased significantly. Pupils in the class with special educational needs made good progress due to the effective support they received. The teacher showed good management and control of the pupils who were

seated in groups to facilitate good behaviour. However, this arrangement limited the opportunities for pupils to work with others of a similar ability and benefit from discussion at an appropriate level.

94. The weaknesses in teaching are few. The work scrutiny and lesson observations showed that tasks are often worksheet based and are given to all pupils with the expectation that the average and higher attaining pupils will complete more of the same work. Occasionally, a few pupils are given work that is too difficult. The use of individual targets for pupils would help pupils and teachers to know what they need to learn. Scrutiny of work over time shows that marking of work has been satisfactory and gives pupils clear indications of whether their work is correct. However, marking does not always indicate what pupils have to do to improve their work.
95. The National Numeracy Strategy is having a satisfactory impact on pupils' learning in Years 1 to 6. Although the opening sessions of all the lessons were effective and ensured that the higher attaining pupils were pushed forward in their learning, planning needs to improve to match the activities to the needs of all pupils. Extension work is usually included in the planning documents, but the challenge does not always meet the needs of the higher attaining pupils. Opportunities for teaching and using numeracy are limited in other subjects. Scrutiny of pupils' work shows that over time there has been a concentration on the teaching of number, with the result that the study of shape, space and measures and of handling data, together with the teaching of the skills of using and applying mathematics are less developed.
96. The co-ordination of the subject is satisfactory. There has been regular monitoring of the teaching of mathematics, and teaching has improved from a low base as a result. However, monitoring needs to become more rigorous in order to focus on whether the needs of the higher attaining pupils are being met. The national end-of-year tests in mathematics are analysed thoroughly and pupils' weaknesses identified. In addition, the data obtained from the analysis is used to predict the pupils' performance at the end of Year 6. However, the use of ongoing assessment of pupils' progress in specific units of work is not yet being used effectively to plan work to meet the needs of individual pupils. The use of information and communication technology in mathematics is satisfactory.

## SCIENCE

97. In 2002 the results of the teacher assessments in science at the end of Year 2 were average compared with all schools nationally and showed an improvement since the last inspection. Results in the national tests at the end of Year 6 were below the national average and had not improved since the last inspection. Results were well below average compared with similar schools. Within this picture of underachievement, girls outperformed boys. However, as the number of pupils in each year group is very small there can be significant variation in the percentage of pupils attaining the required level from year to year. Consequently, it is difficult to make comparisons between year groups.
98. Inspection evidence shows that standards of attainment by the end of Years 2 and 6 are average and achievement of all pupils is satisfactory. This indicates an improvement since the last inspection and the national tests in 2002 for the Year 6 pupils. The improvement in standards is due mainly to the increased allocation of time given to teaching science in Years 1 to 6 and to the review of planning science for each term for the mixed-age classes. Planning now ensures that all pupils cover an appropriate range of science topics within the different attainment targets. However, these improvements have only taken place since September and have yet to have any impact.
99. Pupils' achievement is now satisfactory in all year groups because there is a consistent pattern of teaching science throughout the school that helps pupils to learn important features of the subject and to build up their skills of investigation. This is a significant improvement since the last inspection when teachers demonstrated experiments and pupils watched. The teachers provide pupils with opportunities to learn from first-hand experience and to develop their practical skills. For example, during the inspection, Years 1 and 2 pupils carried out simple investigations into the properties of different materials and learned how to sort different types of discarded waste into

sets of paper, plastic and other materials. The older Year 2 pupils are just beginning to learn how to show their results using a chart or graph and this is a scientific skill that could be introduced earlier to the Year 2 pupils. Only one or two higher attaining pupils have the skills to 'have a go' at presenting their findings in a chart form.

