

INSPECTION REPORT

GREENVALE INFANT SCHOOL

Chatham

LEA area: Medway

Unique reference number: 118317

Headteacher: Miss E Caldwell

Reporting inspector: Mrs H Bonser
22870

Dates of inspection: November 25th – 28th 2002

Inspection number: 247870

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

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INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Type of school:	Infant
School category:	Community
Age range of pupils:	4-7
Gender of pupils:	Mixed
School address:	Symons Avenue Chatham Kent
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Appropriate authority:	The Governing Body
Name of chair of governors:	Mrs S Dengate
Date of previous inspection:	October 6 th – 10 th 1997

INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Team members			Subject responsibilities	Aspect responsibilities
22870	Hilary Bonser	Registered inspector	Religious education; geography; Foundation Stage	The school's results and achievements; Teaching and learning; Leadership and management.
11575	Catherine Fish	Lay inspector		Attitudes, values and personal development; Care and welfare of pupils; Partnership with parents.
12367	Anthony Green	Team inspector	Mathematics; science; information and communication technology; design and technology; physical education; special educational needs; English as an additional language	
27242	Enid Rice	Team inspector	English, art and design; history; music; educational inclusion.	Learning opportunities
1224	Graham Todd	Team inspector	The work of the special educational needs nurture group	

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PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Greenvale Infant School is a community school that draws its pupils from the local neighbourhood. At present there are 166 boys and girls from 4 to 7 years of age. The number has fallen from 255 at the time of the last inspection. The school includes a nurture group, known as Sparklers class, for up to 10 pupils with emotional, social or behavioural difficulties. This was set up in 2000. Children's attainments on entry to the school are well below average, as many have poorly developed personal, social and communication skills. Many pupils come from disadvantaged backgrounds and the number known to be eligible for free school meals is well above average. There are 37 per cent of the pupils on the register of special educational needs, as a result mainly of learning, emotional or behavioural difficulties. This is well above average. One per cent of pupils have a Statement of Special Educational Need, which is below average. Six per cent of pupils come from ethnic minority backgrounds and three per cent speak English as an additional language. The present headteacher took up her post at the beginning of October, following the sad death of the previous headteacher in March and a period of acting headship by the deputy headteacher. There has been a high turnover of teachers and pupils, especially in the last two years.

HOW GOOD THE SCHOOL IS

Greenvale Infant School is a good school with many strengths. Standards in English, mathematics and science have risen considerably since the last inspection to just below average overall. Pupils now achieve well because the quality of teaching and learning is good. Pupils behave very well and they are very keen to learn. The new headteacher, governors and all staff work together very well as a team to improve standards and the quality of education for all pupils and are fully committed to continuing this. The school provides good value for money.

What the school does well

- Standards in reading, writing and mathematics have risen and pupils do well because they are well taught and receive very good support from the teaching assistants.
- Pupils with special educational needs, including those in Sparklers class, make good progress because the school makes very good provision for them, successfully helping them to take part in all aspects of school life.
- The headteacher has made a good start in working closely and effectively with all staff and governors to begin to tackle weaknesses and to bring about a programme of continuing improvements.
- The very good relationships between all members of the school community and the very good provision for moral and social development make a strong contribution to pupils' very positive attitudes towards school and their very good behaviour.
- The school cares well for all of its pupils; all members of staff provide consistently good support and guidance, helping pupils to feel secure and valued.
- The school keeps parents very well informed; this contributes to the very positive views they have of the school.

What could be improved

- Standards in the aspects of English, which are below average at the end of Year 2, especially in writing and speaking.
- Standards in information and communication technology, science, history and geography, which are below average.
- Improve the poor rate of attendance of a small number of pupils.

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 October 1997 and there has been a good improvement overall since then. Standards in English, mathematics and science have been raised and this was acknowledged by

School Achievement Awards in 2000 and 2001. Better assessment procedures and more effective use of teaching assistants to support pupils' learning have contributed to this, together with the improvements in the quality of teaching and learning and the consistent implementation of the national literacy and numeracy strategies. However, in addition to the trauma faced by the whole school community of the illness and death of the previous headteacher, the high turnover of pupils and teachers in the last two years had an adverse effect on the learning of the Year 2 pupils, in particular, last year. Consequently, results in the national tests fell back. Since then, the school has worked hard and successfully to overcome the set-back in performance and continues to do so. There is a strong, shared commitment in the school to raise standards. With the staffing situation now more stable, the school is well placed to make further improvements and is likely to meet the challenging targets set for 2003.

STANDARDS

The table shows the standards achieved by pupils at the end of Year 2 based on National Curriculum test results.

Performance in:	compared with			
	all schools			similar schools
	2000	2001	2002	2002
reading	E	E	E*	E
writing	E	E	E*	E
mathematics	E	D	E	E

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

Results in 2002 fell back and were in the lowest five per cent in reading and writing, compared to schools nationally and well below average in mathematics and in teachers' assessments in science. In spite of this, since the last inspection, results overall have risen more quickly than the national trend. There were good increases in the proportion of pupils reaching the expected Level 2 and the higher Level 3 until 2001, when results were above average in reading and mathematics, in comparison with similar schools, but below average in writing.

Pupils' work and lesson observations show that children do well by the time they leave the reception classes. They reach average standards in all areas of their learning except in mathematical development and in communication, language and literacy, which improve to below average from their well below average starting point. At the end of the Year 2, standards are now average in mathematics, representing very good achievement for these pupils, just below average in reading, and below average in writing and science. This is a good improvement from last year. Boys and girls achieve well overall in relation to their individual starting points. Standards in information and communication technology, history and geography are below average, but average in other subjects. It is clear from pupils' detailed records and assessments, that pupils with special educational needs and English as an additional language, achieve well in relation to their previous attainment by the time they leave the school.

PUPILS' ATTITUDES AND VALUES

Aspect	Comment
Attitudes to the school	Very good; pupils enjoy coming to school, they are enthusiastic, eager to learn and work hard.

Behaviour, in and out of classrooms	Very good throughout the school both in lessons and at play. Two fixed period exclusions in the last school year.
Personal development and relationships	Very good; pupils get on very well together and with the adults in the school; they act responsibly when given jobs to do around the school.
Attendance	Well below average; this is due mainly to the poor attendance of a small number of pupils.

The way in which pupils co-operate with each other, concentrate, and show interest in their work is a particular strength of the school. They show consideration and care towards others. The attitudes and behaviour of pupils was at least good in almost all lessons seen and very good in many of them.

TEACHING AND LEARNING

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

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

The overall quality of teaching is good and has improved since the last inspection, when it was judged to be satisfactory. As a result, pupils learn well in many lessons. The core subjects of English, mathematics and science, including basic literacy and numeracy skills, are taught well across the school. This consistency contributes well to the improvements in standards and in the achievements of pupils of all levels of attainment and is remarkable in view of the relatively short length of time the present team has worked together.

The school now meets the needs of all girls and boys well, including higher attaining pupils and those with special educational needs and English as an additional language. In well-taught lessons across the school, teachers plan work thoroughly, taking good account of pupils' differing needs. They take care to provide activities that are relevant and interesting and manage pupils calmly, positively and very effectively. As a result, pupils concentrate well, work hard and achieve well. As yet, teachers do not make enough use of information and communication technology to support pupils' learning in other subjects.

OTHER ASPECTS OF THE SCHOOL

Aspect	Comment
The quality and range of the curriculum	Satisfactory overall; very good, well balanced provision in the reception classes; in Years 1 and 2, the emphasis on improving pupils' literacy and numeracy skills has led to insufficient attention to subjects such as history and geography.
Provision for pupils with special educational needs	Very good; pupils, including those in Sparklers, have clear achievable targets and are supported very well by teachers and skilled teaching assistants. They are included well in all activities.
Provision for pupils with English as an additional language	Good; pupils receive good support that helps them to participate well in lessons.

Provision for pupils' personal, including spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	Very good overall; very good provision for moral and social development, good for spiritual development and satisfactory for cultural development.
How well the school cares for its pupils	Well; a strong emphasis on promoting the value and self-esteem of each pupil contributes very well to their personal development.

The very good provision for extra-curricular activities in which many pupils participate makes a very good contribution to the very positive attitudes they have towards school. The school already has a good partnership with parents and is actively seeking ways of involving them further.

HOW WELL THE SCHOOL IS LED AND MANAGED

Aspect	Comment
Leadership and management by the headteacher and other key staff	Good overall; good leadership shown so far by the new headteacher, very well supported by the deputy headteacher and very good teamwork between all staff.
How well the governors fulfil their responsibilities	Satisfactory; they take an increasingly active and effective part in the management of the school.
The school's evaluation of its performance	Good; strengths and weaknesses are analysed well and result in effective action to improve standards, teaching and learning.
The strategic use of resources	Good; available funds are used well to support the school's priorities.

The school applies the principles of best value well to spending decisions. Staffing levels are good overall. Learning support assistants provide very effective help for pupils' learning. A good level of resources and good overall accommodation are used very well to create a stimulating learning environment for pupils.

PARENTS' AND CARERS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

What pleases parents most	What parents would like to see improved
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The school is approachable and responsive to their views and concerns. Their children enjoy coming to school. Their children are well taught. They are expected to work hard, do their best and they make good progress. The school provides an interesting range of activities outside lessons. The school is well led and managed and works closely with parents. The children are well behaved and the school helps them to become mature and responsible. 	There were no significant concerns expressed by parents.

Inspection findings fully support the positive views expressed by parents. A very small number of parents felt that their children do not get the right amount of work to do at home. Inspectors judged its provision to be satisfactory.

PART B: COMMENTARY

HOW HIGH ARE STANDARDS?

The school's results and pupils' achievements

1. After the last inspection, results improved significantly, rising more quickly than national trends as a result of a strong and successful school focus on improving standards and teaching in literacy and numeracy, with pupils doing well in relation to similar schools and their own prior attainment. For example, from 1999 to 2001, the numbers of pupils reaching Level 2 rose from 56 to 83 per cent in reading, from 40 to 75 per cent in writing and from 61 to 94 per cent in mathematics. The percentage of pupils reaching Level 3 also improved. This was recognised by School Achievement Awards in 2000 and 2001.
2. However, results in the 2002 National Curriculum tests at the end of Year 2, based on average points, fell back. They were well below average in mathematics and in the lowest five per cent in reading and writing compared to all schools nationally. Teachers' assessments in science indicate that standards were well below average. Unusually, boys did better than girls, although over time the difference in their performance is similar to the national picture. Results were also well below average compared with schools of a similar context. This fallback was due to a particular set of circumstances that combined to adversely affect pupils' standards and achievements at the end of Year 2. There was a high level of movement of pupils in and out of the school in that year group, with over a third of the year group joining the school after the reception year. One class had several different teachers during Year 1 and Year 2 due to the high turnover of staff, which impacted adversely on their rate of learning. The sad death of the headteacher in March was also a difficult and traumatic time for all members of the school community.
3. From observations and analyses of the baseline assessments, children's attainments on entry to the reception classes are well below average. Many have poorly developed speech, language, personal and social skills. A significant number have emotional and behavioural difficulties. Children's achievement has improved to good from satisfactory since the last inspection. This is because they are taught well and the very good provision made for them is adapted well to their particular needs. By the time they leave the reception classes, standards in communication, language and literacy and mathematical development have improved to below average and are broadly average in all other areas of their learning. Children achieve very well in their personal, social and emotional development as a result of the strong emphasis on this area. Past work and lesson observations show that, by the end of the Year 2, standards this year are average overall in mathematics and below average in reading, writing and science. This shows a good improvement from last year and from the time of the last inspection, resuming the upward trend. Detailed assessments and records are kept of pupils from whatever point they joined the school. From a scrutiny of these, it is clear that boys and girls achieve well overall in relation to their prior attainment.
4. Key factors in pupils' good achievement include the improvement in the overall quality of teaching and learning, which is now good and the careful, early identification, very good provision and effective support given to the high percentage of pupils with special educational needs, including those in the nurture group. Other factors include the very good support for pupils' learning that the skilled teaching assistants now provide and the effective and consistent implementation of the literacy and numeracy strategies, as teachers make good use of well planned in-service training and support. The very consistent and positive way teachers manage pupils and the very good relationships between them contributes significantly to pupils' very good attitudes and behaviour and consequently to their rate of learning and achievement. The school has set appropriately challenging targets to raise standards further.
5. In English, pupils now achieve well overall. Standards meet the expected levels at the end of Year 2 in listening skills, but are below them in speaking. This is partly because of the number of pupils with speech and communication difficulties. There are good examples throughout the school of teachers providing planned opportunities across the curriculum for pupils to develop their

speaking and listening skills. Consequently, most pupils listen attentively and respond to questions appropriately. However, many use only a limited vocabulary and have difficulty in expressing their ideas fully. One reason for this is that teachers sometimes do not question pupils further to extend initial brief responses. Pupils' limited speaking skills have an adverse effect on the development of their writing, which is below average. This is also partly because some teachers do not have high enough expectations of the amount and quality of pupils' writing. In general, teachers do not make enough use of opportunities in other subjects for them to practise and extend their writing skills. Standards in reading are slightly below average. Phonics are now well taught and the majority of pupils use a good range of strategies to tackle unfamiliar words. They are enthusiastic readers, but although they understand what they are reading, many have difficulty in talking in any detail about it.

