

INSPECTION REPORT

HOO ST WERBURGH PRIMARY SCHOOL

Rochester, Kent

LEA area: The Medway Towns

Unique reference number: 118327

Headteacher: Mr W Perry

Reporting inspector: Mr P Mathias
21945

Dates of inspection: 9th – 12th December 2002

Inspection number: 247872

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 & junior

School category: Community

Age range of pupils: 4 - 11

Gender of pupils: Mixed

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Appropriate authority: The governing body

Name of chair of governors: Mr Ian Chapel

Date of previous inspection: 3 - 4 July 2000

INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

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21945	Mr P Mathias	Registered inspector	Foundation Stage Physical education	What sort of school is it? The school's results and pupils' achievements How well is the school led and managed What the school should do to improve further
09837	Mr R Walsh	Lay inspector		Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development How well does the school work in partnership with parents?
24528	Mr G Muton	Team inspector	Equal opportunities Mathematics Music	How well does the school care for its pupils?
22157	Mr M Roussel	Team inspector	Special educational needs Art and design Design and technology	How good are the curriculum and other opportunities offered to pupils?
31822	Mrs A Newman	Team Inspector	Science History Religious education	
2433	Mr I R Bennett	Team Inspector	English Information and communication technology Geography English as an additional language	

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PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

With 421 pupils on roll, the school is much bigger than most schools. It caters for boys and girls between the ages of four and 11. An about average number of pupils enter and leave the school at times other than normal. Overall pupils enter the school with below average levels of attainment.

There are 49 pupils who are considered to have some degree of special educational needs. Of these 26 pupils receive outside support for specific learning difficulties. As a proportion these are average figures. In the last two school years four teachers left and three were appointed.

Pupils come from homes with a wide range of social and economic advantage and disadvantage. About eight per cent of pupils are considered to be eligible for free school meals, which is below the national average. One pupil has English as an additional language and nearly all pupils come from white, British backgrounds.

HOW GOOD THE SCHOOL IS

Hoo St Werburgh is an improving school which has made significant progress since the appointment of the current headteacher nearly three years ago. He gives the school a very strong sense of direction. The quality of teaching across the school is now high and is beginning to have an impact on standards pupils achieve, although its impact is less obvious within Year 3 to Year 6 than in the reception classes and in Year 1 and Year 2. There is a strong sense of professional commitment from all the teaching staff who now have high expectations of their pupils. Pupils with special educational needs are well supported and make good progress. Pupils have very positive attitudes to the school and are very interested in their work. They have very good opportunities to learn how to take on responsibilities and to develop socially. The school provides satisfactory value for money.

What the school does well

- The quality of teaching is good and is a particular strength in the reception classes and in Year 1 and Year 2. The provision for pupils considered to have some degree of special educational need is good.
- The leadership of the headteacher is strong and purposeful and the senior management team work closely with the governing body to raise standards and to see that funds are well spent. There is a strong sense of shared commitment amongst all staff to succeed.
- Pupils have very positive attitudes to adults, to each other and to their learning.
- The standards in information and communication technology and history are high.

What could be improved

- Standards in mathematics at the end of Year 6 are below average. Pupils make well below expected progress when compared to the standards they attained at the age of seven in the national tests.
- Teachers do not use the assessments they make nor the records they keep with sufficient precision to set targets for pupils to work towards. There is no clear guidance for teachers to indicate the standards pupils should aim to achieve annually in most subjects.
- The roles of most co-ordinators are not sufficiently well developed and they have had only limited impact on the quality of teaching and learning in their areas of responsibility.
- The time allocated to some subjects in each year is not in line with that which is recommended and kept by most schools.
- Standards in design and technology are lower than expected at the end of Year 6.
- Some large equipment for gymnastics in physical education for pupils in Year 3 to Year 6 is out of date and unwieldy.

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

HOW THE SCHOOL HAS IMPROVED SINCE ITS LAST INSPECTION

When the school was last inspected in July 2000, it was found to be providing an acceptable standard of education for its pupils. Standards of attainment had risen over the previous three years and were broadly average at the end of Year 6. The leadership and management of the school were sound with some strong features. The report highlighted the need to raise standards further across the school and to even out the disparities in standards between classes; to strengthen and improve development planning and to use information the school collects about what pupils know and can do to improve teaching, to raise standards and to strengthen the management of the school.

Overall, the school has made good progress towards addressing the key issues of the report. The quality of teaching is now higher than it was and it is beginning to have a significant impact on the standards currently being achieved. However, standards in mathematics are not high enough at the end of Year 6. There is now a very comprehensive approach to planning for further school improvement. Some improvements have been made and the school uses the information it collects about pupils' progress, but there is still some way to go until the school makes the best use of this information to track pupils' performance rigorously and to set and follow up targets to which pupils should be working. The school recognises this is a priority for the future. The school is very well placed to improve further. Since 1998 the trend of improvement in the tests at the end of Year 6 is broadly in line with the national trend.

STANDARDS

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

Performance in:	compared with			
	all schools			similar schools
	2000	2001	2002	2002
English	C	D	D	E
mathematics	D	E	E	E*
Science	D	D	E	E

Key

well above average A

above average B

average C

below average D

well below average E

very low E*

The table shows that standards in the last three years have generally been below the national average. In 2000, standards in English were average for schools nationally and since then have been lower. In mathematics, results in 2000 were below the national average. Since then results have been well below this average. In science, results were below the national average in 2000 and 2001 and well below average in 2002. When these results are compared to schools considered broadly similar in 2002, results were well below most of these schools in English and science and very low in mathematics. When the performance of 11 year olds in 2002 is compared to the standards they reached in the national assessments when they were seven, they made the anticipated progress in English. In science, they did less well than could be reasonably expected. In mathematics, these pupils performed well below what could be reasonably expected of them. In the last three years boys have attained lower standards than girls in English, mathematics and science.

Children enter the reception classes with below average standards. In classes at the end of Year 6 standards are average in English and science and below average in mathematics. Standards in literacy and numeracy reflect the same pattern as in English and mathematics. Currently standards in the other subjects of the National Curriculum at the end of Year 6 are at expected levels. Exceptions to this are in design and technology where standards are below expected levels and in history and information and communication technology where standards are above those expected. In physical education standards in swimming are above those expected.