100. The quality of teaching and learning in lessons throughout the school is satisfactory overall and this is a significant improvement since the last inspection when teaching of science was judged to be weak. Teachers introduce and reinforce scientific vocabulary effectively and encourage the pupils to use it. They ensure that the pupils record the results of their experiments in written form, but there is very little evidence of the teachers expecting the pupils to record their results in the form of charts, tables or graphs. This lack of attention to teaching the pupils to use a wide range of methods to show their results is not giving the opportunity to average and higher attaining pupils to attain higher standards. During the inspection, in both the work scrutiny and lessons, only one lesson included opportunities for pupils to draw a chart and this was led directly by the teacher.
101. The work scrutiny showed that satisfactory teaching in the Years 5 and 6 class had ensured that pupils had completed a suitable number of different investigations into how solids dissolve in water. The pupils' written work showed a satisfactory understanding of what a fair test is, but the pupils were not expected to use vocabulary such as 'why' they were making a specific prediction and 'how' they came to a particular conclusion. This is not helpful for the pupils to become true 'scientists' and to learn to give scientific reasons for their oral and written answers. Not all teachers are being selective enough with commercial worksheets in the classes for the pupils in Years 1 to 5 and this restricts the higher attaining pupils who are not always given the freedom to investigate and present their work in a more appropriate style. Marking of pupils' work is satisfactory and gives pupils clear indications of whether their work is correct. Nevertheless, marking could improve by teachers giving the pupils very clear information about how they could improve their work and this would have an impact on further progress.
102. Work in science contributes appropriately to the development of literacy skills. The written work of pupils in the Years 5 and 6 class, in particular, showed good development of the skills of writing in 'report' style using scientific vocabulary. A good example of linking science with literacy was observed in the work of Year 1 pupils when they were required to find the words to describe the properties of materials. Effective links to literacy were made by the teacher when she used the vocabulary for properties of materials to teach the initial sounds of words. During the inspection, pupils in the Years 4 and 5 class used Newton meters to measure gravity and pupils in the Years 5 and 6 class drew a chart competently in their books to classify different foods. However, the development of numeracy skills in science is generally very limited with very few opportunities given to pupils to display their results using charts or graphs. The use of information and communication technology is satisfactory with both teachers and pupils using programs and the web site to search for scientific information.
103. There are strengths in the management of science and, overall, the leadership and management of the subject are satisfactory. The co-ordinator has been responsible for science for one term only and has initiated several improvements in her management role. For example, she has altered the yearly planning to ensure that the pupils are given a balanced curriculum as they progress through the mixed-age classes. Although planning is satisfactory, it would further support the teachers if the format of the documents is reviewed in order to clarify exactly when the listed experiences and activities will be taught. The co-ordinator's analysis of the end of the Year 6 test papers showed gaps in the pupils' knowledge due to a lack of sensible planning, and this has now been addressed in the action plan for science. The co-ordinator monitors planning and the quality of teaching, but the feedback to teachers has not yet included targets for improvement in aspects identified as weaknesses. Assessment of pupils' progress at the end of each unit of work began last term and has yet to have an impact on standards. However, the formatted document for assessment is now in place and is being used by most teachers. This was an aspect of science that was judged poor in the last inspection.