6. Standards in mathematics are now broadly average at the end of Year 2. Pupils achieve very well in relation to their previous attainment. This largely reflects the increasing impact of the consistent implementation of the national numeracy strategy with the associated staff training. In well taught lessons, teachers use well matched questions so that all pupils are involved and give them challenging interesting work. However, teachers do not always give pupils enough opportunities to discuss and develop their mental strategies, as many pupils find this difficult because of their limited language skills and mathematical vocabulary. Not enough use is made of opportunities for pupils to apply their mathematical skills in other subjects.
7. Standards in science have improved to below average at the end of Year 2 in all aspects of the subject and they achieve well overall. They show a sound understanding in their learning about living things and begin to predict what will happen in their investigative work. However, pupils' language skills and lack of scientific vocabulary often limit their explanations and recording, while some higher attainers are not challenged enough.
8. Standards in information and communication technology are below average by the end of Year 2, although pupils achieve satisfactorily in relation to their previous attainment. Recent improvements in resources have not been in place long enough to impact on pupils' standards and because staff training is not yet complete, some lack confidence and skills in teaching the subject. Not enough use is made of information and communication technology to support pupils' learning in other subjects.
9. In religious education, the majority of pupils meet the expectations of the locally agreed syllabus at the end of Year 2 and achieve satisfactorily, as at the time of the last report. They develop a sound knowledge of key features of Christianity, Hinduism and Judaism and show respect for the beliefs and ideas of other people.
10. By the end of Year 2, standards are broadly average in art and design, design and technology, music and physical education. Pupils achieve satisfactorily in relation to their previous attainment. However, standards in history and geography are below average and pupils do not achieve as well as they should. One reason for this is that relatively little time is spent on these subjects and the long gaps between topics make it difficult for pupils to build systematically on previous learning.
11. Pupils with special educational needs achieve well and make good gains in their learning, relative to their prior attainment. They make good progress towards their individual targets because of well-matched work and the very good support given by the teaching assistants. When pupils are withdrawn from the classroom for individual or small group specialist teaching they often make very good gains in their knowledge because of the well-trained adults who work with them and the well-matched work. The number of these pupils who reach Level 2, in the National Curriculum tests, reflects their good achievements. Bilingual pupils, who speak English as an additional language, achieve well and make good progress in relation to their understanding and acquisition of English. When given individual support by the support assistant from the Medway Language Achievement Service, they make good and often very good progress. Higher attaining pupils now also achieve well, in general, as a result of better matched work and the improved provision for them since the last inspection. This is reflected in the increased numbers of pupils reaching Level 3 in reading and

mathematics, although very few as yet reach this level in writing. No significant differences in the achievements of boys and girls were noted during the inspection.

Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development

12. The school has built successfully on the positive position in the previous report. The pupils' attitudes to all the school has to offer them is now very good. Their behaviour also is very good and the relationships are a very strong feature that underpins the school community.
13. Pupils enjoy coming to school very much. This is shown by the enthusiasm they show when they arrive each morning. They come in full of purpose and organise themselves quickly at the start of the day. They generally settle quickly in lessons and like to be fully involved in what they are learning. This was characterised in a Year 1 numeracy lesson, when pupils responded eagerly to the quick fire questions, set about timed tasks very quickly and appreciating their success when they achieved the challenges set. It is only when the quality of teaching drops that pupils become fidgety and behave less well. This might be due to the activity lacking stimulation or pupils not being fully involved. The enthusiasm shown in nearly all lessons is reflected in the way the pupils approach other aspects of the school day. The number of pupils who attend activities after school is high; they enjoy taking part and talk eagerly about what they do in them. They enjoy sitting and talking with their friends at lunchtime and playing with them outside at break times. Assemblies are approached respectfully. Pupils enter the hall quietly and sit with their classes. During the inspection, an assembly taken by the vicar of the local church held the pupils' attention as she talked about the season of Advent. They showed a sense of awe and inner well being as they watched the candle lit to mark the start of Advent, listening attentively to the accompanying prayer. Pupils are beginning to enjoy their successes and show pride, for example, in having their name put on the 'proud cloud'. Such examples reflect the good level of their spiritual development, while the respect and interest shown by pupils to visitors from different cultures and religious traditions is a good aspect of their sound cultural development.
14. Behaviour is very good throughout the school day. The pupils have a very good understanding of how they must behave and are very clear about the boundaries. This extends to after school activities, such as the art club, where pupils know that if they are rude, they will not be able to come. If a pupil misbehaves he or she is expected to talk over what happened. This discussion helps the pupil to understand about the effects of his or her actions on others. There are few problems in the playground because the pupils get on so well together. They play very well together; this is very well fostered through the use of playground equipment that the pupils may use individually or with friends. No indication was given either from observation or from talking with pupils about harassment of any form. The pupils understand that they must be kind to each other - it is a Golden Rule - and they try very hard to behave in that way. Friendships form between boys and girls and across the different ethnic groups and are a very positive feature of the school community and of pupils' very good moral and social development.
15. Last year one pupil was excluded on two occasions. The number of exclusions made by the school has dropped in recent years. This has largely resulted from the introduction of the 'Sparklers' class that provides effective support for pupils, some of whom have difficulties with their behaviour. Pupils with special educational needs and those who speak English as an additional language have very good attitudes to class, group and individual activities. Their behaviour is very good. They respond enthusiastically to appropriate questions. Their response in groups or when withdrawn from the class for individual or small group activities is very good.
16. The school takes pupils' views into account through an annual questionnaire; the results are used to try to provide the pupils with what they want, for example in the choice of library books. From this the pupils learn that their views and ideas are valued and they can have a positive impact on the work of the school.
17. The very good relationships across the school community are a great strength. They mean that the school runs smoothly and help to create a supportive atmosphere that is enjoyable to work in. Pupils show very high levels of respect for all staff. They in turn value the pupils and help them to

develop both by providing effective role models and by encouraging appropriate behaviour, for example, by promoting good table manners. The pupils are encouraged as soon as they start school to develop independence and responsibility for themselves. In the reception classes, they are expected to help by setting up play equipment. In Year 2, they might be expected to put their name on the board when they go out to the toilet, and to indicate by the use of a coloured card whether they have understood what they are doing or need help. These activities all help to develop pupils' self esteem, self-knowledge and independence. The pupils work very well together in pairs, providing support for each other. However, whilst there are occasions where the pupils use their initiative, there are still not enough opportunities for them to develop this area fully.

18. Whilst it is evident that the pupils enjoy school when they are there, the level of attendance is well below the national average for all primary schools. The levels of both authorised and unauthorised absences are above average. Authorised absences are mostly due to acceptable reasons, such as illness and reflect the age of the pupils and the social circumstances of some families. Most unauthorised absences are confined to a very few pupils, all well known to the educational welfare officer, who works very hard with the school and the parents to improve matters.

HOW WELL ARE PUPILS OR STUDENTS TAUGHT?

19. The quality of teaching is good overall and pupils learn well in many lessons. This contributes well to the improving standards and good overall achievements of pupils. The quality of teaching and learning was good or better in just over seven out of ten of the lessons seen. It was very good in a tenth of lessons. Very little unsatisfactory teaching was seen. This is an improvement from the time of the last report, when teaching was satisfactory. Over the last two years, there has been a difficult period of high turnover of teachers. The current team has been in place a relatively short time and so the consistency of approach in many key areas of teaching and learning is all the more remarkable. Focused monitoring of teaching and learning and well used staff training have contributed to this, as well as the willingness of teachers to work together and with their teaching assistants in planning and sharing good practice and the effectiveness with which they do this. They share a determination to continue to improve the quality of learning for all of their pupils.
20. Teaching is good overall across the core subjects of English, mathematics and science. This consistent picture results in pupils making good gains in their learning and achieving well in these subjects. No lessons in art and design, geography or design and technology were taught during the inspection period and little direct teaching of information and communication technology or music was seen, so no overall judgements can be made in these subjects. Teaching was good in the lessons seen in physical education and satisfactory overall in religious education and history. The quality of teaching is good in the Foundation Stage and in Years 1 and 2.
21. Basic literacy and numeracy skills are taught well overall, helping pupils to achieve well and to make good progress in many lessons. One reason for this is that teachers have worked hard to implement the national literacy and numeracy strategies consistently, making good use of external training. Other reasons include the very effective support given to pupils with special educational needs and English as an additional language in class. In a well-taught mathematics lesson for Year 1 pupils, the teacher made good use of interesting resources to motivate pupils and used skilful questioning well to target, involve and challenge pupils of differing levels of attainment. As a result they made good progress in their learning about number bonds and adding on to ten. Phonic skills are well taught. For example, in a Year 1 lesson, the teacher helped pupils to make good progress in improving their skills in distinguishing sounds, as they eagerly tried to correct the 'mistakes' made by Croaker the glove puppet. Pupils responded very well, listening carefully and helped by questions such as, 'Which phoneme is he getting wrong? What should the last one be?' This resulted in a good level of accuracy by the end of the session. However, teachers do not have high enough expectations of the amount and quality of pupils' writing and do not make enough use of opportunities in other subjects for pupils to practise and extend its range.
22. The quality of teaching for pupils with special educational needs is good. Work is well matched to their specific needs. They are challenged effectively and targets are met. Consequently, they make good progress. In the majority of classes, daily and weekly planning does not make specific

reference to pupils with special educational needs, their learning outcomes and the resources required. However, teachers know the pupils well and teaching assistants are involved in the weekly planning. In a number of classes, teaching assistants were observed to have a copy of the planning, or informal notes, about the learning objectives specific to the special educational needs pupils. However, this was not observed in all classes. Teaching assistants are given good guidance by the class teachers and are used well. There are good formal and informal liaison procedures between the class teachers and teaching assistants, as well as the special educational needs co-ordinator, who provide very good support for pupils in class and withdrawal groups. They make a positive impact on pupils' learning. They give good feedback to teachers about pupils' progress in the form of comprehensive formal and informal notes, which they discuss with the class teachers, and which help to inform future planning. The use of resources to support learning is good. Pupils are very well managed.

23. The quality of teaching for pupils who speak English as an additional language is good. Work is well matched to their needs. They are given good support in class, in groups and when withdrawn by the bilingual support assistant. However, in class lessons, opportunities are missed for pupils to develop their vocabulary and lesson plans rarely refer to the objectives for pupils who speak and understand little English. For example, in a good Year 1 science lesson, a pupil new to the school and with little understanding of English was very well integrated into the lesson. However, when she signed to the teacher for scissors or sellotape, the teacher did not use the opportunity to reinforce the name of the resources to support understanding and language acquisition.
24. In many lessons, there are strong features that contribute to the very good attitudes pupils have towards their learning. Teachers manage their pupils in a very consistent and positive way. This is based on the very good relationships between all staff and pupils throughout the school. Teachers help pupils to meet their high expectations of behaviour and attitudes to work by creating a calm, secure and purposeful atmosphere in lessons. They have a thorough knowledge of individual pupils, based on a good range of assessment procedures, that they use sensitively to support their learning and to promote their self-esteem and personal development. They listen to and value pupils' ideas, helping them to develop their confidence in expressing them. Many good examples of this were seen in lessons across the school. It means that pupils are keen to share their ideas, in spite of their often limited speaking skills, and to learn readily from their mistakes. Teachers and teaching assistants are adept at managing pupils with emotional and behavioural difficulties, judging when to stand back and when to intervene very well.
25. Other good features include the way that teachers work together very well as a team. They brief and deploy their teaching assistants very well, so that their skilled support has a very positive impact on pupils' learning. They make equally good use of additional help from parents or other volunteers. Many examples were seen of teachers using good questioning skills in whole class sessions, to involve pupils of all levels of attainment and to ensure, for example, that boys and girls were equally involved. They are careful to choose resources and contexts for learning that are relevant to pupils and arouse their interest. As a result, pupils listen well, are keen to learn and work hard in lessons, showing how well they can concentrate and co-operate together. Teachers make good use of strategies that encourage the pupils to work independently, which they do well. For example, in some classes, pupils know that if they need help, they ask their partner first, then if necessary leave it for the time being or show a red card for adult help. Pupils use the system effectively, keeping up the pace of their work.
26. The positive impact of such features on pupils' rate of learning was illustrated in many lessons, such as a well-taught religious education lesson for Year 2 pupils about Hanukkah. The teacher immediately engaged the full attention of the pupils, as she held up an example of a hanukkah, saying, 'You've never seen one of these before!'. The pupils immediately rose to the challenge, making suggestions – unsuccessfully - to the contrary, which she skilfully used to review their previous learning. As they wanted to find the solution, they listened intently to the story, with boys and girls sitting separately to remind them of the tradition in the synagogue. The teacher modelled expressive reading very well, questioning pupils in a way that helped them distinguish between the menorah and hanukkah. The brisk pace of the lesson and the teacher's own enthusiasm contributed to the good rate of pupils' learning throughout the lesson.