PUPILS' ATTITUDES AND VALUES

Aspect	Comment
Attitudes to the school	Very good. Pupils are very responsible and have positive attitudes to their work.
Behaviour, in and out of classrooms	Good. Pupils know what is expected of them and show respect for each other.
Personal development and relationships	Very good, relationships between pupils and adults are very positive and pupils have very good opportunities to take on responsibilities.
Attendance	Satisfactory. Pupils generally arrive punctually and records of absence are kept properly.

TEACHING AND LEARNING

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

Teaching is a strength of the school. Good teaching is found across the school and is particularly effective in the reception classes and in Year 1 and Year 2. The quality of teaching of English and literacy is generally good. In mathematics, in numeracy lessons occasionally some teachers do not give enough thought or emphasis to the organisation of the initial part of the lesson. The teaching of science is good.

During the inspection there was no unsatisfactory teaching. Teachers and their support assistants work together well and the support for pupils with special educational needs is good. Staff know these pupils well and plan carefully and successfully together to ensure they play a full part in their lessons.

Particular strengths of the teaching are – the very good use made of support assistants to help the work of the teachers; the way teachers encourage pupils to think things out for themselves; very good questioning to ensure that pupils know clearly what to do, very good subject knowledge and an ability to demonstrate it, for example, in dance; effective use of time so that lessons have pace and purpose and learning are reviewed systematically.

While there were no major shortcomings, areas for improvement are – to extend the learning of the highest attainers by giving them more challenging work; to introduce the lessons thoroughly and to review how much pupils have learnt from the lessons.

OTHER ASPECTS OF THE SCHOOL

Aspect	Comment
The quality and range of the curriculum	Satisfactory overall. The curriculum is planned to meet the requirement of the National Curriculum, but too much time is spent on some subjects at the expense of others. The amount of time set aside for subjects does not always match that recommended and kept by most schools.
Provision for pupils with special educational needs	Good. Despite the lack of a permanent co-ordinator for this area the school provides good facilities, which are well used. All pupils are fully included in every aspect of school life. Teachers and support assistants work closely and effectively together.
Provision for pupils with English as an additional language	Good. The one pupil with English as an additional language is well supported by the teacher who works closely with a Language Support Advisory Teacher.
Provision for pupils' personal, including spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	Satisfactory overall. A particular strength is the very good arrangements to promote pupils' social development. Provision for pupils' spiritual and cultural development is satisfactory. Provision for moral development is good and pupils have good opportunities to learn about what is right and wrong.
How well the school cares for its pupils	Good overall. There are secure procedures for child protection and for ensuring pupils' welfare. Arrangements to promote good behaviour are good. The school has sound procedures to collect information about the progress pupils make and the standards they reach. However, teachers do not make sufficient use of this information to set targets for pupils to work towards and to measure their progress towards them. There are no agreed examples of pupils' work in most subjects to indicate to the teachers standards pupils should aim to achieve year on year.

HOW WELL THE SCHOOL IS LED AND MANAGED

Aspect	Comment
Leadership and management by the headteacher and other key staff	The headteacher provides a very good lead to the work of the school and in ensuring that there is a strong positive commitment from all staff. The deputy headteacher is newly appointed and is beginning to work closely and effectively in the management of the school. The roles of most co-ordinators are underdeveloped.

How well the governors fulfil their responsibilities	The chair of governors provides an experienced and knowledgeable lead and the governing body fulfils its responsibilities well. Governors have a good understanding of the strengths and areas of weakness in the school.
The school's evaluation of its performance	Good. There has been a detailed analysis of what the school does well and what needs to be done to improve further. Procedures to raise standards have yet to be put into effect fully.
The strategic use of resources	Good. There are good procedures to link the school's financial planning to its educational needs. The school improvement plan is thorough and well constructed. There is a very good understanding amongst the governing body of how to find best value in its spending decisions. The school uses grants and other additional funds well. Resources for learning are generally adequate except for physical education where some large apparatus for pupils in Year 3 to Year 6 is heavy and difficult for pupils to handle. Its storage is problematic. The school is an attractive environment, which provides a stimulating setting for the work of pupils and staff.

PARENTS' AND CARERS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

What pleases parents most	What parents would like to see improved
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • My child likes school. • I feel comfortable in approaching the school. • The expectations the school has of my child. • The school is well led and managed. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The school does not provide a sufficiently wide range of activities.

The inspection team agrees with the majority of parents who have positive views of the school and the quality of education it provides. The school makes available a good range of activities out of school. A meeting was held between the registered inspector and parents. Twelve parents were present. This small sample of parents was generally happy with the current quality of education the school now provides which they rightly believe is better than it was.

PART B: COMMENTARY

HOW HIGH ARE STANDARDS?

The school's results and pupils' achievements

1. Generally pupils enter the school with below average standards. Standards overall are average by the age of 11. During the inspection there was no significant variation between the performance of boys and girls, although in the national tests of 11 year olds in the last three years, boys did worse than girls in English, mathematics and science.
2. In the 2002 national assessments for seven year olds, standards were above average when compared to schools nationally in reading, writing and mathematics. When compared to schools considered broadly similar these results were average. Standards in the period between 1999 and 2002 have varied considerably in reading, writing and mathematics. However, when compared to the rate of improvement of schools nationally, standards in reading have improved faster than in most schools. In writing and in mathematics, standards have improved at about the same rate as most schools.
3. In the 2002 national assessment tests for 11 year olds, standards in English were below average. In mathematics and science they were well below average. When compared to schools considered broadly similar, standards in English and science were well below average and in mathematics standards were very low. When compared to standards pupils achieved four years before when they were seven years of age, pupils made the expected progress in English, below expected progress in science and well below what could reasonably be expected of them in mathematics. In the national tests for 11 year olds in the last five years in English, standards rose steeply between 1998 and 1999 but have fallen away since. The same is true in pupils' performance in mathematics. In science, results are much the same as they were in 1998. Overall, the school's trend of improvement in this period is broadly in line with the national trend. The school has identified as a priority the need to raise standards in the national tests for 11 year olds and is in the process of developing well thought out strategies to do this.
4. Children enter the reception classes with levels of basic skills, which are broadly below those usually found amongst children of this age. Standards at the end of Year 2 in classes in English in speaking and listening and writing are average. In reading, standards are above average. Standards in mathematics and science are average. At the end of Year 6, standards in classes in English in speaking and listening, reading and writing are average. In mathematics, standards are below average because the good teaching in some classes is not consistent, for example in the way teachers begin the numeracy sessions. In science, standards in classes are average. Standards have remained the same as at the time of the last inspection in English and science. In mathematics, standards have improved at the end of Year 2 but not at the end of Year 6. This improvement at the end of Year 2 is closely linked to the good and very good teaching going on in classes in Year 1 and Year 2. In English by the end of Year 2, most pupils are reading at the expected levels and many are able to use their skills to work out the sounds letters make. By the age of 11 some pupils can confidently explain their likes and dislikes and discuss at a reasonable level how different authors develop characters, themes and plots. The work completed in literacy lessons enables pupils to understand the different styles and functions of writing such as describing, reporting, narrating and persuading. In speaking and

listening most pupils at all ages talk freely and confidently and most willingly take part in class discussions and are keen to share their ideas and views.