## **ART AND DESIGN**

104. Standards of attainment in art and design are average by the end of Years 2 and 6 and have been maintained since the last inspection. The achievement of all pupils, including those with special educational needs, is satisfactory. The teaching of art and design is blocked in alternate half terms with design and technology and there were very few lessons on the timetable for the inspection period.
105. Only one lesson was observed during the inspection, with Years 1 and 2 pupils. In this lesson, the quality of teaching and learning was good. The pupils were encouraged to try out different tools and techniques for creating pictures in pastel or fabrics. The organisation of the activities was effective with good use of classroom assistants and parents to support the pupils. The resources chosen were plentiful and appropriate and the pupils were well motivated to choose a colourful and wide range of fabrics to create an effective woven design. No time was lost giving instructions for the different tasks. Pupils used pastels to match colours to different patterns in cloth samples and worked hard to extend the patterns. Due to the good support, all the pupils in this group were engrossed with their task and made better than expected progress with colour matching and use of line. Pupils' learning was good and a few were aware of how their own skills were improving. At the end of the lesson one of the boys said he was especially pleased because he had put a lot of effort into his work. In these year groups, planning for art and design covers an appropriate range of skills and the work scrutiny showed that the pupils have an appropriate understanding of colour, shape and space using a wide range of materials.
106. No lessons were observed in Years 3 to 6. However, indications are, from the scrutiny of work and planning documents, that the quality of teaching and learning is satisfactory. The curriculum in art and design in these year groups is narrower than that in Years 1 to 2 because of the lower than average allocation of time given to the subject. Nevertheless, the work on display in the Years 5 and 6 class from last term showed that pupils had observed closely the work of Australian aboriginal artists both on the Internet and from artefacts brought into the school. They had used their sketchbooks well to try out and practise specific patterns they wanted to reproduce. The pupils' intricate pictures were pleasing and intriguing because of the wide variety of media they had used to create paintings of turtles, snakes and the aboriginal mapping symbols of the Australian landscape. The soft colours used by the pupils to recreate the landscape were thoughtfully chosen. Good links with religious education were evident in Years 5 and 6 when pupils painted large prayer mats when studying Islam. Their bold use of colour brought the patterns to life.
107. The co-ordinator is very enthusiastic about the subject and her action plan shows a determination to improve the provision for art and design. The management of the subject overall is satisfactory, although there are strengths. These include a thriving art club run by the co-ordinator that is attended by one quarter of the school's pupils. During the inspection, the pupils enjoyed being taught calligraphy with some high quality materials and very good support from helpful parents. At the beginning of last term, an Australian week was organised that was particularly useful for introducing art media from another culture and very different art and design techniques into the school. Resources are satisfactory for art and design and include a useful range of biographical books about different artists. The scheme of work for art and design was implemented by the school last term, as were the use of sketchbooks. Although there is an attractive portfolio of the pupils' work showing good observational drawing skills, the pupils' work is not given a level to indicate the standards attained. Therefore, the portfolio is not as helpful as it could be for teachers who need further professional development. The use of information and communication technology is satisfactory in art and design. No systems are in place to record the progress of pupils in art and design and this is unsatisfactory. There has been no improvement in this aspect of the subject since the last inspection. There has been a good contribution to the pupils' cultural development in art and design with the emphasis on aboriginal art for a week.

## **DESIGN AND TECHNOLOGY**

108. Standards of attainment in design and technology by the end of Years 2 and 6 are below average. The achievement of all pupils, including those with special educational needs, is unsatisfactory. These findings are similar to those in the last inspection. The teaching of design and technology is

blocked half termly with art and design and there were few lessons on the timetable for the inspection period.

109. Although only one lesson was observed in the class for Years 3 and 4, indications are, from a scrutiny of a very limited amount of pupils' work and discussion with the co-ordinator, that the quality of teaching and learning is unsatisfactory overall in Years 1 to 6. In Years 1 and 2, the pupils' work making model castles shows an understanding of the design process. However, there was no evidence to show that the pupils have covered the different aspects of the curriculum in sufficient depth. By the end of Year 6, pupils had produced embroidered squares and hats for Christmas. However, the design element was unsatisfactory. The pupils' designs were weak and this also showed in their designs for a bridge to be made as part of a science unit of work. There was very little evidence of pupils evaluating their designs or reconsidering them as they progressed through the activity. The links with science impacted negatively on the key aspects of the technology process.
110. The quality of teaching and learning in the one lesson observed was satisfactory overall, with some good aspects. Subject knowledge was good. Much effort had gone into collecting an array of different types of bread so that pupils could appreciate the wide range of products available. Pupils enjoyed this task and carefully recorded their views. The teacher had high expectations for behaviour. However, the teacher introduced the lesson whilst some of the class were washing their hands, thereby lessening the effect of the overview that linked the bread tasting activity with the design and technology task that was to follow.
111. The management of the subject is unsatisfactory. Until this term, there has been a limited curriculum that did not fully cover all the technology strands and materials in sufficient detail. The newly appointed specialist teacher joined the school the week before the inspection and she has already produced the outlines of a long-term plan. The school now has the expert subject leadership that it has lacked for a considerable time. Resources are difficult to access and are unsatisfactory. These limitations do not help teachers to plan how to teach the subject and provide the pupils with the necessary equipment to improve their attainment. In addition, the time allocated to the teaching of design and technology throughout the year is low compared to other schools nationally. Teachers have not received up-to-date training in the subject. The lack of good planning has resulted in the subject not making full use of information and communication technology or contributing to spiritual, moral, social and cultural education. Assessment systems to record the pupils' progress are not in place.