27. There were some elements of teaching, where examples of good or very good practice were seen, but where there was some inconsistency between teachers. These frequently made the difference between good and very good teaching and satisfactory lessons. In some lessons, teachers made very good use of strategies such as paired discussion to help pupils clarify and articulate their ideas, before responding in front of the whole group, or skilfully questioning them to encourage them to extend their initial reply. In other lessons, such opportunities were missed. In general, in all subjects, not enough emphasis is given to key vocabulary to help pupils increase their limited range.
28. All lessons are carefully planned with clear objectives. However, not all teachers share these effectively with pupils. In the best examples seen, teachers not only discussed the objectives with pupils so they knew exactly what they should be learning, but kept pupils tightly focused by returning to them during the lesson. At the end, they encouraged pupils to evaluate their work against them, so that they knew how well they were doing. Review sessions at the end of lessons are sometimes used well to help pupils not only review, but to extend what they have learnt and also to set the context for what they will learn next, as in a very well taught Year 2 mathematics lesson on shape. In some lessons, such reviews are too brief and such opportunities are lost. Although in most lessons seen activities were well matched to pupils' differing needs, scrutiny of past work, especially in subjects such as religious education, history and geography, show that the same task is often given to the whole class. This limits the rate of learning, especially, of some average and higher attaining pupils.
29. Teachers make good use of assessment information to set targets in reading, writing and mathematics for pupils to work on and share them well with parents. However, they do not yet use these consistently in lessons to help pupils focus on the areas for improvement and to move their learning on. As a result of on-going training, teachers make sound use of opportunities in the computer suite to help pupils develop their skills in information and communication technology. They do not make sufficient use of these in the classroom to support pupils' learning in other subjects.

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

30. The quality and range of learning opportunities is satisfactory overall and has been maintained since the last inspection. The provision for pupils in the Foundation Stage has improved further and is now very good. The requirements of the National Curriculum are met and the locally agreed syllabus for religious education is covered satisfactorily. However, the balance of the curriculum is uneven, as high priority is given to English, which results in other areas of the curriculum, such as history, geography, assuming a low profile. While this has been appropriate as the school has concentrated its efforts on successfully raising standards in English, mathematics and science, it has resulted in standards in history and geography falling back since the last inspection to below average.
31. Significant strengths of the curriculum are the strategies for teaching literacy and numeracy, opportunities for all pupils to attend a very good range of after-school clubs, links with the community and the provision for pupils with special educational needs, including those in the nurture group.
32. The school has implemented the national literacy and numeracy strategies successfully and well. However, there are insufficient opportunities for pupils to use these skills in other subject areas. Although information and communication skills are being taught, there are few planned opportunities for its use across the curriculum. The school has comprehensive planning frameworks that help pupils to build on previous learning in most subjects. All pupils are fully included in lessons regardless of background, gender and ability through skilful questioning and attention to their particular needs.

33. Provision for pupils with special educational needs is very good and contributes very well towards the good progress they make. The school's implementation of the Code of Practice is meeting the needs of the pupils and ensures they have equal access to the curriculum. However, teachers' daily planning does not always specifically identify the lesson objectives for pupils with special educational needs. Provision for pupils who speak English as an additional language is good and also ensures they have full access to the curriculum.
34. The school makes satisfactory provision for personal, social and health education. Lessons are timetabled, giving pupils the opportunity to view themselves in relation to others as they grow and develop, so that they may begin to have an understanding of citizenship. In a lesson on kindness, a pupil with English as an additional language reflected: 'When I had no friends, N--- let me play'. A file is used to support staff, containing health and safety issues. Procedures are in place to cover educational visits, first aid and accidents. Displays in the school serve to show the importance of keeping safe, such as a large picture on road safety with the 'Green Cross Code' highlighted. Although there are suggestions as to where aspects of personal and social development can be covered in different areas of the curriculum, there is no framework to give teachers guidance and to ensure full coverage. The school is reviewing this part of its provision. There are appropriate policies for sex education and drug awareness, and the school makes good use of the school nurse and police to support pupils' learning in these areas.
35. A wide range of extra-curricular activities enhance and enrich the curriculum and pupils have opportunities to make visits outside school. For example, pupils sing for residents at a local home for the elderly at Christmas time. A very good range of weekly clubs, including those for cooking, art, drama, gardening, computers and choir are all well attended and contribute very well to pupils' enthusiasm for school.
36. The contribution made by the community to pupils' learning is good. There are strong links with the local church and the vicar leads assemblies regularly. Some parents and friends of the school from the community help during lesson times, as in music.
37. Satisfactory relationships exist with the junior school, which helps pupils when they transfer from one stage of education to another. The school holds joint staff meetings with the junior school to discuss curricular matters. Such contacts help to ensure continuity and progression in learning. Useful links are made with teacher training institutions and pupils from the local secondary schools visit for work experience.
38. The provision for pupils' personal development is very good overall. The opportunities for spiritual development are good. Some improvement has been made since the last inspection when this aspect was satisfactory. A policy for collective worship is in place and there is a strong emphasis throughout the school on individual worth and respect for others. This is reinforced through the school's own system of rewards, which are recognised daily in classes. Achievements are celebrated in assemblies as well as in a display near the entrance hall. Assemblies are held for the whole school and are based on Christian principles. Festivals from other world faiths are recognised and celebrated. Music is played sometimes as pupils leave assemblies and they are actively involved in them through questioning and by pupils offering their own prayers.
39. Very good provision is made for pupils' moral development. The behaviour policy is consistently applied throughout the school and is known well by the pupils. 'Golden Time' and 'Circle Time' have been introduced to give opportunities for pupils to explore this area of the curriculum. The strongest influence on pupils is the day-to-day dealings between themselves and all staff, both teaching and non-teaching. Very good relationships and the very good role models that all staff provide promote very good behaviour. Good work, behaviour and attitudes are praised and rewarded, in a way that motivates pupils very well.
40. The provision for social development is very good. Pupils have frequent opportunities to work together, in pairs and larger groups, for example, in literacy, physical education, drama and music. Teachers organise and manage their classrooms and pupils in a way that actively promotes opportunities for co-operation and peer support. Pupils are given responsibilities within the

classroom, such as taking registers to the office and tidying up at the end of lessons. Very good extra-curricular provision gives opportunities for pupils to develop their social skills in different situations. Pupils support charities such as 'Children in Need,' showing them the importance of helping others and raising their awareness of needs in the wider community.

41. Satisfactory provision is made for pupils' cultural development. Visitors from other religions are invited to lead assemblies and talk to pupils during lesson time. An art week is arranged for next term and a theatre group has been organised to perform for pupils. They have suitable opportunities to become aware of their own culture and other world cultures, especially through art and design and music. Pupils make visits to museums and listen to speakers from the local community. The school prepares its pupils for life in a multi-cultural society satisfactorily. Whilst the school recognises the diversity of culture of its pupils, there is little evidence of the ethnic and cultural backgrounds of all of the bilingual pupils being celebrated fully.

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL CARE FOR ITS PUPILS?

42. The pupils are well looked after in school. All staff take an active interest in their well-being and the pupils know that the staff will listen to them and take any concerns they have seriously. Thus they feel well supported and are able to concentrate on what they are learning in school. The atmosphere that the school creates helps pupils to develop their confidence and self-reliance.
43. The procedures and policies in place to ensure the health, safety and welfare of pupils are good. Child protection is covered by the local procedures; the head teacher is familiar with the systems in place and the need to provide information and attend meetings such as case conferences. The health and safety policy and procedures cover all the necessary arrangements, for example, for risk assessment, first aid and manual handling. The school nurse is available to support this area through regular health checks. The school has a policy for Internet use by pupils and staff. This ensures that pupils and adults only access and use appropriate Internet sites.
44. Although attendance at school is poor, the school has good procedures for monitoring and promoting good attendance. The school monitors both attendance and punctuality well. It finds it frustrating that its efforts do not enjoy more success. Any family with a child absent is rung to find out the reason; messages are left when possible, but often parents are not contactable. The number of calls being made has reduced as parents have become better at contacting the school because of reminders to do so, for example through newsletters. Further efforts are made to ascertain the reason for any absence with the office staff making personal contact when the opportunity arises. The educational welfare officer, who has a very detailed knowledge of the local community, provides very good support. She holds clinics within school to which parents are invited. Her efforts are commendable; she is prepared to use every power available to her. This resulted in a court case last year. The school encourages the pupils to attend by awarding certificates for high levels of attendance. Parents are reminded of the need for regular, punctual attendance.
45. The school's behaviour, bullying and harassment policies and procedures are all very good. The principles behind them are very simple, as are the rewards, sanctions and methods of recording and monitoring. The school places great emphasis on developing self-awareness and confidence to enable the pupils to cope with any form of harassment. The school sets high expectations of relationships within the whole community and this is very effective in ensuring that all pupils are fully involved in all activities in school and that none are excluded because of any differences. This is particularly noticed in the regular inclusion of pupils in the Sparklers class with their peers.
46. The staff all know the pupils well. This is shown by the good quality interactions that take place between them and the details given by teachers in the end of year report to parents. These show that teachers know the pupils' strengths and areas for development well and, although personal development is only formally recorded in the Foundation Stage, this does not hamper the successful promoting of the personal development of older pupils.

47. The arrangements for the assessment and identification of pupils with special educational needs are very good and are being implemented in accordance with the Code of Practice, 2002. The school cares for these pupils very well and has maintained this since the previous inspection. Baseline assessments and tests are used well to identify and target pupils' needs. Pupils' gains in knowledge, skills and understanding are good. Records are up to date and comprehensive. Examples of pupils' work are kept, which helps to monitor progress. Individual educational plans contain very specific targets, which are shared with pupils and parents. Pupils regularly refer to their own copies of these, which are phrased in appropriate language, and the targets they have achieved. They are proud of the file in which they are kept. The monitoring and support for pupils with a Statement of Special Educational Needs is very good. The annual reviews show good progress by pupils and outline future targets. The support given by the teaching assistants for pupils with a statement is very good. Liaison with outside agencies and external support staff is good.
48. The arrangement for the assessment and monitoring of bilingual learners is good. The school cares for pupils who speak English as an additional language well. The Medway Language Achievement Service provides good support. The bilingual support assistant monitors and assesses pupils well. She keeps comprehensive records, which are shared with the co-ordinator for English as an additional language. This ensures that work is well matched and that the pupils make good progress. Bilingual pupils are fully integrated into the life of the school.
49. There is no register for the identification of gifted and talented pupils but the school has identified a number of higher attaining pupils who are withdrawn from lessons once a week for group work in English, mathematics and questioning skills.
50. There are good procedures overall for monitoring and supporting pupils' academic progress. The school has good, wide-ranging assessment procedures, especially in English and mathematics, which are used well to track and monitor the progress of pupils of all levels of attainment as they move through school. Data from each year's national test results are analysed and the information is used well to address identified weaknesses. These are good improvements since the last inspection and have contributed to the rising standards. In English and mathematics analyses are used to set termly curricular targets for each year group and these are adapted appropriately for different groups of pupils, for example, in Year 1, to put a capital letter and full stop at the beginning and end of every sentence. In some classes, individual targets related to these are also set. However, the effectiveness with which teachers use these targets to move pupils' learning on is inconsistent. This is partly because the present team of teachers is relatively new. This means that although teachers have moderated work together, some variations remain in the interpretation of the criteria for National Curriculum and Foundation Stage levels, which affect teacher's expectations and their half-termly predictions of pupils' performance. In other subjects, assessment procedures are less refined and not yet used as effectively to raise standards.

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL WORK IN PARTNERSHIP WITH PARENTS?

51. Parents hold very positive views of the school. Although only a relatively small number of parents returned the questionnaire, the analysis reflects one undertaken by the school along similar lines that received a larger response. Every area covered had more than half the respondents strongly agreeing; there was only the issue of homework that caused concern to a very small number of parents. This is a reflection of the confidence that parents have in the school. The very positive views expressed were confirmed by the findings of the inspection and the use of homework was found to be satisfactory.
52. The school works very hard to develop a supportive working relationship with the parents; a number of good policies are in place to promote this. All respondents to the questionnaire say the school is approachable; this is illustrated very well by the headteacher and deputy head teacher being available at the start and end of the day. There are also a good number of both formal and informal opportunities for parents to meet with staff and these are found to be very helpful by parents. Parents are happy to come in to school to talk about their children's work and progress - there are weekly opportunities for them to look at their work - and to attend any events or activities in which

they are involved. Most sign the home–school agreement. However, few attend meetings, such as those organised to discuss what is being taught. The school is actively promoting opportunities for parents to come for such meetings and has set up some potentially good initiatives for this, such as a computer course.

53. The information provided to parents is very good overall. The letters that go home to parents are informative, friendly and appropriate to that family. Newsletters are of very good quality - the way they are laid out is interesting and the information is varied and relevant. Parents are sent an informative letter every half term to tell them what their children will be learning. The regular opportunities to discuss their children's work are generally well attended and give teachers the opportunity to discuss targets with parents. The annual reports to parents about their children are sound. Those provided in the Foundation Stage are helpful because they indicate, through a tick sheet, exactly what the children can do at the end of that stage, together with helpful comments by the teachers. Reports for older children give some helpful comments about what they can do in English and mathematics, but other subjects are reported briefly, often in groups and do not always give sufficient detail. The comments on the pupils' personal development and attitudes made by the class teacher are good.
54. Liaison with parents of pupils with special educational needs is good. They are aware of the point of contact in the school and are regularly informed of the targets of the individual educational plans either at consultation meetings or by letter. Parents of pupils with statements are kept fully informed and are involved in reviewing the targets set for their children, in accordance with the Code of Practice. The special needs co-ordinator works hard to ensure parents are well informed. When pupils achieve a target they are awarded an 'I can' certificate which is sent home so that parents can share in their child's success.
55. Parents of bilingual pupils, who speak English as an additional language, are kept well informed of their child's progress. Where appropriate, the school provides translators for when teachers meet parents but does not arrange for the translation of letters, reports and information into home languages.
56. The school works hard to involve parents in its work. A small number help out in classes and their contribution has a good impact on pupils' learning and is valued highly by the school. There is a 'Friends' association that is run by a small band of people. Support for its activities from parents is very variable, although a good number helped with the construction of the pond and environmental area. The school asks parents to complete a questionnaire annually – the results are analysed and action taken when necessary. For example, arrangements for collecting children at the end of the day were altered in response to parental concerns. The school also surveys parents who take their children away from the school before the end of Year 2. Results from this questionnaire show that the reasons for the pupils leaving are rarely through dissatisfaction, but often for family moves.