5. In mathematics, by the age of seven pupils are able to add and subtract numbers to 20, and double and half numbers. They know about odd and even numbers and can name common, two-dimensional shapes and describe some of their features. By the age of 11 most pupils add, subtract, multiply and divide confidently and generally accurately. They know how to multiply and divide whole numbers by ten and 100 and understand the decimal system. However, some pupils lack confidence and understanding of the decimal system.
6. In science in Year 2, pupils are able to identify the properties of a range of different materials and can classify them using simple criteria. They are able to carry out simple investigations, for example, about how materials such as bread and chocolate change when heated. They are able to predict accurately what is likely to happen when they apply heat to different substances. In Year 6, pupils have a good understanding of what makes a “fair” test. They know the functions and structures of the main parts of the human body and the importance of living a healthy lifestyle. They know about food chains and the distinguishing characteristics of herbivores and carnivores.
7. Standards in information and communication technology are above those expected at the end of Year 2 and in line with those expected at the end of Year 6. This variation is due to the inherent difficulties in helping older pupils to catch up when standards were below those expected. Standards in design and technology are above expected levels at the end of Year 2 and reflect the impact of the successful lead, which the co-ordinator has given to teachers in Year 1 and Year 2. At the end of Year 6, standards are below those expected and found usually. This is because the scheme of work is not followed sufficiently well to maintain the good progress made by pupils in Year 1 and Year 2. Teachers in Year 3 to Year 6 do not have a clear idea of the standards pupils should attain.
8. In history, standards are above those expected at the end of Year 2 and Year 6 which reflect the wide and interesting curriculum provided and the effective way in which it is taught across the school. Standards in geography, music and physical education are at expected levels at the end of Year 2 and Year 6. Pupils achieve well in swimming and many exceed the standards expected of 11 year olds (to swim 25 metres). Standards in religious education are in line with those set out in the locally agreed syllabus.
9. The previous inspection report provided limited information to judge the standards in most subjects. From what information is available it is clear that standards have improved in mathematics at the end of Year 2 but not at the end of Year 6. Standards have also improved in information and communication technology. In English and science, standards are about the same. Pupils with special educational needs make good progress overall.

Pupils’ attitudes, values and personal development

10. Pupils’ attitudes to learning are very good, which represents an improvement on the good attitudes reported at the time of the last inspection. On arrival at school younger pupils play contentedly whilst older pupils get on with preparations for the day. They are eager to join in with the wide range of extra-curricular activities, which provides considerable support for their educational, physical, and social

development. For example, the drama club is now successfully attracting boys as well as girls, and is intending to perform some stage routines to an audience in the New Year.

11. Most pupils, including those with special educational needs, are enthusiastic about their learning and are willing to discuss the work. When the pace of teaching is brisk and the activities challenging, pupils respond with enthusiasm, as was observed in a Year 6 history lesson when pupils delivered confident and interesting presentations on the topic they had recently been studying to the rest of the class. When working in pairs or groups, equipment and information are shared unselfishly and safely. Nearly all parents who responded to the pre-inspection questionnaire agreed with inspection findings that their children enjoyed the experience of being at Hoo St Werburgh Primary School.
12. Standards of behaviour are consistently good throughout the school and are seen to have a beneficial effect on pupil learning. There have been no exclusions over the past year. Pupils respond well to the school's high expectations, benefiting from the supportive environment and the opportunities it provides for reflection on moral and social issues. Pupils understand what is expected of them and the great majority follow the school rules. There are a few pupils who present considerable behavioural difficulties. This minority is well managed by staff and the common sense of the majority of pupils ensures that lessons are not disrupted. At lunchtime around the school and outside in the playground, where some lively play is enjoyed, behaviour is also good. The lunchtime 'Sanctuary Room' is seen to be particularly effective in helping to modify pupils' behaviour by providing a supervised calm area where appropriate activities and games are undertaken. These activities are carefully selected in line with the reason for being sent to the sanctuary room. Pupils are confident to approach adults with any worries they might have and are willing to listen to what others might say. Although some incidents of bullying have occurred, it was noted from discussions with parents that staff dealt with these quickly and effectively.
13. Pupils' personal development is very good. Pupils respond well to the school's clear social values. In lessons, they are seen to help and support each other in group work and other activities. They display interest and respect for each other's feelings, ideas and work. They accept the full participation of those with special needs. Many opportunities are available for pupils to develop their self-esteem, by becoming, for example, a member of the school council, or being congratulated for producing a good effort or piece of work at the headteacher's weekly assembly. Pupils are encouraged to articulate their own beliefs and views by taking part in discussion groups and class feedback sessions enable them to share their thoughts and experiences with each other. They enjoy being given responsibility and act sensibly when trust is placed in them. The 'Ambassadors' system is seen to be particularly effective in this respect; pupils from Year 6 are given responsibility for helping with the smooth running of the school; for example, they act as play leaders, organising games on the playground at lunchtime, and ensuring that younger pupils do not run down the corridors. Relationships are very good. Adults provide good role models of co-operative working and pupils respond well. Relationships between pupils are very supportive; they work well in pairs and groups, and share equipment, such as computers, amicably. The paired reading scheme where Year 6 pupils help Year 3 is highly valued by the younger pupils.
14. Attendance rates are satisfactory. The school creates a happy and welcoming environment, which encourages good attendance in pupils. Pupils settle to work quickly and quietly at the start of sessions and staff treat latecomers seriously, with

any disruption being kept to a minimum. Registers are meticulously maintained and controlled, and comply fully with all statutory requirements.

HOW WELL ARE PUPILS TAUGHT?