## **GEOGRAPHY**

112. During the inspection, it was not possible to observe any lessons of geography as some lessons were timetabled on days after the inspection had been completed. In addition, geography was not being taught in some classes this half term as the subject alternates with history. Judgements on attainment and teaching are based on an analysis of pupils' work, teachers' planning documents, displays of work and discussions with pupils. The school has adopted a four-year rolling programme for the teaching of geography and this year all pupils will study an environmental issue and a study of Leigh village.
113. Standards of attainment are average by the end of Years 2 and 6 and the achievement of all pupils, including those with special educational needs, is satisfactory. This is in line with the findings of the last inspection. At the beginning of last term, an Australian week was organised that linked art with geography. Although the emphasis was on art, nevertheless, the pupils' work showed that in the short time available there had been a focus on the geography, particularly the mapping, of Australia. The indications are that the quality of teaching and learning is satisfactory. The work scrutiny showed a fairly narrow range of work throughout the school; for example, only two pieces had been completed in a term's study of 'recycling' in Years 4 and 5. This is possibly linked to the lower than average allocation of time given to geography. The pupils in the Years 5 and 6 class had kept effective records of weather observations over a period of time and their study of weather had included the effects of global warming and how it will affect different countries of the world. The pupils in the Years 3 and 4 class had illustrated their work well, but all pupils had copied the

teacher's writing from the board regardless of their ability. Presentation of work is good and marked with comments, such as, 'Well done'. However, no assessment has been carried out of the level of pupils' understanding of the geographical content of the work.

114. The new co-ordinator for geography joined the school the week before the inspection. She has plans to initiate assessment on a half-termly basis and to build up a portfolio of pupils' work that has been given a level and appropriately graded to help further the teachers' professional development. The lack of assessment to inform planning is resulting in work not being matched to the needs of individual or groups of pupils. There are some links with information and communication technology, but these could be developed further. The scheme of work is based on nationally produced guidance, but there are areas where this needs further adaptation to meet pupils' needs. There is very little evidence that teachers plan to use pupils' literacy skills in this subject.