HOW WELL IS THE SCHOOL LED AND MANAGED?

57. The overall leadership and management of the school is good. There has been a good response to the weaknesses identified in the previous report. There has been a good improvement in standards, in spite of the fall back last year, the needs of higher attaining pupils are met more effectively and assessment procedures for these and all pupils are now good. Teaching assistants are now used well and their full involvement in the planning of work helps them to provide very effective help for pupils' learning. In addition to this, there have been a number of other good improvements. For example, the literacy and numeracy strategies have been implemented effectively and consistently and the quality of teaching has improved from satisfactory to good. Well planned monitoring and staff training together with well-used support from the local education authority have all contributed to this. The setting up of the nurture group in 2000 has also had a significant impact, not only on the achievements of pupils who work in the group, but also on the attitudes and behaviour of all pupils. These are now very good and contribute greatly to their good rate of learning.

58. It is a tribute to the work of the previous headteacher, the sense of purpose shown by the deputy, as acting headteacher, and the sensitivity and leadership qualities demonstrated by the new headteacher that, in spite of the very considerable difficulties faced over the last two years with the high turnover of teachers and pupils and the illness and death of the previous headteacher, the set-back last year in the improvement in standards has been so quickly overcome and that staff morale is so positive.
59. It is too soon to see the full effect of the leadership and management of the new headteacher. However, she has already established good working relationships with the staff and governors, secured their confidence and support and that of many parents, judged by their views expressed in the questionnaire, as well as the commitment of all to ongoing school improvement. The response of the whole staff team, through mutual support, hard work and the dedication of all to improving the quality of teaching and learning for pupils, contributes well to the common sense of direction and focus on raising standards further. This is clearly shared by governors, as is the determination to maintain the high level of care and support for pupils and to ensure that all pupils, including those in the nurture group, continue to participate as fully as possible in all aspects of school life. A strong sense of teamwork pervades the whole school to the considerable benefit of pupils, in spite of the relatively short length of time that the current staff have been together. Teachers' good knowledge of individual pupils, the way they promote self-esteem and recognise achievements are good examples of how these aims are seen in practice daily. This makes a strong contribution to the very positive attitudes and good behaviour of the pupils and to the way that the school successfully encourages racial harmony.
60. The headteacher is ably supported by the deputy headteacher and they work together very well to manage the smooth day-to-day running of the school and the pastoral care of pupils. The present senior management team is relatively newly formed, following staff changes, and it is too soon to judge their impact. Its composition, with year group leaders, the special educational needs co-ordinator and Nurture Group teacher, promotes a comprehensive overview of the school for its strategic planning role. Over the past two years, the senior management team has carried out useful monitoring and evaluation activities, such as the analysis of performance information and the identification of key priorities, which has contributed to the improved standards. Most subjects have new co-ordinators this year, again in response to staff changes. They have made a good start by reviewing their subjects in light of available information and drawing up appropriate action plans. The headteacher is increasing their leadership roles by delegating budgets to them and ensuring that they will have the opportunity to monitor teaching and learning in their own subjects this school year in order to provide them with a clearer view of standards and achievement.
61. The special educational needs co-ordinator, who also co-ordinates the teaching of English as an additional language, provides very good leadership. She is making a very positive impact on the special needs provision. She has led training sessions for teachers and teaching assistants and regularly works in classes, which is raising the skills and knowledge of teachers and teaching assistants and the achievement of the pupils. Teaching assistants are given good guidance by the special educational needs co-ordinator and other staff and attend appropriate training courses to update their skills and knowledge, which is ensuring that they support pupils well. They feel very well supported and very positive about their roles. The responsible governor for special educational needs is new to the post and has had little time to impact on the provision for pupils. However, she has a very good understanding of her role, of the needs of the pupils and of the requirements of the Code of Practice. The special needs co-ordinator, and all staff, have a good understanding of the new Code of Practice, which has been fully implemented. The co-ordinator has a very good awareness of the issues of inclusion for pupils who have a limited acquisition of English and leads this aspect well. She ensures that there is good liaison between teachers and teaching assistants and the bilingual support assistant.
62. The determination and capacity of the school to raise standards is seen in the way that the headteacher is putting into place good systems to support a rigorous approach to all aspects of monitoring and evaluation. These are building on and extending those that have been in place and have already made a good contribution to improving the quality of teaching and learning, including the good use of external monitoring by local education authority inspectors. For example,

opportunities for all co-ordinators to monitor teaching and learning in their subjects and for peer observations and support are now to be included in the programme.

63. The systems for performance management are in place and used appropriately to support school development. Teaching assistants also have a well-structured appraisal system. The school is making appropriate use of initiatives, such as the 'Healthy Schools' Award to provide further support for school improvement. The headteacher manages the additional bureaucratic demands, arising from implementation of national initiatives effectively. She does this, for example, through the use of information and communication technology and by prioritising and delegating appropriately, so that these do not detract from the benefit to pupils.
64. Increasingly good use is being made of performance data to track and monitor the progress of individual pupils, through appropriate information systems, for example in setting numerical targets for pupils in terms of their expected National Curriculum levels, which are reviewed half termly. Test results are carefully analysed to identify weaknesses in the curriculum or in the achievements of particular groups of pupils. Appropriate action is then taken to address these by setting curricular targets in English and mathematics for each year group and for pupils of differing levels of attainment. This helps to give a clear focus to teaching and learning and contributes to the rising standards, although the effectiveness with which teachers use these targets in lessons to help pupils improve their work varies. As yet, this process has not been extended to science.
65. Governors are committed and very supportive of the school and carry out their statutory duties satisfactorily. There were a number of new governors this year and the new Chair of Governors has used this opportunity well to restructure the committees and to clarify roles and responsibilities. She also provided good and valued support for the school during the difficult period following the death of the previous headteacher. Governors have begun to visit the school to see and report on specific aspects of its work, such as the Nurture Group. This helps to inform their clear view of the strengths and weaknesses of the school and of what is needed to continue to take the school forward. It is also enabling them to develop some aspects of their role, such as strategic planning and monitoring and evaluation, in a more structured and pro-active way.
66. The quality of financial planning and management is sound. The knowledgeable, efficient finance officer makes a good contribution to this. Close attention is now being given to ensuring that funds received by the school are used effectively to support the school priorities. Good use is also made of specific grants, for example, to improve the number of learning support assistants in classes and for the Nurture Group. The school has begun to evaluate the effectiveness of such spending decisions in relation to individual pupils' achievement and school performance. Principles of best value are applied appropriately and contribute to the improved cost effectiveness of the school. For example, the school ensures through competitive tendering that they obtain best value for money when purchasing resources and services. Parents and pupils are now consulted regularly, both informally and through annual questionnaires.
67. The induction of new teachers, newly qualified teachers, supply teachers and teaching assistants is good. During the inspection week, a teacher in her second year of teaching spoke highly of the support she was given during her induction year. New teachers are given good guidance about the policies and practices in the school, planning for each subject and the school's strategies for behaviour management. The potential for training teachers is good. The deputy headteacher is a trained mentor for trainee teachers and ensures that trainee teachers are well supported. Good links have been established with the initial teacher training institution at Christchurch College, Canterbury.
68. The match of teachers and support staff to meet the demands of the curriculum is good and has been maintained since the previous report. Teachers are suitably qualified and well balanced in their total experience and are deployed effectively. The deputy headteacher and the teacher responsible for improving writing and information and communication technology give good support throughout the school, teaching alongside colleagues or withdrawing groups of pupils for specific learning support. The special educational needs co-ordinator supports pupils well in classes and ensures that there is very good provision for pupils by all teachers and teaching assistants. There

is a higher than average number of well-qualified teaching assistants who provide skilled and very effective support for pupils. Administrative staff provide helpful and efficient support. Lunchtime supervisors support the school well, especially in the very effective way they manage pupils, providing, as all other staff, very good role models for pupils.

69. The accommodation is good. It is well cared for and displays provide an attractive learning environment. Classrooms, the special educational needs room and "The Sparklers" nurture room are spacious. The large hall provides adequate space for indoor physical education lessons. Displays reinforce the good spiritual provision for the pupils in the way that they both stimulate and value their work. There are plans to improve the school grounds, which have begun with the building of a pond, with the help and support of parents. The site manager and cleaning staff maintain the building well and ensure that it is clean and welcoming. The premises governor is well qualified and has a good understanding of the issues with regard to the upkeep of the building. He supports the school well. The local education authority is carrying out a survey of accessibility. Once this is completed, the school will use the findings as a basis for its access statement and policy.
70. The level of resources is good overall and has been maintained since the previous inspection. They are good for English, mathematics, science, religious education, physical education and the foundation stage. In all other subjects, resources are satisfactory except for history where there is a lack of artefacts. The bright and welcoming library is well stocked with a good range of fiction and non-fiction books to encourage pupils to read and enjoy books. The grounds are adequate with a large and a small hard play area and an adequate area of grass. Lines and markings on the hard areas are fading, which make them difficult for pupils to see and use.

WHAT SHOULD THE SCHOOL DO TO IMPROVE FURTHER?

In the context of the school's many strengths, the governors, headteacher and staff should address the following matters in their action plan in order to raise standards and the quality of education further:

- a) Raise standards in all those aspects of English , that are below average at the end of Year 2, especially in writing and speaking by*:-
 - ensuring all staff have high enough expectations of the amount and quality of pupils' writing, especially of average and higher attaining pupils.
 - providing more opportunities in subjects across the curriculum for written recording and for pupils to practise a variety of forms of writing.
 - placing greater emphasis on the use of specialist vocabulary across the curriculum to extend pupils' limited vocabulary.
 - making more consistent use of opportunities for pupils to articulate their responses more clearly and in greater detail.(see paragraphs 5,21,27,-30, 32,50, 89,91-2,143,145.)

- b) Raise standards in information and communication technology,* science, history and geography , which are below average by:-
 - completing the planned information and communication technology training for teachers to increase their skills and confidence and extend training to teaching assistants.
 - making more use of classroom computers to support pupils' learning across the curriculum.
 - providing more opportunities for pupils to discuss and explain their practical and investigative work in science to develop their scientific thinking.
 - making more use of the outdoor environment to support pupils' learning in science.
 - reviewing the planning and balance of the curriculum to ensure that pupils can build systematically on previous learning in history and geography.
 - making more focused use of other subjects, especially the opportunities in history and geography, as contexts for pupils' learning in literacy.
 - providing more opportunities for older pupils in particular to consolidate and extend their understanding through written recording
 - ensuring that activities are consistently matched to the needs of pupils of differing levels of attainment.(see paragraphs 7,8,10,18,44,94,104-5,116-118,120-129, 135,145)

- c) Improve the poor rate of attendance of a small number of pupils by*:-
 - Continuing to implement rigorously the good procedures for promoting attendance and punctuality.(see paragraphs 18, 44)

**The school has already identified these areas for development.*

THE WORK OF THE NURTURE GROUP (SPARKLERS CLASS)

71. The nurture group provision, which was opened in 2000, is good and most pupils achieve well. Inspection evidence and records of pupils' work show that the pupils make good progress with their learning over a relatively short period of time. As their behaviour and social skills improve they gain in self-confidence, their literacy and numeracy skills start to get better as they focus more on learning.
72. Currently there are nine pupils in the group, mostly boys. Seven of the pupils are in Year 1 and the others are in Year 2. The accommodation is good and the classroom has soft furnishings, a sink, food preparation area and a suitable range of large construction toys. This good quality environment helps pupils to bridge the gap between home and school. The main purpose of the group is to help pupils with social, emotional and behavioural difficulties to develop their confidence, social skills and self-esteem before being returned to full-time education within a mainstream class. This normally happens within four terms.
73. The teacher and support assistant have received specialist training in running a nurture group. This has helped them to plan a good curriculum that meets the wide range of pupils' learning needs within the group. The pupils' individual education plans are very good and form an essential part of the planning. They have detailed literacy, numeracy and social targets, and these show clearly how the teacher is tracking the pupils' progress. Assessment is good; higher attaining pupils are assessed regularly against National Curriculum Levels, whilst the lower attaining pupils are assessed against the P Scales (a measurement of pre-National Curriculum attainment). The pupils are familiar with their targets and enjoy marking them off on their laminated cards when they have been achieved.
74. The day is structured well so that the pupils have a clear idea of what will be taught and what is expected from them. TEACCH (Treatment and Education of Autistic and related Communication Handicapped Children) techniques are providing a good deal of this structure. For example, the daily schedule of activities is pictured on the board. Pupils take a card with their name on it and place it against a choosing activity, to use when they have completed their literacy or numeracy work. The choice of construction activities such as a train, marble run and boat provide a good incentive for pupils to concentrate on their work. The teacher has good strategies for managing behaviour. The work is organised so that pupils concentrate for short periods of time and then are rewarded with a short activity period. Pupils are extremely proud when they accumulate sufficient 'ticks' and receive a sticker for good behaviour. Overall, pupils' attitudes and behaviour are good and they are very clear about the boundaries set by the teacher.
75. Teaching is consistently good. The teacher used well-framed questions to include pupils of all abilities in the lessons. For example, in one lesson, the higher attaining pupil was given the opportunity to sequence events when discussing how they had made toast for breakfast. Others who were struggling with language were praised for recognising simple words in the sentences such as 'in' and 'at'. They helped the teacher to make sentences by choosing words written on flash cards. The teacher and learning support assistant have high expectations of what the pupils can achieve. Every opportunity is taken to extend pupils' speaking and listening skills. Because of this the pupils grow in confidence, make good progress and become socially aware of others in the group. Occasionally, pupils become frustrated leave the main group and work alone. In this respect, the school has not given sufficient consideration to using a symbol vocabulary and a picture exchange system, that could be of benefit to the pupils who have very weak communication skills. Information and communication technology is also an area that requires further development as a tool to reinforce pupils' learning. Social skills are effectively taught; for example, pupils observed having breakfast washed their hands before sitting at the table. The pupil who had taken orders served others in the group, who then waited until all were ready to start the meal. At the end of the morning, the pupils were observed gathering around the teacher who was holding a dog puppet called Sam. They took it in turns to get up and speak to Sam and tell him how well they had functioned during the morning. This was an excellent way for them to develop

their language skills, recognise their achievements and develop self-esteem by sharing their thoughts with others in a non-threatening environment.