15. The quality of teaching is good and is better than at the time of the last inspection. Across the school the teaching is never less than satisfactory. In about half the lessons seen the teaching is good. In about one in ten of the lessons seen the teaching is very good and occasionally excellent. In about one in three lessons the teaching is satisfactory. These are high figures and represent a significant strength of the school. Particular strengths are some very good teaching in Year 1 and Year 2 and some good teaching in Year 3 to Year 6. The quality of teaching for children in reception classes is good and well based on the small steps necessary for children of this age to take in their learning. Overall, this good teaching allied to the increasingly rigorous analysis of assessment information in English, mathematics and science, is having a significant impact on raising standards. This is clearly evidence in Year 1 and Year 2 where results in the national assessments for seven year olds are above the national average. The impact of this good and occasionally very good teaching has yet to have a similar effect on the recent results in the national tests for 11 year olds. These were well below the national average in 2002. However, standards seen in classes in Year 6 are now generally higher.
16. The teaching is literacy is good and lessons are well planned to meet the structure of the literacy hour. Teachers have a good understanding of how to teach reading. The National Numeracy Strategy is now being more successfully taught across the school. However, in some classes in Year 3 to Year 6, insufficient emphasis is given to the introductory phase of these lessons.
17. Across the school where teaching is good or very good, lessons begin in a lively and purposeful way because the lessons are thoughtfully planned and the teachers know clearly what they intend to teach in the time available. The teachers demonstrate well themselves, showing a high level of professional knowledge and training so that all the pupils are able to see clearly what standards they should aim to achieve. Support assistants are well prepared and work very effectively under the teachers' directions to ensure that all pupils, including those with special educational needs, are well involved.
18. A learning support teacher from the local education authority also visits the school on a regular basis to support special educational needs in the school. The planning and organisation of lessons for these pupils are very well managed by the classroom teachers who ensure that a daily plan of deployment is given to the learning support assistants. They are fully briefed on their work with pupils with special educational needs. The learning support assistants in turn keep a daily log so that the teachers are well informed on the progress pupils make in each lesson.
19. Across the school in the best lessons, teachers successfully encourage their pupils to think things out for themselves and to work independently of their teachers. Teachers question carefully to ensure that their pupils understand what they have been taught previously and to make sure that they are ready for the next more challenging steps.
20. Where teaching is satisfactory and has some weaknesses the lessons do not extend the learning of the highest attaining pupils; the lesson is not sufficiently well managed so that there is insufficient time for the teacher to review what has been learnt.

21. Generally, the quality of marking is satisfactory. Teachers regularly assess pupils' work in English, mathematics and science and are now beginning to use this information well to set individual goals for pupils to reach. There are sound arrangements for the setting of homework which is often related to the work pupils undertake in their lessons.

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

22. The quality and range of learning opportunities for pupils are satisfactory in the reception classes and also across the rest of the school. The curriculum is based upon national guidance and meets the requirements of the National Curriculum and in religious education it conforms to the requirements of the locally agreed syllabus. However, although the curriculum is broad it is not balanced because of the time taken for English and mathematics subjects, especially English that takes curriculum time away from other subjects. Furthermore, times allotted to each subject vary considerably across year groups and this impacts upon the effective consistency of teaching and learning in each subject as pupils move through the school. There is an effective, programme for teaching personal, social and health education, including sex and drugs education. Provision for equality of opportunity is good and all pupils, regardless of gender are encouraged to take part in all activities. The policy for special educational needs has been written to meet the requirements of the new Code of Practice for Special Educational Needs. The curriculum for pupils with special educational needs is good and they are well supported.
23. The National Literacy and Numeracy Strategies have been successfully introduced and the effectiveness of the strategies in literacy is good and satisfactory in numeracy. The school has adopted national guidance for schemes of work and these are in place for science and the foundation subjects. The school provides a good range of extra-curricular activities for pupils. For example, there are a number of opportunities available to children to play soccer and develop a range of ball skills. Year 6 are engaged in a programme run by Gillingham Football Club and that has been operating for two years. The school recognises the importance of these sessions, in developing ball skills and in the role models of the coaches in setting good examples of team play.
24. There is a series of planned trips for each year that include, visits to Dover and Lullingstone in connection with historical topics and a residential trip to the Isle of Wight for geographical and environmental studies. Pupils have also taken part in walking the Saxon Shoreline, raising money for The Poverty and Hope Appeal. Visitors to the school have included a speaker from Maidstone Museum who came to talk about the Romans, the local MP with regards to the issue of the proposed new airport in the locality. Year 4 pupils were fired up about this and have produced posters that highlight their own points of view for or against the siting of the airport.
25. The community makes a sound contribution to the life of the school. Effective links have been created with the police and church and visitors have included speakers who have talked about conservation. Good support is given by The Music for Schools Foundation who have helped in introducing brass, woodwind and guitar tuition to the school and performing music groups have played to the school. The links with Gillingham Football Club and the tennis tuition from Wainscott Tennis Club have enhanced pupils' opportunities in developing their sporting skills. Parental interest in supporting after school clubs is developing with two parents leading weekly activities.

26. Relationships with partner institutions are satisfactory overall. This has including a leading literacy teacher from the secondary school visiting the school, pupils attending the Medway Childrens' University facility and the school working in partnership with a Beacon Status Grammar School to develop pupil and staff information and communication technology skills.
27. The school's provision for pupils' spiritual, moral, and cultural development is satisfactory. The provision for pupils' spiritual development is satisfactory. Through the religious education curriculum and daily assemblies, the school provides pupils with knowledge and insight into values and beliefs that enable them to reflect on their own and others' experiences. The school complies with statutory regulations for a daily act of collective worship, and uses assemblies well to reflect on feelings and important moral issues. Teachers demonstrate a commitment to establishing and maintaining a spiritual ethos in the school, which is rooted in Christian values, and a belief in the unique worth of every individual.
28. The provision for pupils' moral development is good. There is a clear and simple, whole-school moral code emphasising good behaviour, which is promoted consistently throughout the school by all staff. Principles distinguishing right from wrong are taught well and staff provide very good role models for the children to emulate. Many activities and stories in the reception classes teach children to respect others and to know the difference between acceptable and unacceptable behaviour. These allow pupils to develop their own ideas and values against clear moral codes. Pupils are polite and helpful to visitors and are keen to share their work and achievements. Parents are very supportive of the way the school fosters good behaviour and the majority are happy with the school's standards of behaviour.
29. Very good provision is made for pupils' social development. Pupils are given numerous opportunities to work and play together, in pairs and small groups. These are fully inclusive, with no problems caused by either race or gender. Teachers give pupils increasing responsibilities for their own conduct and learning as they progress through the school. By Year 6 pupils are given responsibility for many jobs around the school, such as running the library and devising and organising games for other pupils at playtimes. A boy and girl from each year group is democratically elected onto the school council, through which pupils' views are expressed. Members of the council take their job very seriously and their influence has recently helped decisions in the improvement of some of the school's facilities. The council now intends to put forward ideas to the headteacher and governors for improving play equipment. Opportunities exist for Year 6 pupils to take part in a residential visit to the Isle of Wight which helps enhance their independence and self-confidence.
30. The provision for pupils' cultural development is satisfactory. Pupils develop their understanding of past cultures through history and art lessons, and of other cultures through their work in geography. There is a good range of visitors to the school, including a Ghanaian arts group, which develop awareness of their own and other cultures. However, visits out of school are limited. The school has links with a school in the Gambia, and pupils are at present collecting pens and pencils to help improve its educational resources.