## HISTORY

115. Standards of attainment at the end of Years 2 and 6 are average. The achievement of all pupils, including those with special educational needs, is satisfactory. No judgement was made on standards in history in the last inspection and no comparison can be made. Pupils are developing a satisfactory understanding of chronology and historical facts. However, their research skills are underdeveloped because of the limited opportunities they have to research information from first-hand resources, books, the school library, CD-ROMs and the Internet. The pupils in Years 5 and 6 can discuss the differences between primary and secondary sources.
116. The quality of teaching and learning in Years 1 and 2 is satisfactory overall. In an example of good teaching in the class for Years 1 and 2 pupils, good questioning by the teacher resulted in the pupils being able to establish the use of a range of artefacts that might have been used by people who inhabited Bodiam Castle. Effective methods of teaching this age group helped the pupils to write accurate descriptions of specific artefacts and how they were used. Good links with literacy were established by the teacher in this lesson and she provided a word bank of useful words that helped the pupils to improve their written descriptions. In addition, the pupils were encouraged to concentrate well on their accurate observational drawing of the artefacts. All pupils, including those with special educational needs, made good progress in this lesson.
117. The quality of teaching in Years 3 to 6 is satisfactory. Pupils in the Years 5 and 6 class were encouraged to access evidence about Victorian transport from more than one source, although the lack of books available limited this activity. It was evident that the pupils are not used to researching from books as their skills at retrieving information by making notes or compiling lists are underdeveloped. Most of the pupils simply copied one or two sentences from the text. A group of three pupils were able to create a 'Power Point' presentation on the computer showing their research.
118. The scrutiny of pupils' work shows that a significant amount of work is copied from books or from teachers' notes on the board as well as some inappropriate colouring in of commercially produced pictures. The school is over dependent on the use of commercially produced worksheets and, in addition, there are few textbooks for the teachers to use to enable pupils to further their research skills. In addition, there are very few first-hand resources such as photographs and facsimiles of historical documents. This limits pupils' opportunities to develop their enquiry skills. Most classrooms display timelines to support and develop pupils' sense of chronology.
119. The management of the subject is satisfactory. The co-ordinator joined the school last term and has prepared an action plan for the development of history as part of the school development plan. However, the pupils' limited research skills are not identified in the action plan as an area of improvement, and this omission is linked to the lack of monitoring in the subject due to the changes in management of the subject. The school has introduced a scheme of work based on nationally produced guidance and the medium-term planning for history has been reviewed to ensure that the curriculum is covered adequately. Work is now planned on a four-year rolling programme and, during this academic year, all the pupils are making a study of the Victorians

together with a local study. As yet, there are no systems in place to record pupils' progress and to inform planning in the subject. The use of information and communication technology to support history is insufficient and resources are unsatisfactory, particularly those needed for pupils to develop their research skills.

## **INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY**

120. During the inspection, only two information and communication technology (ICT) lessons were observed, although the teaching and learning of ICT as part of other lessons was seen on a number of occasions. Inspection findings are based on these observations: the analysis of pupils' work; the scrutiny of school documentation, including planning, and discussions with the co-ordinator. The indications are that standards of attainment are average by the end of Years 2 and 6. The achievement of all pupils, including those with special educational needs, is satisfactory. Standards have improved since the last inspection when they were judged to be unsatisfactory.
121. By the end of Year 2, pupils are confident when using computers. They have had experience in controlling a toy floor robot and know about programmed devices outside school. Year 2 pupils were introduced to a new web site that was linked to their class topic about castles and learnt that ICT can be used to communicate new information. They are formally taught the 'QUERTY' keyboard and have good keyboard skills for their age. Pupils can type simple text and place gaps between words using the space bar, but there was little evidence of the use of more advanced skills such as changing the font, colour and size of their work. Year 2 pupils can log on and manipulate screen icons using the mouse and are taught about simple databases.
122. By the end of Year 6, pupils use computers to help their English and improve their numeracy skills. Teachers' planning indicates the use of ICT to produce pictures and plans in art and design and geography. Although the use of ICT in different subjects is satisfactory, nevertheless, it could be improved particularly for research in subjects such as history and art and design. There was some good research by Year 3 pupils into different types of wrapping paper and various designs as the basis for their own computer design work. The pupils in the Years 5 and 6 class carefully analysed a range of instructions before sequencing their own as part of a project on control technology. Pupils write descriptions of the functions of the software that they use. Older pupils are beginning to create a multimedia presentation in history. However, the widespread use of the Internet for research is underdeveloped, as is the use of e-mail to extend horizons and communication skills. Little in-depth work on databases or the use of computers to answer, 'What if?', questions was seen. The use of computers as a tool to aid learning in all subjects is not planned sufficiently.
123. The quality of teaching and learning is satisfactory. A good demonstration on how to access a program was given in the lesson for the Years 1 and 2 pupils. In lessons for the Years 5 and 6 pupils, the teacher's clear guidance sheets on the use of equipment and programs increased the pace of learning. Pupils could make progress without waiting for the teacher to help. In this class also, the teacher's good subject knowledge inspired the pupils who worked very well and quite independently. A scrutiny of existing web sites effectively encouraged pupils to carefully consider the audience for their intended school web site. Good, well-planned teaching resulted in positive attitudes and behaviour. Good organisation enables teachers to develop further pupils' ICT skills by implementing a system whereby pupils have short bursts of experience on the computers during lessons in other subjects.
124. The management of the subject is good. The co-ordinator is enthusiastic and knowledgeable. She has had responsibility for the subject for a term only, but has already produced a detailed scheme of work for the current academic year. Pupils' learning is improving as a result of a more structured approach to the subject. There are references to resources, but not to assessment opportunities. This aspect of curriculum and planning is underdeveloped. Some class teachers have begun to record the outcomes of the ICT tasks completed in class, but these have not been fine-tuned to reflect the individual pupil's performance in relation to levels of attainment. The co-ordinator is working hard to rectify this and to improve standards in difficult circumstances. Most staff are relatively new to the school and have varying expertise and training needs and the co-ordinator has