76. The management of the nurture group is good. The teacher and learning support assistant work very closely together as a team and both have clearly defined roles. There are good relationships with parents who are informed regularly about pupils' progress. However, the planning for pupils integrating into mainstream classes is not thought out carefully enough. For example, it would be better if the lessons that the pupils attend when integrating reflected the curriculum they receive in the nurture group. This would be more interesting for them and give them the opportunity to function at a more appropriate level in mainstream classes.

PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS

Summary of the sources of evidence for the inspection

Number of lessons observed	38
Number of discussions with staff, governors, other adults and pupils	32

Summary of teaching observed during the inspection

	Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
Number	0	4	24	9	1	0	0
Percentage	0	11	63	24	3	0	0

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

Information about the school's pupils

Pupils on the school's roll	YR– Y2
Number of pupils on the school's roll (FTE for part-time pupils)	166
Number of full-time pupils known to be eligible for free school meals	63
Special educational needs	YR– Y2
Number of pupils with statements of special educational needs	1
Number of pupils on the school's special educational needs register	62
English as an additional language	No of pupils
Number of pupils with English as an additional language	5
Pupil mobility in the last school year	No of pupils
Pupils who joined the school other than at the usual time of first admission	48
Pupils who left the school other than at the usual time of leaving	46

Attendance

Authorised absence

	%
School data	8.9
National comparative data	5.4

Unauthorised absence

	%
School data	1.2
National comparative data	0.5

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

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

	Year	Boys	Girls	Total
Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 1 for the latest reporting year	2002	29	40	69

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		Reading	Writing	Mathematics
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	20	17	26
	Girls	26	25	31
	Total	46	42	57
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	67(83)	61(75)	83(94)
	National	84(84)	86(86)	90(91)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	21	25	26
	Girls	27	29	32
	Total	48	54	58
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	70(76)	78(81)	84(80)
	National	85(85)	89(89)	89(89)

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

Ethnic background of pupils

Exclusions in the last school year

Categories used in the Annual School Census	No of pupils on roll	Number of fixed period exclusions	Number of permanent exclusions
White – British	156	2	0
White – Irish	0	0	0
White – any other White background	4	0	0
Mixed – White and Black Caribbean	0	0	0
Mixed – White and Black African	1	0	0
Mixed – White and Asian	0	0	0
Mixed – any other mixed background	0	0	0
Asian or Asian British - Indian	1	0	0
Asian or Asian British - Pakistani	0	0	0
Asian or Asian British – Bangladeshi	1	0	0
Asian or Asian British – any other Asian background	0	0	0
Black or Black British – Caribbean	0	0	0
Black or Black British – African	1	0	0
Black or Black British – any other Black background	0	0	0
Chinese	1	0	0
Any other ethnic group	1	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– Y2

Total number of qualified teachers (FTE)	11,4
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	1:15
Average class size	24

Education support staff: YR– Y2

Total number of education support staff	12
Total aggregate hours worked per week	326

Qualified teachers and support staff: nursery

Total number of qualified teachers (FTE)	N/A
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	N/A
Total number of education support staff	N/A
Total aggregate hours worked per week	N/A
Number of pupils per FTE adult	N/A

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Recruitment of teachers

Number of teachers who left the school during the last two years	10
Number of teachers appointed to the school during the last two years	9

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.

Financial information

Financial year	2001/02
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	£
Total income	619916
Total expenditure	626013
Expenditure per pupil	2988
Balance brought forward from previous year	27778
Balance carried forward to next year	21681

Results of the survey of parents and carers

Questionnaire return rate

Number of questionnaires sent out	221
Number of questionnaires returned	27

Percentage of responses in each category

	Strongly agree	Tend to agree	Tend to disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know
My child likes school.	78	22	0	0	0
My child is making good progress in school.	63	37	0	0	0
Behaviour in the school is good.	59	33	4	4	0
My child gets the right amount of work to do at home.	56	30	11	0	4
The teaching is good.	74	26	0	0	0
I am kept well informed about how my child is getting on.	67	30	4	0	0
I would feel comfortable about approaching the school with questions or a problem.	81	19	0	0	0
The school expects my child to work hard and achieve his or her best.	67	33	0	0	0
The school works closely with parents.	67	26	4	0	4
The school is well led and managed.	52	41	4	0	4
The school is helping my child become mature and responsible.	56	41	4	0	0
The school provides an interesting range of activities outside lessons.	69	31	0	0	0

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

77. Provision for children in the reception classes has improved further since the last inspection and is now very good. Children enjoy a rich and practical curriculum, which is carefully planned to meet their particular needs. Children join the school, on a part-time basis initially, at the beginning of the autumn or spring term, depending on when they have their fifth birthday. A good range of induction procedures, including home visits, helps the children to settle into school quickly and happily.
78. Children's attainment on entry is well below average, with many having, in particular, poor communication and language skills and limited personal, social and emotional development. As a result of the good teaching, which has also improved since the last inspection, and a stimulating learning environment, children achieve well overall by the end of their reception year in relation to their prior attainment. The majority of children now meet the early learning goals in their personal, social and emotional development, creative and physical development and in their knowledge and understanding of the world. Most do not meet all of the early learning goals in their communication, language and literacy and mathematical development.
79. The overall quality of teaching in the reception classes is good and ranges from satisfactory to very good. This means that the children learn well. Particular strengths in the teaching include very good support for the development of personal and social skills and a strong emphasis on developing good listening skills and clearer speech. Assessment procedures are good and information from assessments is used very well to help teachers to plan the next steps in children's learning. Every activity has clear learning objectives against which teachers and teaching assistants note and assess children's response and progress. The information is also used to help identify children with special educational needs and to provide appropriate support. This early identification also helps these pupils to do well. The sensitive, quiet but firm management of the children who come into school with behavioural and emotional difficulties is very effective and also a strength. There are very good relationships and teamwork between the teachers and teaching assistants and all are fully involved in planning the children's activities. This means that the children benefit from very consistent approach in all the contacts that they have with adults and this contributes well to their good rate of learning.

Personal, social and emotional development

80. A significant number of children enter the school with immature personal and social skills. About a third have had no pre-school experience. By the time they leave the reception class, most children reach the early learning goals in this area. This shows very good achievement and reflects the strong and successful emphasis on this area of learning and very good, skilful teaching in it. Teachers are trained in using a common approach that they use well to give focused support to children in developing their independence and personal and social skills. They use this to very good effect in managing the children and in planning and organising classroom resources and learning activities. As a result of this, although the children have been in school less than a term, they move confidently, purposefully and happily around the classroom, are keen to participate in activities and respond well in general to instructions, showing a considerable degree of independence already. One reason for this is that the activities are very well structured, interesting and well matched to the children's needs. Another is that teachers encourage children to make their own decisions. For example the teacher directs children to the learning board to choose a learning activity from an appropriate range, rather than suggesting what they might do. A good range of resources are used both inside and outside to create stimulating contexts for learning. These also help children to concentrate well for appropriate periods. For example the 'Jungle Café' currently provides an attractive role play area. Most children play and work together amicably and are willing to share and take turns in the many opportunities they have for paired and small group work. Some still need support with this. They tidy up quickly and sensibly in response, for example, to 'tidy-up' music being played.

81. Most children show a good awareness of acceptable and unacceptable behaviour in the classroom, as set out in their 'Golden Rules', to which teachers usually refer when correcting any misbehaviour. Teachers and teaching assistants manage children's behaviour very positively and consistently, which contributes to the very good relationships they have with the children and the welcoming secure environment in which the children flourish. Teachers give children good opportunities to make choices and to increase their awareness of their own learning when planning and reviewing some activities for themselves. They often question children well to help them think ahead and relate the play to their learning. For example, when one more articulate child announced he was going to play on the scooters, the teacher asked him what he was going to learn, he replied, 'I'm going to balance'. All of these factors contribute to the very good achievement of children in this area of learning.

Communication, language and literacy

82. Many of the children have poor skills in this area when they start school. They achieve well as a result of good overall teaching, although most are unlikely to attain all of the early goals in this area of learning by the time they enter Year 1. Teachers and teaching assistants make good use of the many planned opportunities to help children improve their speaking and listening skills, for example, encouraging them to reply in complete sentences as they discuss in circle time who should have the last piece of chocolate that was passed round! Teachers also take care to ensure that children understand the meaning of new words they introduce, as many of the children have a very limited vocabulary. Several, for example, cannot name some common fruit and vegetables, such as cucumber. Although most have learnt and understand the words 'author' and 'illustrator', they have difficulty in explaining the terms. Children enjoy listening to stories, learn to understand that text has meaning and handle books appropriately. Although children are encouraged to take books home every night, the level of support they receive at home varies. Children make good gains in lessons using a variety of methods to help them to learn to read and are helped in this because sounds and sight words are taught in a well-structured way. As yet, even higher attaining children are familiar with only a small range of these. Most can recognise the initial sound in words of letters they have learnt. Average and higher attaining pupils can use the pictures in a book to 'read' a simple story.
83. Average and higher attaining children are also beginning to use their knowledge of some initial sounds to write the first letter of words and a few write simple words with recognisable letters, for example when making a shopping list for milkshakes, with well-focused help from the teaching assistant. During the same very well taught literacy session the teacher encouraged a group of average attaining pupils to talk about what they wanted to write as labels for food, and to practise as many of the letter sounds as they could as they identified the first letter. As they worked, the teacher checked their pencil grip and noted relevant points on which to base subsequent learning such as, 'N--- heard the final phoneme' and 'N—couldn't say 'banana'. Because teachers and teaching assistants value the children's efforts at writing, encouraging them to 'read' it to them at every opportunity, children are keen and confident writers. One group of children who were 'writing' independently, concentrated fully on their task for over ten minutes, making long lists of letter-like shapes, which they enjoyed reading to the 'visitor'!

Mathematical development

84. This area of learning is taught well and children achieve well. Most are on course to meet the early learning goals in several aspects, such as number recognition and counting, but some have difficulties with their use and understanding of mathematics language as a result of their poor communication skills. Teachers help children to see mathematics all around them and take every opportunity for children to practise their skills. For example, one higher attaining child remarked spontaneously, when playing with the road mender's equipment outside, 'I know that shape – rectangle', and the teachers encouraged groups to successfully sort different kinds of food they were examining in different ways. The teachers provide a wide variety of interesting practical activities to reinforce children's learning. A very good example was seen of this in a lesson about the use and counting of 1p coins. The children were completely absorbed as they took turns to

drive the bus or to go to the bus stop and buy a ticket from the conductor (the teacher) while the others carefully counted out their own coins to check that the customer had given the correct number. The children thoroughly enjoyed these practical activities and learned well as a result of their involvement.

Knowledge and understanding of the world

85. Many children enter the school with limited knowledge of the world around them. As a result of the stimulating, varied and very relevant provision planned for them and good teaching, they achieve well. When they leave the reception classes, they reach a level that is broadly average. They talk about holidays and birthdays and there is daily recording of the weather and days of the week. Regular opportunities to use the computer help children to develop hand-eye co-ordination by using the 'mouse' to complete simple sound or number programs and to print out their work. Some higher attaining pupils make confident use of icons in a paint program to produce patterns with different effects. The children visited the local park to look at autumn changes, observing the route they took, and afterwards designed and made 'Hoovers' out of Lego and 'tested' them outside. They investigated the colour, shapes and textures of a range of fruit and vegetables, using appropriate equipment safely to cut into them so they could compare the inside and outside and see if their predictions were correct. Children use a good variety of construction equipment to build in both structured and unstructured activities and experiment with different ways of joining materials, for example, when making boats for the harbour display. They learn from visitors such as the school nurse about how to keep their bodies healthy and from a Hindu visitor about Divali customs. Because of the children's overall limited experiences and lack of vocabulary, many find it difficult to ask questions about why things happen and to talk about features that they like and dislike without considerable prompting.