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL CARE FOR ITS PUPILS?

31. There are good procedures for child protection and for ensuring pupils' welfare. The headteacher is the designated person for child protection purposes. He has developed guidance information to provide all staff and parent helpers, with an

awareness of the action to be taken in cases of concern. Health and safety procedures are in place and supervised by a sub-committee of governors. Risk assessments are undertaken and premises inspections take place termly. It was noted during the inspection that the steps connecting the upper and lower playgrounds were loose and constitute a safety hazard for children moving between the two areas. The school has been made aware of this problem. Contracts are in place for the regular inspection of electrical and fire equipment and fire drills take place on a regular basis. Any minor injuries to pupils are handled competently by staff trained in first aid and are fully documented in the school's accident book. The health and welfare of pupils have a high priority in the school; for example, pupils are encouraged to have their own bottles of water with them during the day.

32. The school's procedures for monitoring the progress and personal development of pupils are satisfactory. The pupils' annual reports to parents are informative and comprehensive. They contain targets for future improvement. They also contain information on personal development and a section for parents to return written comments. In addition, parents are invited to discuss the contents with the class teacher. The home/school 'contact books' and reading records encourage parents to comment on their child's progress and development on a day-to-day basis. The environment provided by the staff is caring and supportive. This makes a significant contribution to the quality of education. Teachers and support staff know the pupils and their families extremely well, and deal sensitively with any problems as they arise. Learning support assistants are enthusiastic and committed to improving attainment levels, and they provide invaluable support to individual pupils. This is particularly evident in the help given to those pupils with special educational needs in meeting their personal learning targets. The pastoral care provided by staff is good. Discussion groups for pupils are used effectively throughout the school in encouraging them to take responsibility for their own actions, and also as a vehicle for communicating any fears or concerns in a non-threatening climate. There is a strong feeling of mutual respect between adults and pupils and this adds significantly to the comfortable atmosphere within the school. The school records attendance electronically and regularly monitors attendance patterns. Parents are aware of their responsibility to authorise and notify the school in the event of their child's absence, and any unsatisfactory absence is followed up by the school and if necessary the education welfare officer. The school takes advantage of advice and guidance from other professionals including the school nurse, and the educational psychologist.
33. Procedures for monitoring and promoting good behaviour are good. A strong moral ethos pervades the school, which encourages pupils to take responsibility for their own actions. The atmosphere in school is calm and encouraging. Pupils are both expected and helped to work hard. Each class discusses its own class rules at the beginning of the school year and sets behaviour targets. Pupils are rewarded for hard work, good effort and positive attitudes by being awarded merit certificates at the weekly celebration assemblies. All parents sign up to the school's home school agreement when their children start school. Lunchtime supervisors manage lunchtimes well. They have recently been trained in the management of pupils and succeed in creating a pleasant, sociable atmosphere in the dining hall. The anti-bullying policy is well thought out and pupils are made fully aware that any signs of harassment or aggression will be dealt with firmly. Issues of bullying and racism are addressed effectively through class discussions. If the behaviour of a child becomes particularly difficult, parents are involved, instances are monitored, and behaviour contracts may be drawn up.

34. Overall the school's procedures for assessing pupils' academic progress in English and mathematics and science are satisfactory which is an improvement from the time of the last inspection. The procedures in other subjects are underdeveloped overall. The use of assessment information is unsatisfactory. There are some examples of the school using assessment information well to make changes to the school organisation as for example the grouping of Year 6 into ability groups for mathematics lessons. There are also examples of areas of relative weakness in pupils' learning being identified and action being taken. However, the systems in place are not yet sufficiently efficient enough for the effective tracking of the progress of individuals or of groups of pupils as they move through the school.
35. A considerable amount of work has been done, especially since the last inspection, to collect information on pupils' attainment. An assessment is made of pupils' abilities in the reception year to provide a base from which progress can be measured. As pupils move from class to class their reading and spelling abilities are tested. In addition to the statutory tests in English and mathematics in Year 2, pupils complete 'optional' national tests in subsequent years. Other tests have been organised to gauge pupils reasoning abilities and the results of these are analysed by specialist authorities to give the school information on pupils' likely performance in the final statutory tests they take in Year 6. The school has not yet made the most effective use of this wealth of information by, for example, creating a computer database, or for setting long-term targets for pupils' performance.
36. In addition to 'formal' testing, teachers use a number of ways to assess pupils' progress within individual lessons and over the course of each term. The literacy co-ordinator has organised meetings for teachers to reach agreement about the quality of writing for each National Curriculum level and a bank of examples is kept as a reference. A school system for an overview of progress in literacy is established but no such system exists for other subjects.
37. The effectiveness of the school's educational and personal support is satisfactory. Since the time of the last inspection a system of pupil 'conferencing' (when teachers sit down with pupils and talk about their work) and target setting has been introduced. However, there are variations and inconsistencies in the approach adopted by different teachers, for example teachers are setting different types of targets; while some targets refer to pupils' next steps in learning, others are too general and some teachers set targets in literacy but not in numeracy, others do it for both.

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL WORK IN PARTNERSHIP WITH PARENTS?