set up a weekly 'clinic' to support their needs. Software is adequate, but the lack of a CD player in each classroom and in the library, affects ICT capability and pupils' ability to develop independent learning and research skills.

## **MUSIC**

125. Standards of attainment in music are above average by the end of Years 2 and 6. This represents good achievement for all pupils including those with special educational needs and shows good improvement from the last inspection when standards were judged to be average. This is because there has been significant stability in provision in music by a visiting unqualified teacher who is a professional musician. She teaches all pupils throughout the school with class teachers giving support. Pupils thoroughly enjoy their music lessons and pupils with special educational needs take a full part in all activities. The school caters well for those pupils who have a talent in this subject. Pupils in Years 1 to 6 sing very well and this is a strength of the school. In assemblies, pupils showed good control of pitch, dynamics and rhythm as well as sensitivity to particular songs or hymns, such as, 'A Drop in the Ocean'. A few pupils make good progress in recorder lessons. Although the pupils' performing and composing skills are given good attention, their appraising skills are less well developed.
126. The quality of teaching and learning is very good. Lessons are very well planned with excellent pace and no time wasted. Methods of teaching are excellent. After approximately four years of this high quality of teaching, practically all the pupils in Years 5 to 6 can read simple music notation. A few pupils in Years 5 and 6 know what a coda is and can recognise a rest. All pupils are able to sing rhythms well and most can play glockenspiels accurately. The teacher's very high expectations result in pupils bringing their individual performances together effectively as a whole group. Pupils are very aware of the different parts and contribution of the different members of the class. The Years 5 and 6 pupils particularly enjoyed using body percussion and vocal techniques to create an African composition.
127. Excellent methods of teaching ensured that the Years 1 and 2 pupils were able to choose instruments to match moods, such as being fed up (drums) or very happy (shakers). Pupils quickly learned to play their individual instruments in groups and finally the whole class gave a performance. The pupils showed above average skills at starting and finishing together and keeping to a steady pulse. Good techniques of how to play untuned percussion instruments were taught and the pupils quickly learned how to create the most pleasing sound from their particular instrument. The quality of learning in both lessons observed was increased because the pupils clearly enjoy music lessons, they are very familiar with the teacher's methods and they make the best use of the opportunities provided by the teacher. In both lessons, the class teachers and assistants gave good support to enable instruments to be distributed efficiently.
128. The pupils have many opportunities to sing in productions for their parents and other visitors at the end of the school year, at Christmas and at Harvest Festivals. In addition, they give concerts for their older friends in Leigh and other community groups. The pupils' performances are much appreciated. From time to time, visiting musicians give performances and workshops and inform the pupils about their instruments. Musicians have included a cellist, a brass and woodwind instrumentalist, an organist and pianist as well as a ragtime jug band.
129. The co-ordination of the music curriculum is the responsibility of one of the teachers who works part-time in the school, and is satisfactory. The action plan for music shows intentions to improve the range of compact discs and players in each class so that the appraising skills of the pupils are given more attention by class teachers. There are no procedures in place to assess the progress of pupils in music and, therefore, this aspect of music is unsatisfactory. Insufficient use is made of information and communication technology to widen the pupils' knowledge. The lessons in music contribute well to the spiritual and cultural development of the pupils. Music enables the pupils to feel the joy of making music together and helps pupils to become more familiar with music from contrasting traditions and countries.