Physical development

86. The frequent and purposeful use teachers and teaching assistants make of the outdoor play area, a good number and variety of wheeled vehicles and other equipment for outside play, and the regular use of the school hall, contribute well to the good achievement of children in this area of learning. In one example, children were rolling hoops to each other and the challenge from the teacher to make up a game to show to others encouraged them to become more accurate in their movements. Most reach the expected levels by the end of their reception year. In a well-taught lesson in the school hall, the teacher organised and managed the children well. This helped them to make good progress in controlling their running, jumping, skipping and hopping, using the floor and benches confidently and moving safely around each other. Children have frequent opportunities to develop fine movements through the use of a variety of construction toys, plasticine, scissors, paint and pencils. They also learn to use a good range of tools safely.

Creative development

87. A very good range of activities with well focused adult support and encouragement mean that children make good gains in learning and by the end of the reception year are on course to attain the early learning goals. Teachers provide good opportunities for imaginative play. The 'Jungle Café' was very popular and gave good opportunities for imaginative role-play as children prepared and priced meals and then invited others to play with them. Adults join in role-play activities and help children to develop their ideas and gain confidence as some have very limited experiences of this kind of play. Drama lessons are also well used for this purpose. In their artwork, children use paint imaginatively, print with different objects such as leaves and use a range of materials to create pictures of plates of food and skeleton bodies. They experiment with mixing colours and explore clay, making well shaped diva lamps for example. They enjoy singing songs and rhymes, especially action songs, and as they become familiar with the words join in songs such as 'Ten Fat Sausages' with gusto! An appropriate range of musical instruments is invitingly displayed in the classrooms to encourage children to experiment with the sounds.

ENGLISH

88. When children start school their language skills are well below average. Inspection findings show that by the end of Year 2, standards in English have improved to below average overall. Pupils, achieve well, particularly in speaking and listening and reading but less so in writing. There is no significant difference in the achievement of girls and boys. Pupils benefit from a well-organised and systematic approach to the teaching of speaking and listening and reading, with careful attention given to pupils' needs and individual weaknesses. Good improvement has been made overall since the last inspection, when standards were very low, and the fall back in standards last year has already been reversed. Factors that have contributed to this include the improvement in the quality of teaching and learning from satisfactory to good, largely as the result of the effective implementation of the national literacy strategy and the well-used training associated with it.
89. In all classes, pupils have well-planned opportunities to develop their speaking and listening skills. By Year 2, many pupils are gaining confidence in sharing their ideas. Some higher attaining pupils answer questions using full sentences and the strategy of using partners to discuss their work and then feed back to the class, has helped to ensure improvement in listening skills, which are now broadly average. Pupils clearly enjoy conversing with other pupils and adults but many have limited vocabulary and their speaking skills are below average. In some lessons, opportunities are missed to extend pupils' initial replies and vocabulary and pupils are clearly hindered by the development of their language. Some younger pupils find it difficult to follow instructions; consequently they do not always understand their task, making it difficult for them to work independently at times. All pupils are well supported in speaking and listening. Pupils with special educational needs, in one lesson, were encouraged to talk using puppets and in a drama lesson, a Year 2 pupil with English as an additional language, chatted to the teacher who listened attentively and responded even though the activity in this lesson was mime. Another pupil was chosen to name objects, which gave opportunity to practise new vocabulary. The drama club which takes place weekly serves to reinforce language work in lessons. Pupils playing a game called 'Hot Seat', were able to find suitable words to describe their actions, such as 'slippery', 'icy' and 'smelly'.
90. Standards in reading are slightly below average. In Year 2, some pupils read their books well. They enjoy books and talk about them but they do not always anticipate what might happen next in the story. They know a range of common words and many attempt to sound out letters for unfamiliar words. They pay attention to pictures to understand the story. Higher attaining pupils read with more fluency and are beginning to use expression, paying attention to punctuation, such as speech marks, altering their voice accordingly. They understand title, index and page, using this vocabulary appropriately. They have experience of reading non-fiction books as well as fiction and some pupils describe their favourite stories. A Year 2 pupil who enjoyed 'Winnie-the-Pooh' could discuss events in the story and the other characters involved. A display, 'Learning about Books', shows pupils have the opportunity to express opinions and form conclusions. For example, one pupil wrote, 'Books are special to Grannies because they like to read'. Pupils use reference books to find information and this can be seen in other areas of the curriculum. An example in history illustrates this, where pupils searched for vocabulary about castles. They generally understand the use of the library and some higher attaining pupils are eager to explain how books can be found. Pupils, who find reading difficult, do not always recognise when they have made errors. They are often hesitant, waiting for help, rather than attempting to use strategies, which lead them to independent reading. Many pupils have few books at home and therefore have a limited range of reading experience outside school.
91. Standards in writing are below average. Pupils try hard to use their knowledge of sounds to spell words in story writing. Pupils understand and are beginning to use, capital letters and full stops, whilst some handwriting is joined. Most pupils form their letters correctly but in some work, presentation needs care. Many younger pupils are able to write a few sentences and by Year 2, a few higher attaining pupils are beginning to write more imaginatively, joining their written ideas with phrases such as, 'after a while', to move their stories on. Scrutiny of writing over a period of time however, indicates that even higher attaining pupils often produce written work which is below the standard that might be expected, in spite of effective support from the writing support teacher. Younger pupils generally write from their own experience with titles such as 'Birthdays' or 'The Seaside'. Teachers discuss the beginnings, middle section and endings of stories with pupils,

showing how actions and events may be developed. However, the standard of writing throughout the school does not always fulfil the promise suggested during discussion periods at the beginning of lessons. Teachers mark work regularly and often highlight areas for development such as finger spacing. Pupils are praised appropriately for their efforts, helping them to value themselves as good writers. Targets for writing are displayed in some classrooms on group tables. Pupils in this way are able to look at them, understanding more about their learning and their writing achievement and the suggested ways to improve. However, in general, teachers do not have high enough expectations of pupils' written work.

92. Basic literacy skills are taught well within English lessons and pupils' rate of learning is good. They steadily develop their reading, spelling and writing through a broad range of experiences. Pupils with special educational needs make good progress with the targets in their individual education plans, which meet their needs. They benefit from tasks that are adapted for them and from the additional support given by skilled teaching assistants or the special educational needs co-ordinator in class. Pupils who speak English as an additional language achieve equally well. They are supported well in their work, increasing their confidence as writers. However, teachers do not make enough use of opportunities in other subjects for pupils to practise and extend their skills, especially in writing.
93. The quality of teaching ranges from satisfactory to good and is good overall. In the most effective lessons, activities are carefully planned and structured, taking into consideration all groups so that pupils with special educational needs and those with English as an additional language achieve well. In well-taught lessons, teachers prepare different work to suit all levels of attainment, but in some lessons tasks are not always matched to pupils' needs. Teachers create a highly purposeful learning atmosphere and use skilful questioning directed to specific groups. They make good use of appropriate praise. Teachers challenge pupils and use a brisk pace in most lessons. As a result, pupils work with interest and concentration. All staff, both teaching and non-teaching, manage pupils consistently well. They provide good role models for their pupils, valuing their contributions, showing respect and fostering pupils' self-esteem. This makes a very good contribution to their spiritual and social development. As a result, pupils have positive attitudes to English, which contribute to their good achievement. They are keen to answer questions and discuss ideas, working well when they are set tasks and often showing a good degree of independence. In a Year 1 class, pupils sharpened their pencils sensibly, when necessary, without asking the teacher and were able to collect resources for group work without help. Pupils generally relate very well to one another and are polite. Behaviour in lessons is good and pupils respond positively to praise. An example was seen in a Year 2 lesson when the teacher told the pupils that they had 'brilliant ideas'.
94. The co-ordinator is new to this responsibility. However, the subject has been well managed. The school's systems for planning are effective and the national literacy strategy is implemented well and consistently. Assessment information has been analysed well with appropriate areas identified for action. The co-ordinator checks planning and intends to monitor standards and teaching in order to focus on further improving weaknesses. Good use is made of the support received from the local education authority. Good systems for assessment exist and a tracking process is used well as pupils move through the school. The subject is resourced well and the resources are used effectively. The school library is a stimulating learning environment. A wide range of books exists, some with a multi-cultural flavour and they are in good order. Pupils are timetabled for library periods and borrow books regularly. During the inspection, information and communication technology was not used widely throughout the subject to support pupils learning. The school is aware of this and it is an area for improvement in the co-ordinators' action plan.

MATHEMATICS

95. By the end of Year 2, pupils are likely to attain standards that are in line with the national average. Achievement is very good. This represents very good improvement since the previous inspection report when standards were judged to be well below average. Results of the Year 2 national tests for 2001 showed pupils' attainment to have improved to below average, at level 2 or above. The 2002 national tests show a decline in results, due to a particular set of circumstances affecting that year group. The school has worked hard to come through this unsettled period, which is reflected in the rise in standards now evident. Pupils with special educational needs make good progress and achieve well in relation to their prior attainment. Pupils who speak English as an additional language also make good progress and achieve well. During the inspection week, no evidence was observed of any gender differences but the co-ordinator has identified the underachievement of girls to be an area for development.
96. By Year 2, the majority of pupils can add and subtract two and three digit numbers. They can describe simple patterns in number, continue a sequence of numbers to 100, recall their 2, 3, 4, 5 and 10 times tables, recognise odd and even numbers and identify halves and quarters. Although pupils are developing personal mental strategies to calculate answers, they are often restricted by limited language skills and a lack of appropriate mathematical vocabulary. In their work on shape, space and measurement, pupils can tell the time on a twelve-hour clock using the hour, half hour and quarter hour. They can describe the properties of two-dimensional shapes and simple three-dimensional shapes and can measure with increased accuracy up to 30 centimetres. Higher attaining pupils measure up to a metre. In their work on data handling, pupils can construct simple bar graphs from information given.
97. Mathematics and numeracy are used satisfactorily across the curriculum but opportunities are missed. For example, in art pupils describe and use shapes and patterns, in science they use simple charts to show how many 'puffs' it takes to blow a model house down and in information technology they use shape and number programs. However, careful measuring is not developed in design and technology and in physical education pupils are not given the opportunity, for example, to count heartbeats after regular exercise or record scores in group activities.
98. The quality of teaching is good overall. No lessons are less than satisfactory. In one fifth of lessons teaching is very good. This represents good improvement since the previous inspection when teaching ranged from unsatisfactory to very good. Teachers' subject knowledge is generally good and they apply the elements of national numeracy strategy well. There is very good commitment to raising standards of pupils' achievement. Teaching assistants are very well briefed and support pupils well. Pupils with special educational needs and those who speak English as an additional language are given very good support. The good quality teaching results in good learning and good progress in lessons by all pupils. In a very good Year 2 lesson on halving simple two-dimensional shapes pupils' learning was also very good because of the fast pace of the lesson, the well matched questions, which ensured all pupils took part, and the very good use of opportunities for pupils to discuss with each other and the class teacher their personal strategies. Good use was also made of the interactive, computer controlled, 'Smart-board', which gave pupils the opportunity to draw electronically a half of a two-dimensional shape on the board. This also supported pupils' computer skills. When one pupil made an error in his drawing, the class teacher said 'Don't worry, it's all part of learning to use the board.' When he finally achieved the drawing, the rest of the class applauded his success. Pupils are taught at a good pace and often with a good level of challenge. Teachers use activities that motivate and interest pupils, which results in them enjoying mathematics lessons and feeling challenged and results in very good attitudes and very good behaviour. This is an improvement since the previous report when attitudes were judged to be satisfactory overall and sometimes good.
99. Generally, teachers use questions and pupils' answers well to assess understanding but not all use pupils' errors and misconceptions as further teaching points or ask pupils to explain and share their personal mental strategies or stress the mathematical vocabulary to be used. This also misses an opportunity for pupils to expand their general vocabulary and use of language. In a very good Year 1 lesson observed, the teacher encouraged pupils to share their strategies for finding

the number of legs visible on a picture of a ten-legged caterpillar. The teacher hid some of them and asked pupils to discuss with their neighbour their strategies for counting on to ten or back from 10, before sharing the answer and strategy with the teacher and the rest of the class. As well as correct methods, the teacher also used pupils' errors as teaching points. In a satisfactory Year 1 lesson, the teacher used questions well to engage pupils in the task and to check understanding of addition and subtraction of numbers to fifteen. However, rather than using pupils' errors as a teaching point, she moved on to pupils who provided the correct answer. In all lessons, teachers display or refer to the objectives of the lesson, so that pupils know what they are learning. At the end of the lesson, pupils are brought together to review the objectives and to assess their understanding. In a very good Year 1 lesson, pupils were asked to self assess their own understanding by raising a hand if they felt they had achieved the objective. Lessons are well organised and start with a whole class, mental, warm-up session, in which teachers try to involve everyone. Management of pupils in lessons is very good and creates a very good atmosphere for learning. Good use is made of assessment of pupils against the lesson objectives, which is used to inform future planning. However, pupils' books show that they are often set the same worksheet to complete rather than worksheets that are designed to match the needs of the different groupings within a class. Daily marking is used well and comments are written in books to support pupils' learning. This results in pupils having a good understanding of their learning and of their targets for development.