38. Parents are very positive and supportive in their views of the school. They are particularly appreciative of the progress their children are making, the friendly atmosphere created throughout the school, the ready availability of the headteacher and staff and the enjoyment that their children obtain from attending the school. Parents who responded to the pre-inspection questionnaire, attended the pre-inspection meeting or were spoken to during the inspection were unanimous in their appreciation of the headteacher's leadership and management of the school.
39. The school has created good links with its parents. In the reception class, staff involve new parents well and quickly establish good relationships, which sets the tone for parental involvement in learning throughout the school. New parents are provided with a well designed booklet containing tips on how to help their children with reading and mathematics at home. Home 'contact books' are used at this stage to set up a communication channel between parents and teacher. Parents are given good

quality information about the school in a clear and well-written prospectus. Regular newsletters keep parents informed about school activities and opportunities for formal consultation with the class teachers occur twice a year. Pupils' progress reports are good and they provide a clear statement about the standards achieved in the core subjects of English, mathematics, and science. The pupils' effort and behaviour are reported on, as is their personal development, and parents have the opportunity to record their responses. Parents are informed about the work and progress of pupils with special educational needs, and systems are in place to involve parents in the drawing up and review of their child's individual education plans.

40. A small number of parents volunteer to help in classrooms, provide additional supervision on visits, and also help with after-school clubs. Parents help with their children's work at home by supporting the school's homework policy, and the children's homework diaries and home 'contact books' provide valuable channels for home-school dialogue. There is a very active Parent Teacher Association, which organises and holds very successful fund-raising events. Every year they ensure that book bags displaying the school's logo are available for all new reception children. The Parent Teacher Association also runs a "Nearly New" uniform shop where parents have donated school uniforms that they no longer need. The school warmly appreciates this help and support.

HOW WELL IS THE SCHOOL LED AND MANAGED?

41. The quality of leadership and management is good and a particular strength is the leadership shown by the headteacher. Parents rightly believe that the school is well led. In a relatively short time the headteacher has established a strong team of teachers who share ambitious, long-term objectives for the school and have a very strong commitment to reach them. A new deputy headteacher has recently been appointed and is beginning to work closely and effectively with the headteacher. There is now a very positive ethos to the work of the school and a wish to succeed. This is shared by all staff. The school is very well placed to improve further.
42. The school has made good progress in addressing most of the key issues indicated in the last report. For example, the school development plan is now a well thought out and well used working document. The school is now assembling and beginning to use information, from national tests and other reliable assessments to look carefully at the standards pupils achieve and to identify strengths and weaknesses in teaching and learning. However, this has yet to have its full impact on the standards currently reached in the national tests for 11 year olds and in raising standards further within Year 5 and Year 6. This is because the changes, which have taken, place in improving the quality of teaching and learning across the school have yet to have their full impact on the standards which older pupils achieve.
43. The roles and responsibilities of co-ordinators are clearly set out and for example, in deciding the priorities for spending in their own subjects. They are providing a positive lead. However, while the co-ordinators for English and mathematics have good opportunities to look at the quality of teaching and learning and the progress of initiatives in the classes, co-ordinators of other subjects have had limited opportunities to do this.
44. There is no permanent co-ordinator for special educational needs. Currently the headteacher has responsibilities in this area pending the appointment of a permanent teacher to undertake this work. Nonetheless, the management of special educational needs is good. A good start has been made to bringing the procedures in line with the

new code of practice including writing a new policy. The governing body is very supportive and very pro-active in increasing the fundings substantially to ensure that a good number of teaching assistants are well employed to help children with special educational needs. Arrangements to help new teachers settle into the routines of the school are satisfactory. However the school lacks a formal written policy to help newly qualified teachers in their first year of teaching.

45. The governing body fulfils its statutory duties and is well led by an experienced and knowledgeable chair. There is a positive and constructive attitude amongst governors who are well informed and play their full part in the school's improvement. Committees of the governing body are effective.
46. The school budget is set to reflect the priorities identified as necessary for school improvement. The headteacher has worked to ensure that the budget is spent wisely and that at the end of the year there is neither a deficit nor large rollover. When setting the school development plan the governing body are given clear indication of the costing for priorities and are able to make decisions based on this. The Chair of Governors leads the finance committee and meets regularly with the headteacher and bursar to review and monitor the school budget. The finance committee receives regular budget reports so that spending is closely monitored. The school bursar is very efficient in managing the budget. Budget controls are clear and effective and the last auditor's report identified no concerns as to financial management. Specific funds are used for their intended purpose. Systems are in place for ensuring best value for money is achieved when purchasing. The chair of the finance sub-committee is committed to the implementation of best value and is knowledgeable in this area.
47. The school's administrative staff and the site manager provide good support for the headteacher and staff. Day-to-day administration is effective and sets a busy and purposeful tone to the school. Generally, good use is made of the accommodation although the distance between the two school buildings is unhelpful in developing a strong sense of joint identity for teachers. Movement between the two sites via a set of steps is also problematic because some of the steps are loose. Resources for teaching most subjects are adequate. An exception is in physical education where some of the gymnastics equipment is heavy and out-dated. It is difficult for pupils to put up or take down. The complicated arrangements for storage in cupboards and under the stage prevent lessons moving on with an appropriate pace and purpose. Standards pupils reach are adversely influenced in this area of physical education.
48. The school is a bright and purposeful place. Classrooms are attractive with colourful displays of pupils work reflecting the positive way teachers value their pupils' efforts. There is a generous number of support assistants who are well trained and give good support to teachers. These assistants are positively and successfully encouraged to feel an important part of the school's professional staff.
49. Pupils enter the school with levels of basic skills, which, on the whole, are below average. Pupils are now making good progress in the reception classes and at the end of Year 2. At the end of Year 6 pupils' progress is satisfactory. There are clear indications that standards in Year 6 will rise when the overall good teaching going on has time to make its full impact. Taking the good quality of teaching, the positive way the school is led and managed and the progress pupils make, it provides satisfactory value for money.

WHAT SHOULD THE SCHOOL DO TO IMPROVE FURTHER?