## **PHYSICAL EDUCATION**

130. During the inspection week, the school hall was being demolished and all physical education lessons were held in the village hall, ten minutes walk away. No observations were made of the Years 1 and 2 pupils and no judgement can be made about standards or the quality of teaching by the end of Year 2. Two lessons, one of games and one of gymnastics, were observed. No swimming lessons were observed. Therefore, judgements are made of a narrow range of the physical education curriculum and discussions with the co-ordinator.
131. Standards of attainment by the end of Year 6 are in line with what is expected for their age and pupils' achievement, including those with special educational needs, is satisfactory. Standards have been maintained since the previous inspection. By the end of Year 6 pupils can perform with control, accuracy and safety, a range of basic skills. In a lesson for the Years 5 and 6 pupils, pupils showed the ability to control a ball or beanbag with a hockey stick well. This skill was used in a one-on-one attack and defence game, which pupils played with great enthusiasm. All pupils in Years 3 to 6 have swimming lessons at the local swimming pool and this is an improvement implemented by the headteacher. On her appointment, a year ago, the pupils did not have swimming lessons. By the end of Year 6, the majority of pupils are able to swim 25 metres and a few pupils have won school achievement certificates for their skills in diving.
132. The quality of teaching and learning in Years 3 to 6 is satisfactory overall with several strengths. In an example of good teaching in the class for Years 3 and 4 pupils, the teacher and classroom assistant were appropriately dressed and ensured that all pupils were also. Good methods of teaching ensured that the pupils were kept very active throughout and appropriate emphasis was placed on pupils improving their performance. The essential elements of a warm-up and cool-down were included and pupils were guided about how to be aware of the effect of exercise on their bodies. Good management and control ensured that the pupils worked well individually and co-operated in groups to practise bending, stretching and curling movements with control. Pupils were given the opportunity to watch each other and constructively evaluate and suggest areas for improvement in each other's performance. Higher attaining pupils were encouraged to produce higher order skills.
133. Pupils' attitudes and behaviour are good in Years 3 to 6. Pupils are eager to take part in lessons despite working in far from ideal conditions. In discussion, pupils mentioned that one of their favourite activities is the summer games lessons on the village green.
134. Leadership and management of physical education are satisfactory. A policy and scheme of work, based on published schemes and nationally produced guidelines are in place. During the inspection, the school hall was being demolished and the school is able to use the village hall for physical education lessons until the new hall is built. Resources, overall, are satisfactory. Most of the large equipment is currently in store due to the lack of a hall. Although playground space is very limited, the school uses the village tennis courts as extra hard surface areas. During the summer months, the village green is used for sports and sports day with track and rounders pitch marked out. The subject contributes well to the social development of pupils; for example, through team games and the wide range of extra-curricular activities. Teachers give generously of their time to run after-school clubs, which include race walking, running, rugby, football and netball. These sports activities contribute well to the physical education curriculum. The use of assessment to inform planning, especially for higher attaining pupils, is unsatisfactory. The use of numeracy and information and communication technology to support the subject is underdeveloped; for example, pupils do not watch themselves on video in order to refine and improve their performance. The co-ordinator is well qualified for the post, but was only appointed to the school staff last term and has had no opportunity to work alongside colleagues or to monitor teaching and learning in order to raise standards.