100. The co-ordinator is new to the post and has not had time to develop her leadership role. However, she manages the subject well and has already developed a good understanding of the strengths and areas to develop in the subject. She has analysed national test results to target weaknesses in pupils' knowledge, understanding and application. They include developing pupils' ability to solve problems and encouraging pupils to use a variety of written and mental methods when solving problems. The subject is well resourced. Satisfactory use is made of information and communication technology to support the subject. For example, Year 2 pupils were observed using a computer program to develop understanding of halves and quarters of a square and a rectangle. However, the co-ordinator recognises that the use of information and communication technology is an area for development. Number lines are displayed prominently in most classrooms on desks or on the wall, which helps pupils in their number work. Satisfactory use is made of homework, which is set once a week. The subject makes a good contribution to the spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of pupils. For example, class groupings ensure that pupils work well together and displays are used well to celebrate pupils' achievement.

SCIENCE

101. By the end of Year 2, pupils' attainment is below the national average. However, the achievement of pupils, including those with special educational needs and those who speak English as an additional language, is good. Judgements are similar to the previous inspection. The results of the 2002 teacher assessments showed that pupils' attainment was well below the national average overall, although there was a rise in pupils' knowledge and understanding of materials and their properties, life processes and experimental work.
102. By the end of Year 2, attainment in practical and investigative science is below expectations. Pupils record their work using drawings and writing but are often restricted by poor language and literacy skills. For example, Year 1 pupils are beginning to predict what will happen when they build a house of straw or bricks for the 'Three Little Pigs', but their restricted use of language and limited use of scientific vocabulary make it difficult for them to describe in writing or in words their predictions and the results. This is similar to findings in the previous inspection report. Year 2 pupils complete simple charts to show what happens to different materials when heated and cooled but higher attaining pupils are not given the opportunity to produce their own charts of their observations and measurements or to consider simple patterns and trends from their evidence.
103. In their work on life processes, pupils can describe the main organs of the body and label a picture of the human body. They can sort objects by living things and non-living things. In their work on materials, pupils can sort common materials according to their properties and know that some materials will change when heated and cooled and others will not. There was no evidence in pupils'

books of work on sound and light and forces but as part of the design and technology week pupils design and make lighthouses with simple electrical circuits to make the light work.

104. The quality of teaching is good and has been maintained since the previous inspection. The good teaching results in good progress in lessons by pupils. Pupils with special educational needs and those who speak English as an additional language are given very good support in lessons. All pupils are fully included in lessons. For example, in a good Year 2 lesson on the five senses, the teaching assistant was well briefed by the class teacher and supported groups well. She encouraged pupils to talk about their work and describe their results. As the pupils worked she assessed and recorded their understanding against the lesson objectives. A parent helper was also well briefed and gave good support in the lesson. In the majority of lessons teachers share the objectives of the lesson so that pupils know what is to be learnt and why. However, few examples were observed of teachers stressing the key scientific vocabulary of a lesson or writing the key words on the board or on spelling sheets for pupils to refer to. Where worksheets are used, they are often the same for the different ability groups in the class. For example, in the Year 2 lesson on the senses, the pupils had to complete a worksheet after each investigation. Because the worksheet was the same for all pupils the lower attainers were not able to complete it and put some answers in the wrong section because they were unable to read the instructions. Teachers do not make enough use of the outside environment to support pupils' learning. However, they manage pupils very well and consistently and this contributes well to the attitudes and behaviour of pupils, which are very good and have improved since the previous inspection. Pupils are enthusiastic about science, particularly when there is a practical and investigative component to the lesson.
105. The leadership and management of the subject is good. The co-ordinator has had the opportunity to observe lessons and work alongside colleagues. Time has been allocated for the summer term to make further observations. The scheme of work is based on a published scheme and nationally produced guidance. The use of numeracy and information technology to support the subject is underdeveloped. The subject contributes well to the spiritual, social and cultural development of the pupils. For example, pupils are encouraged to work together in small groups. In the good Year 2 lesson, pupils used their senses to appreciate the importance of taste, sight, hearing, smell and touch. In a good Year 1 lesson, pupils used a variety of materials to make houses based on the story of the Three Little Pigs.

ART AND DESIGN

106. During the inspection no art lessons were observed. As a result, it was not possible to make an overall judgement about the quality of teaching. Other evidence was gained from examples of work, documentation, talking to pupils, school displays, and discussion with the subject co-ordinator. This indicates that standards are broadly average, by the end of Year 2 and pupils' achievement is satisfactory. These findings are similar to the previous inspection. All pupils have equal access to the subject and suitable support is given to those pupils with special educational needs and to pupils with English as an additional language.
107. In Year 1 and Year 2, pupils make appropriate drawings and patterns. Younger children make leaf patterns following a visit to the park. Pupils handle and mix colours in the making of small portraits. However, some of the portraits show that watercolour work is insufficiently developed. Large scale collaborative work can be seen around the school and in the hall. For example, large pictures celebrating festivals, such as Divali.
108. Teachers plan a cross-curricular approach to art and design. This is evident in planning documents and displays. A link with English can be seen with stories illustrated like the 'Very Hungry Caterpillar', and nursery rhymes such as 'Little Bo Peep', where pupils are given the opportunity to express their views by writing the name of their favourite rhyme on a white board. Collage pictures link mathematics with art and design, when pupils make shape and repeating patterns contributing to the large picture, 'Do you know your numbers to 10?' Further links can be seen with music, where pupils illustrate 'One elephant went out to play', and 'Five little speckled frogs'. Links with a local play-group are made and their firework pictures are featured in the school corridor.

109. A thriving Art Club exists, held once weekly. The co-ordinator supports pupils well with a variety of activities. At present, pupils are making a Christmas present for their 'Mum', using clay to design and decorate a pot. A good selection of materials and tools are available. Pupils work in a warm and friendly atmosphere in this after school activity. Good behaviour is still reinforced by the teacher who was heard to comment to a pupil: 'If we are rude, we don't come to Art Club'. This example serves to illustrate that the rules for good behaviour are consistent.
110. There are bright displays of art and design in all areas, which successfully promote self-esteem, giving pupils a pride in their work and surroundings. These displays show pupils have varied experiences in the subject, drawing their attention to the natural world with subjects like ants and mini-beasts and the cultures of other countries and so contributing well to their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. Where possible, the school has planned art and design activities to link with topics being studied. The subject is well planned and resourced and use is made of visitors to school to promote art and design in the curriculum. Displays in classrooms produce a stimulating learning environment for all pupils. Work is well mounted, giving pupils the opportunity to celebrate success. However, no evidence was seen during the inspection of information and communication technology being used to enhance the learning process.
111. This subject manager has been in post a short while but already has a satisfactory overview of the subject and its importance within the curriculum. Evidence files are kept for each year group showing styles and techniques used in pupils' work and their level of attainment. Links are made with other schools for in-service work such as looking at art in other cultures. In this way teaching and learning is well supported and has a multi-cultural dimension. An action plan has been made with aims to update the art and design policy, revise the scheme of work, and introduce sketchbooks throughout the school. From the evidence obtained during the inspection, leadership of the subject is at least satisfactory.

DESIGN AND TECHNOLOGY

112. During the inspection week it was not possible to observe any design and technology lessons. Therefore, judgements are based on a portfolio of photographs and pupils' work, teachers' planning, assessment records and discussions with staff and the co-ordinator.
113. By the end of Year 2, standards are average and have improved since the previous inspection when they were judged to be unsatisfactory. Pupils' are achieving satisfactorily. They design and make models from recyclable and commercial materials and identify appropriate materials that should be used. Their skills of cutting, sticking and joining are sound. Year 2 pupils design and make bridges, decorate Easter Eggs, design and make sun hats and design pulley systems to raise, for example, a flag on a castle's flagpole and the draw bridge of a castle. The work in Year 2 builds soundly on the skills learnt in Year 1. For example, Year 1 pupils make a moving vehicle using a wooden base and scrap materials, which involves different ways of joining the material and different ways to add moving wheels. They make paper and card houses with doors and windows that open and close and clock faces with moving fingers. From their work they steadily acquire the skills for folding, scoring, cutting and joining card and paper with glue, sellotape and split pins.
114. Pupils design and make their work satisfactorily but inspection evidence indicates that although opportunities are provided for pupils to evaluate their products and think of ways to improve their work, this aspect is less well developed.
115. It is not possible to make an overall judgement about teaching. However, from the evidence seen, the quality of teaching is at least satisfactory. Planning and the use of assessment is satisfactory.
116. The co-ordinator is new to the post and has had little time to make an impact on the leadership of the subject. However, she manages the subject well and has a good understanding of the strengths and areas to develop. Since becoming co-ordinator she has begun to audit resources, developed long term plans and organised a design and technology week to ensure the continued profile of the subject. Since the previous inspection a new scheme of work has been introduced

based on nationally produced guidance and the previous scheme. The scheme ensures that there is progression and continuity within the subject. The subject contributes well to the social and moral development of pupils. For example, pupils work well together in pairs and small groups and the design and technology week included opportunities for Year 2 pupils to work with Year 3 pupils at the neighbouring junior school. The subject is also enhanced by an after school sewing club and an after school cookery club. The use of mathematical skills, such as measuring, when making models and artefacts is underdeveloped. The use of information and communication technology to support the subject is unsatisfactory.

GEOGRAPHY

117. No geography was taught during the inspection week and consequently no judgement can be made about the overall quality of teaching. Judgements are based on discussions with teachers and scrutiny of past work and displays and planning. These indicate that standards are below average at the end of Year 2 and pupils' achievement, including that of pupils with special educational needs and English as an additional language, is unsatisfactory. Standards have fallen since the last inspection when they were described as average. One reason for this is that the school has concentrated curriculum time on successfully raising standards in English and mathematics and, as a result, less time and attention has been given to geography. While the geography curriculum broadly meets requirements, the way that it is organised, with long gaps between topics, makes it difficult for pupils to develop geographical understanding and skills systematically. There is no structured approach to the teaching of mapping skills. In addition to this, there is very little evidence of written recording particularly in Year 2 and consequently pupils do not have the opportunity to apply, consolidate or extend their learning effectively. This also means that teachers do not make the most of the many opportunities in the subject for pupils to practise their writing skills and different forms of writing.
118. When comparing and contrasting some features of India and England earlier this term, Year 2 pupils identified the two countries on a world map and suggested several similarities and differences in climate, transport and clothes. From pictures and videos, some began to raise geographical questions such as, 'Why is there no glass in their windows?' Although attractive displays supported their learning with appropriate questions, little work by pupils was included, or evident, for example, in the very inviting 'World Travel Agency' role-play area. In the limited amount of written work seen, there was no evidence of pupils' vocabulary being extended through learning and using specific geographical terms. Little use is made yet of information and communication technology to support pupils' learning. In cross-curricular topics, such as 'Houses and Homes', planning is not rigorous enough in identifying key learning objectives against which to assess pupils' geographical learning. In the same way, although pupils have walks and visits within the local area, not enough use is made of these for practical activities, such as traffic counts and shop surveys.
119. The newly appointed co-ordinator is well aware of shortcomings in the subject and this is reflected in her action plan, which includes the use of time, which has now been allocated for her, to observe teaching and learning in the summer term to help identify specific priorities for development.

HISTORY

120. As no lessons were taught in Year 2 during the inspection, evidence is taken from class lessons in Year 1, scrutiny of pupils' work, displays and photographs, school documentation and discussion with pupils and the co-ordinator. These indicate that standards in history are below average at the end of Year 2 and pupils, including those with special educational needs and those who speak English as an additional language achieve unsatisfactorily. This is similar to the judgement in the previous inspection. Although the planned curriculum broadly meets the requirements of the National Curriculum, because of the way it is organised, pupils do not have sufficient opportunities to build consistently on previous learning or develop historical skills systematically. Teachers of older, average and higher attaining pupils do not have high enough

expectations of the amount and quality of written recording of pupils' work, both to reinforce their historical knowledge and to practice and extend their writing skills.

121. Pupils in Year 1 were learning about castles. The subject was presented in a stimulating way with reference to the familiar traditional tale, 'Cinderella'. Pupils responded readily to class discussion and used a variety of resources to investigate the features of castles to support their learning, such as books, models, pictures, and photographs. They understood that buildings can crumble with age and by the end of the lesson began to understand why people lived the way they did long ago. The Internet was used to search for further information, but in the lesson, although the pupils had the skills to operate it they were unable to access it. Pupils show in the lessons that they have limited historical vocabulary. Many pupils do not understand the significance of, for instance, moats, towers, or battlements and find it difficult initially to draw conclusions about life in the past. By the end of the lesson, they had made good progress.
122. The quality of teaching and learning in the lessons seen was satisfactory, with some that was good. Pupils listened carefully and contributed to class discussion, although some had difficulty in explaining their thoughts. They shared information with partners and fed back their ideas to the whole class. This method of teaching ensured that they remained on task and that their interest was sustained. Teachers planned interesting activities and used questions effectively to encourage pupils to explore their thinking and draw conclusions. School visits do take place, as pupils have visited Dover Castle and the Toy Museum in Rochester. Samples of work resulting from these visits are less than satisfactory, as some are incomplete. There is little evidence of information and communication technology being used to support pupils' learning. Displays around the school have photographs that highlight the passage of time, indicating how people change as they grow with a caption: 'Do we look the same?' Family time-lines can be seen in some classrooms.

INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY

123. During the inspection week it was only possible to observe short taught sessions using the new interactive 'Smart-board', an interactive screen connected to a computer, which is controlled by touching the screen. No lessons were observed using the classroom computers. Therefore, judgements are made on the limited number of direct observations, discussions with pupils, teachers and the co-ordinator, teachers planning and assessment records.
124. By the end of Year 2, standards of attainment are below average. This represents a decline since the previous inspection, when attainment was judged to be average. The decline can be attributed to the school not keeping up with changes and developments in information and communication technology and the insufficient knowledge of some teachers to teach the subject with confidence. Pupils' achievement, including those with special educational needs and those who speak English as an additional language is satisfactory, in relation to their prior attainment.
125. By Year 2, the majority of pupils can use the mouse to open programs, select from an on-screen menu and 'drag and drop' icons. Pupils are less secure about how to use the mouse and keyboard to delete and insert letters and words and the use of the spell-check. The majority of pupils show unsatisfactory standards in word-processing skills and are not confident with the layout of the keyboard. They are also not confident about changing the size, colour and style of fonts used. Although there is evidence of pupils word-processing simple sentences, few examples were seen of pupils word-processing extended stories and accounts to support other areas of the curriculum, for example, in English and history. Pupils spoken to could demonstrate how to use an art program and how to select colour, spray and repeat pictures from a menu. However, this was done randomly and without an awareness of producing a picture for an audience. The same pupils could save their work but were unable to access it again. The majority of pupils know that information can be obtained from computers, television, radio, video and audiotape, compact discs, the Internet and the interactive smart-board.
126. Little direct teaching was observed during the inspection week so it is not possible to make an overall judgement on teaching. Some examples of good teaching were observed. For example, in a well taught mathematics lesson, the teacher used the smart-board well to develop pupils'

understanding of shapes and halves and quarters of shapes. She shared the objectives with the pupils so that they knew what they were about to learn and why and reviewed them at the end of the lesson. The teacher used questions well to assess pupils' understanding and to develop their knowledge and skills. The school has appointed a full time teaching assistant for information and communication technology to work with groups. She has good subject knowledge, which enables her to teach groups well. During the inspection week she was observed teaching pupils how to use the interactive smart-board and the facility to change pupils' handwriting into typed script. However, the scrutiny of pupils' work, teachers' planning and assessment records indicate that the quality of teaching is no more than satisfactory overall. This is because of the missed opportunities by teachers to support other areas of the curriculum by using class computers. During the inspection week, many of the class computers were not used. Boys and girls display equally good attitudes and growing confidence and interest in the subject.

127. Since the previous inspection there has been an unsatisfactory improvement in the subject, which is now being addressed by the recent appointment of a knowledgeable co-ordinator, a teaching assistant, and the investment in the smart-board, new computers and programmable toys. Unfortunately, the recent changes in staff has meant that progress in skills and knowledge made by teachers does not have time to be fully embedded and new staff require further training. At the time of the inspection teachers were part way through a national training initiative, which will raise their confidence, skills and knowledge.
128. The co-ordinator leads and manages the subject well. Although new to the post she has a good understanding of the strengths of the subject and the areas for development. As she is not class based she has the opportunity to work alongside colleagues and support them in lessons. She is writing a new scheme of work based on nationally produced guidance and established schemes of work. She is very ably supported by the teaching assistant who is employed specifically to teach groups and class activities. She has a good knowledge of the subject. Some use of information and communication technology is made to support English, mathematics and science but unsatisfactory in other subjects. Assessment of pupils' progress and understanding is satisfactory overall but does not inform future planning and takes little account of the skills some pupils bring from home. A new assessment and tracking sheet has been introduced by the co-ordinator but has not been in use long enough to help inform planning and to support the raising of standards.
129. At the time of the inspection, the interactive smart-board had only been in the school for three weeks. Therefore, it was the main focus of use for information and communication technology for teachers and pupils. The co-ordinator and learning support assistant for information and communication technology were observed teaching groups or up to half a class smart-board skills, whilst the remainder of the class worked with the class teacher on a related activity. Unfortunately, the area used for the smart-board is too small for a large group and not all pupils could be actively involved in the group lesson. Also, if a child leans against the cupboard housing the projector for the smart-board, this causes the projector beam to go out of alignment and for the computer program to 'crash'. The co-ordinator recognises that the use of the smart-board is an area for development. A weekly computer club supports the subject well.

MUSIC

130. Only one Year 1 lesson was observed during the inspection and evidence was secured from assemblies, a choir session, documents, incidental classroom work and discussion with the subject co-ordinator. These indicate that standards are average at the end of Year 2 and have been maintained since the last inspection when a similar judgement was made. Pupils, including those with special educational needs and English as an additional language, achieve satisfactorily.
131. Not enough teaching was seen to make an overall judgement on its quality. In the Year 1 singing lesson seen, the teaching and learning was unsatisfactory. Pupils explored using their own voices in different ways to secure a sense of melody. Two Year 1 classes were present and the pupils practised hymns for forthcoming assemblies. They listened well during the introduction to the lesson but lacked stimulation to remain on task. As the lesson continued, few pupils responded to the music. Pupils were chosen to dramatise some of the songs, whilst others used percussion

instruments to accompany them. One pupil was unable to keep a steady pulse and was not well supported by the teacher in this task. The aims and objectives of the lesson were not realised and the impact on learning was significant. A friend of the school joined the lesson playing the piano to accompany the songs, serving as a good role model for the pupils and giving them first hand experience of making music.

132. Singing during assemblies was good. Pupils throughout the school sang with a sweet tone. In an assembly when the tape failed, pupils were able to sing 'Little Donkey' unaccompanied, showing their confidence in performance. The choir achieved a good standard when rehearsing for their Christmas concert. They have a positive attitude to music and obviously enjoy it. The co-ordinator, who supported them, has a secure knowledge of the subject, displays great enthusiasm and as a result pupils are well motivated. Parents show an interest and support their children in these performances.
133. A 'Sure Start' group for pre-school children takes place in school. Parents bring their young children for musical and drama activities. The atmosphere within the group is calm and gentle, enhanced by tapes that are used such as, 'sounds of the sea'. Although run by an outside agency, it uses the school as its base and is open to all parents with young children in the locality and is a good community link.
134. Good use is made of resources in music, such as tuned and untuned percussion. Classrooms and the hall are both used for music lessons. These are organised on alternative weeks for singing and percussion. Opportunities for in-service training occur where pupils' experience the multicultural aspect of music. An example of this was an Arts Project where visitors to school inspired pupils by providing workshops that gave first hand experience of musical activities with a multi-cultural flavour and making a good contribution to their cultural development.
135. The subject leader is new to the post but has audited resources and displayed them in the hall so that all pupils have equal access. As a result, class teachers borrow percussion instruments more readily to use in classrooms. A range of CDs and tapes are stored for class use and a 'handy hints' folder is available to develop teaching in the subject. In general little use is made of information and communication technology to support pupils' learning. The co-ordinator has a sound overview of music and its importance, with an action plan designed to improve the subject. Aspects for improvement include monitoring teaching and learning, staff training for composition and notation, and planning music across the curriculum. As these plans are yet to be fully implemented, leadership is at present satisfactory.

PHYSICAL EDUCATION

136. During the inspection week, it was only possible to observe gymnastics and games lessons. No dance lessons were observed. Therefore, judgements are based on a limited observation of all of the physical education curriculum, teachers' planning, assessment records and discussions with teachers and the co-ordinator.
137. By Year 2, standards are average and have been maintained since the previous inspection. Pupils, including those with special educational needs and those who speak English as an additional language, achieve appropriately. By Year 2, pupils can jump, hop and balance with sound control and can demonstrate a sequence of movements. For example, in a well taught Year 1 lesson, pupils were observed linking a sequence of curling, stretching and rocking movements, which they did with growing confidence. In a good Year 2 lesson, pupils satisfactorily controlled a ball to aim at targets made from hoops and buckets. Planning and assessment records indicate that pupils can throw and catch objects with accuracy over a short distance. Pupils work well in teams and understand the tactics and rules of simple attack and invasion games. For example, in a good Year 2 lesson, pupils consolidated their ball skills with a class game. The pupils quickly understood the rules of the game and joined in with enthusiasm and interest.
138. The quality of teaching is good and has improved since the previous inspection when teaching was judged to range from unsatisfactory to good. Teachers' subject knowledge is generally good, which

ensures that skills are taught well. Lessons are soundly planned with the key elements of a warm-up and a cooling-down session. Time and resources are used well and good use is made of teaching assistants, who are well-briefed and support pupils well, especially those who speak English as an additional language, those identified with special educational needs, and those pupils integrated from 'Sparklers' class. Teachers and teaching assistants set a good example to pupils by dressing appropriately and leading by example. They ensure that all pupils dress appropriately. Lessons start with an appropriate warm-up session and pupils are taught to recognise the effect that vigorous activity has on their body. For example, in a Year 2 lesson the pupils were asked to feel their heart beat and to describe any changes they felt after the warm-up. The well matched activities, challenging tasks and very good class management results in very good behaviour and attitudes by pupils in lessons. All teachers pay very good attention to safety in the lessons. For example, they ensure that at least four pupils carry apparatus, which pupils are expected to put out and put away. In one lesson observed, the teacher began by writing the learning intentions on the board and discussing them with the pupils. She then reviewed the objectives at the end of the lesson and asked pupils to evaluate if they had achieved the objectives. However, not all teachers do this. Few opportunities were observed of teachers asking pupils to watch and constructively evaluate each other.

139. The co-ordinator manages the subject well and has a good understanding of the strengths of the subject and the areas for development. She is developing a scheme of work based on national guidance and an existing school scheme. The use of information and communication technology to support the subject is unsatisfactory and opportunities are missed for pupils to develop their skills in literacy and numeracy. For example, teachers do not use the opportunities for pupils to feel their heart beat after exercise to accurately count the beats over a set period of time or to develop their language and speaking skills by constructively evaluating each other. Resources are good. The larger playground is adequate in size for a class lesson. The subject contributes well to the spiritual, moral and social development of pupils. For example, team games, grouped and paired activities and following the rules of games, encourage pupils to work well together and to appreciate the need for rules. All pupils are fully included in lessons. Pupils who are unable to join in because of illness are encouraged to watch the lesson and make notes or sketches about what is being done well in the lesson. During the summer term the 'Runaround Club' contributes well to physical education.

RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

140. Evidence from lessons seen during the inspection, together with discussions with staff, scrutiny of planning, displays and previous work indicate that standards are broadly in line with the expectations of the locally agreed syllabus at the end of Year 2. Standards in the aspect of learning from religion, although satisfactory overall, are not as secure as in the aspect of learning about religions because teachers place less emphasis on this in their planning. Boys and girls, including those with special educational needs and English as an additional language, achieve satisfactorily overall in relation to their prior attainment. Standards are similar to those described in the previous report.
141. By the end of Year 2, pupils know how Christians celebrate Easter and Christmas. They are familiar with some of the stories from the Bible, such as the story of Moses and the parable of 'The Prodigal Son'. They know that Harvest is a time of thanksgiving and write simple prayers of thanks. They begin to learn about the origins of important festivals in other religions, such as Divali and Hanukkah, and how they are celebrated, both in lessons and from Jewish and Hindu visitors. They compare features of these religions such as their places of worship and some show their understanding of the symbolism of present-giving at Christmas to Christians through comments such as, '--- because the wise men gave presents to Jesus'.
142. The quality of teaching is satisfactory overall, with some that is good. Key features in all lessons seen were the very positive and consistent ways that teachers managed their pupils and the very good relationship between pupils and teachers and between the pupils themselves. As a result, boys and girls of all levels of attainment were confident in sharing their ideas, secure in the knowledge that both teachers and their peers would value and respect what they had to say. This,

together with the very good role – modelling of teachers and teaching assistants, not only added to pupils' interest and positive attitudes in lessons, but also contributed to the evident respect they show for the values, views and beliefs of others. In this way, the subject makes a very good contribution to pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development.

143. There is little evidence of above average attainment. Scrutiny of past work shows that one reason for this is that teachers usually give the same task to the whole class, so that there is little opportunity for average and higher attaining pupils to extend their knowledge and understanding further. This is partly because assessment is underdeveloped and consequently teachers do not always take sufficient account of pupils' previous learning.
144. Some good examples were seen in lessons of teachers making good use of opportunities for pupils to extend their literacy skills as well as their knowledge of other religions. In a Year 1 lesson, for example, the teacher helped pupils to articulate their thoughts about the significance of some Christian artefacts they were examining more clearly, by discussing their ideas with a partner before sharing them with the class. Subsequent activities also provided opportunities for pupils to practise their writing skills at an appropriate level. By contrast, in some lessons and in much of the past work seen, such opportunities are missed as much of the recorded work of older, average and higher attaining pupils consists of only pictures, sometimes with simple captions.
145. Although teachers introduce appropriate religious vocabulary to pupils orally, key words are not clearly always displayed or taught in written form to reinforce pupils' learning sufficiently. Teachers support pupils' learning through videos, for example, but they do not make enough use of information and communication technology for this purpose.
146. The co-ordinator has carefully reviewed the curriculum and teachers' planning to ensure that it covers the requirements of the locally agreed syllabus and has developed a good range of resources, which teachers use well to support pupils' learning about religions. The co-ordinator has recognised in her action plan the need to develop assessment procedures to help to raise standards further, especially in the aspect of learning from religions. Assemblies often include themes that support pupils' learning in religious education lessons well because teachers make good links with them. The assembly during the inspection led by a Jewish visitor was a good example of this. The local vicars regularly lead assemblies and pupils visit their church both to perform their Christmas concert and to study its features. Such links make a useful contribution to pupils' learning about Christian beliefs.