The governing body, headteacher and staff should:-

- (1) Raise standards in mathematics at the end of Year 6 by –
 - i making the good teaching more consistent across the school;
 - ii using the information from the school's assessments of what pupils know and can do to plan activities that carefully match pupils' abilities and previous achievements;
 - iii review the use of learning resources and their effectiveness. (Paragraphs 5, 17, 34, 70, 72, 75)
- (2) Improve the use of assessments and record keeping to raise standards by –
 - i establishing and reviewing consistent systems for tracking pupils' performance and for setting of targets for individual pupils regularly (which the school is beginning to address);
 - ii putting together examples of pupils' work in all subjects to indicate the standards pupils should aim to achieve year on year. (Paragraphs 34, 35, 36, 37, 70)
- (3) Extend the roles of co-ordinators so that all have appropriate opportunities in the longer term to visit classes to review the quality of teaching and learning and the progress of subject initiatives. (Paragraphs 43, 79, 94, 99, 108, 121, 129)
- (4) Review the balance of the curriculum so that the overall times allocated to individual subjects in each year is in line with that recommended and kept by most schools. (Paragraph 22)

MINOR KEY ISSUES

- (1) Raise standards in design and technology from Year 3 to Year 6 and ensure that teachers make effective use of the good guidance they have been given in this subject. (Paragraphs 7, 94)
- (2) Review the quality and availability of large apparatus in gymnastics for pupils in Year 3 to Year 6. (Paragraphs 120, 122)

PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS

Summary of the sources of evidence for the inspection

Number of lessons observed	75
Number of discussions with staff, governors, other adults and pupils	49

Summary of teaching observed during the inspection

	Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
Number	1	8	36	29	0	0	0
Percentage	1	11	49	38	0	0	0

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

Information about the school's pupils

Pupils on the school's roll	Nursery	YR – Y6
Number of pupils on the school's roll (FTE for part-time pupils)	N/A	421
Number of full-time pupils known to be eligible for free school meals	N/A	42

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Special educational needs	Nursery	YR – Y6
Number of pupils with statements of special educational needs	N/A	6
Number of pupils on the school's special educational needs register	N/A	49

English as an additional language	No of pupils
Number of pupils with English as an additional language	1

Pupil mobility in the last school year	No of pupils
Pupils who joined the school other than at the usual time of first admission	21
Pupils who left the school other than at the usual time of leaving	21

Attendance

Authorised absence

	%
School data	4.7

Unauthorised absence

	%
School data	0.7

National comparative data	5.6
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National comparative data	0.5
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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	24	36	60

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		Reading	Writing	Mathematics
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	22	24	24
	Girls	33	35	35
	Total	55	59	59
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	92 (89)	98 (82)	98 (91)
	National	84 (84)	86 (86)	90 (91)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	23	23	24
	Girls	34	34	36
	Total	57	57	60
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	95 (76)	95 (73)	100 (87)
	National	85 (85)	89 (89)	89 (89)

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

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

	Year	Boys	Girls	Total
Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 2 for the latest reporting year	2002	32	31	63

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys	19	15	24
	Girls	23	18	28
	Total	42	33	52
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	67 (71)	52 (59)	83 (81)
	National	75 (75)	73 (71)	86 (87)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys	20	18	25
	Girls	24	22	30
	Total	44	40	55
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	70 (62)	63 (63)	87 (71)
	National	73 (72)	74 (74)	82 (82)

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

Ethnic background of pupils

Categories used in the Annual School Census
White – British
White – Irish
White – any other White background
Mixed – White and Black Caribbean
Mixed – White and Black African
Mixed – White and Asian
Mixed – any other mixed background
Asian or Asian British - Indian
Asian or Asian British - Pakistani
Asian or Asian British – Bangladeshi
Asian or Asian British – any other Asian background
Black or Black British – Caribbean
Black or Black British – African
Black or Black British – any other Black background
Chinese
Any other ethnic group
No ethnic group recorded

Exclusions in the last school year

No of pupils on roll	Number of fixed period exclusions	Number of permanent exclusions
394	0	0
0	0	0
0	0	0
0	0	0
0	0	0
0	0	0
0	0	0
2	0	0
0	0	0
0	0	0
0	0	0
1	0	0
0	0	0
1	0	0
1	0	0
1	0	0
0	0	0

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

Teachers and classes

Qualified teachers and classes: YR – Y6

Total number of qualified teachers (FTE)	15
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	28
Average class size	30

Education support staff: YR– Y6

Total number of education support staff	17
Total aggregate hours worked per week	345

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

Financial information

Financial year	2001
	£
Total income	865,751
Total expenditure	898,288
Expenditure per pupil	2,139
Balance brought forward from previous year	22,763
Balance carried forward to next year	9,774

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	4
Number of teachers appointed to the school during the last two years	3

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

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Results of the survey of parents and carers

Questionnaire return rate

Number of questionnaires sent out	395
Number of questionnaires returned	129

Percentage of responses in each category

	Strongly agree	Tend to agree	Tend to disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know
My child likes school.	63	36	1	0	0
My child is making good progress in school.	58	39	1	2	0
Behaviour in the school is good.	49	44	2	0	5
My child gets the right amount of work to do at home.	33	51	9	3	4
The teaching is good.	50	45	2	1	2
I am kept well informed about how my child is getting on.	32	55	9	2	2
I would feel comfortable about approaching the school with questions or a problem.	68	30	2	0	0
The school expects my child to work hard and achieve his or her best.	60	37	1	0	2
The school works closely with parents.	34	56	6	2	2
The school is well led and managed.	74	22	2	0	2
The school is helping my child become mature and responsible.	48	46	2	0	4
The school provides an interesting range of activities outside lessons.	26	37	16	3	18

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

50. Provision for children in the reception classes is good. The curriculum is suitably based on the six areas of learning considered appropriate for children of this age. Children start school with wide ranging standards that overall are below those expected of children of this age. The quality of learning is good. By the age of six many, but not all are ready to begin the National Curriculum.
51. Thirty-three children currently attend full time in the reception classes. In January, a further group of younger children will join those already in school. Then class sizes in reception will be about 30 children.

Personal, social and emotional development

52. Many children enter the school with underdeveloped skills in this area of learning. Good teaching encouraged the children to work independently and constantly. By the age of six many achieve as expected for their age. Staff provide good examples and treat their children in a reassuring and encouraging way leading to constructive relationships between children and adults. This contributes well to the children's development of positive attitudes. They take turns fairly, and listen well.
53. Children demonstrate satisfactory levels of independence, for example, in putting on coats to go outside to play. Adults promote children's personal development and effectively ensure that the equipment and resources are labelled and easily accessible for children.