## **RELIGIOUS EDUCATION**

135. During the inspection, only one lesson was observed in religious education. Inspection findings are based on this observation, the analysis of pupils' work, the scrutiny of school documentation, including planning, and discussions with the co-ordinator. Standards of attainment are meeting the

requirements of the locally agreed syllabus by the end of Years 2 and 6. The achievement of all pupils, including those with special educational needs, is satisfactory and has been maintained since the last inspection. Pupils with special educational needs often make good progress in lessons when account is taken of their prior attainment and targets in their individual education plans.

136. By the end of Year 2, pupils have developed their knowledge and understanding of the importance of the Bible to Christians and know some of the stories, as well as those relating to Christmas and Easter. They understand aspects of Judaism such as religious practice within the home. Pupils have celebrated harvest festivals and understand Christian views about God as a creator and provider. The pupils in Years 1 and 2 have learned about symbolism and how symbols are important within world faiths such as Hinduism and Sikhism.
137. An analysis of pupils' books in Years 3 to 6, and the observation of a lesson in the Years 5 and 6 class, shows that pupils have an appropriate knowledge of the basic beliefs of the main world religions. They have an understanding of the background and work of some of the important figures. Year 6 pupils wrote about the importance of 'Chanukah' to Jews and pupils in Year 5 knew about the meaning of the 'Five Pillars of Islam' for Muslims. Pupils' knowledge about religions is in line with the expectations of the local agreed syllabus, but no better. Their knowledge lacks detail and depth. Homework for older pupils is not common. There is too little extended writing and research evident in the work scrutiny. However, the quality of the pupils' reflective work about, for instance, the nature of God, is better. A Year 5 pupil of average attainment eloquently expounded the concept of a God who must care for all, including animals. Year 4 pupils wrote thoughtful poems on the meaning of harvest festivals.
138. The quality of teaching and learning in Years 1 to 6 is satisfactory with strengths. Good subject knowledge in a lesson for the Years 5 and 6 pupils resulted in pupils learning the correct meaning of terms associated with Sikhism. There was a careful explanation of why Sikhs do not have pictures of Gura and good references to the similarity with Muslim views. A challenging group exercise, planned to increase pupils' knowledge of the Gurdwara, required a high level of language skills. Although several pupils had no difficulty and could offer very good definitions and examples of mediation, this was not the case for about one third of the class. Although the teacher worked hard to help, the result was a lesson that was satisfactory, with some pupils not fully participating towards the end. Pupils with special educational needs gained from being in especially chosen mixed-ability groups and made good progress. Not enough time was planned for the final session of the lesson to share views as well as to confirm and extend understanding. Over time, the subject is taught methodically and teachers successfully encourage the pupils to vocalise thoughts about feelings and the needs of others.
139. The management of the subject is satisfactory, with a number of good features. A specialist teacher has been the co-ordinator for just over a year. She has worked very hard to plan a curriculum that successfully integrates the requirements of the locally agreed syllabus with units from the national guidelines. Considerable effort has resulted in resources that support the subject, including the teacher collecting her own artefacts. Overall, the curriculum supports progressive development, although it has yet to be fine-tuned to ensure that the particular requirements of mixed-age classes have been met. The decision to teach topics concurrently throughout Years 3 to 6 results in some overlap and recapping of basic ideas. The school is aware of the problems of ensuring that each pupil encounters new knowledge and experiences and is revising their long-term planning. High quality assessment and record keeping has not yet been developed and the co-ordinator has not had the opportunity to observe lessons. Very effective links with the local Christian community have been forged in order to enhance the provision of religious education, but this has not yet been extended to other faiths. This lessens the capacity of the subject to prepare pupils for life in multicultural Britain. The contribution of the subject to all other aspects of spiritual, social, moral and cultural education is good. There is scope to increase the use of information and communication technology to aid research.