Communication, language and literacy

54. The quality of teaching is good. Adults give good attention to the teaching of communication, language and literacy and children make good progress. At the end of the reception year it is likely that children will attain in communication, language and literacy in line with that found nationally. Children enjoy listening to stories and join in willingly to discussions with their teachers. They write confidently a letter to Father Christmas, reading their requests in an expressive and lively way. They discuss in detail the process of running a post office and how to send a card via the post. Adults effectively encourage children to extend their speaking and listening skills by drawing out from them their opinions of other children's work which they are encouraged successfully to evaluate generously. As a result, children take a pride in showing their work to others. The teaching assistants are well deployed, for example to help children build up their knowledge of the sounds letters make or to use their pencils to practise writing patterns.

Mathematical development

55. Teaching is good and children make good progress and many are on target to reach the Early Learning Goals at the end of the reception class. The adults work well together to encourage children successfully to recognise numbers and numerals and to match sets of objects to the number which represents them. Children are able to recognise simple regular two-dimensional shapes. They are beginning to learn how to compare objects so that they are grouped smaller or bigger than. Through using shapes, structured apparatus, water and sand, children develop basic understanding

of space, shape and measure. Teachers' planning is thorough and ensures that all children are appropriately challenged and supported.

Knowledge and understanding of the world

56. Teaching is good. Adults build well on what children know and can do enabling them to make good progress. Teachers provide a wide range of well prepared purposeful play activities so that children learn about the world in which they live, for example to test their senses in learning about different flavours and textures of different fruits. They are beginning to use a computer confidently, manipulating the "mouse" accurately and moving the "cursor" to find their way through a simple program to help them with their reading. They work confidently with wet and dry materials learning about their properties and the spaces they take up. They discuss with other children the best ways to build an object to use constructional materials. Adults effectively help children to think things out for themselves and to work independently.

Physical development

57. Teaching is good. By the end of reception classes children achieve well and nearly all are able to move with confidence, control and co-ordination. They show awareness of space and of the need to work safely when using a range of small and large equipment. They know that exercise is good for their bodies. They are beginning to handle tools such as scissors accurately and to measure, cut and stick carefully. In the well resourced outdoor play area the children play sensibly and take turns fairly when using the large toys and climbing equipment. They ride large wheeled toys appropriately going faster and slower as necessary. They are able to steer accurately and avoid accidents. They are able to climb over, under, through, around and between. While some children find these activities difficult they are well supported by adults.

Creative development

58. Overall teaching is good and children achieve well. Many are likely to attain the early learning goals by the end of the reception class. Effective organisation by the teachers and good support from adult helpers ensures that all children are included in all the activities. Children use colours confidently and enjoy exploring the different colours they are able to make, for example, when painting self portraits. Staff provide an appropriate balance of activities and cleverly encourage children to choose and to make their own decisions. They sensitively create settings where children are able to discuss their own work and that of others. Teachers plan carefully to ensure that children build on the small steps to learning they have attained. Children join in singing familiar songs and enjoy role play, for example when in a post office and preparing the post for Christmas.

ENGLISH

59. Standards in English are good at the end of Year 2 and satisfactory at the end of Year 6. Over time standards at Year 1 and Year 2 have been average and above in reading, although results in 2002 were lower than in 2001. In writing, standards have improved over time. Although standards have been average overall in reading and writing, fewer than average number of pupils achieved the higher Level 3 in 2001. A higher percentage of pupils than the national average achieved Level 3 in reading in 2002 and although the number of pupils achieving Level 3 in writing in 2002 was below the national average it was an improvement on 2001. Standards at the age of

11 were well below average in 2002 when compared with similar schools. There had been an improvement in standards between 1998 and 2000 when they matched the national average. In 2001 and 2002 there has been a decline to below the national average.

60. In the lessons observed and the pupils' work analysed during the inspection standards are now above average for pupils in Year 2 and satisfactory at year 6. A significant number of pupils are working above the expected level for their age in all aspects of English. There is no significant difference between the achievement of boys and girls. Pupils with special educational needs make good progress, as does the pupil with English as an additional language. Class teachers, ably assisted by teacher assistants monitor progress of these pupils and termly assessments are made. An advisory teacher supports the pupil with English as an additional language effectively.
61. Pupils' standards seen during the inspection in reading, writing and speaking and listening are above average at Year 1 and satisfactory at Year 2 but pupils' reading standards are better than writing. Most pupils make satisfactory progress. The majority of pupils in the school are keen, interested and motivated in all they do. Relationships between teachers, support staff and pupils are good and are a key factor in the improvement in standards in the subject across the school.
62. Pupils of all ages have very positive attitudes to reading. Their achievements are at least satisfactory and many pupils achieve well. They talk openly about their favourite authors and books. Particular authors pupils like are, J. K. Rowling, Roald Dahl, Enid Blyton, Dick King Smith and Jacqueline Wilson. Most pupils have well developed reading habits at both home and school and the support given to pupils at home is a positive factor in raising standards. Most pupils are able to locate books in the school library quickly using the very clear and appropriate prompts available to them but few pupils were observed using the library for research. Many pupils belong to the public library in Hoo although not all are regular visitors. Teachers do not encourage pupils sufficiently in lessons to develop their learning skills, for example, to use computers and the school library to research topics further.
63. By the age of seven, the majority of pupils are reading at the expected level and many are able to use strategies, especially phonics for decoding words. By the age of 11, some pupils could confidently explain their likes and dislikes and discuss at a literal level how different authors develop characters, themes and plots. Most pupils are aware of conventions such as alphabetical order, contents, index and glossary and know the difference between fiction and non-fiction books. However, few pupils have opportunities for independent study with books, CD-ROMs and websites regularly. The school is very well resourced for 'big books' and this assists with the implementation of the National Literacy Strategy. The school has also introduced a scheme whereby Year 6 pupils are paired with Year 3 pupils and they read together.
64. Over the last two years, developing pupils' writing skills has been a focus of the school improvement plan. Standards in writing seen during the inspection in writing are at the expected level for pupils in Year 2 and Year 6. A consistent approach to medium-term planning at both key stages has now been established. All teachers have completed training relating to the National Literacy Strategy and they are now carrying out the strategy effectively. As a result, they put more emphasis on teaching and developing basic skills. The co-ordinator initiated strategies that have helped pupils to progress well in writing this year.

65. The work completed in literacy lessons enables pupils to understand different styles and functions of writing such as describing, reporting, narrating and persuading. In some classes this is supported well through the work done in other subject areas, particularly history. Younger pupils in the school are showing significant signs of improvement in their writing.
66. There is evidence of pupils using information and communication technology to enhance the presentation of written work but as yet not enough is done by staff to help children review and refine their work. Marking is improved and much seen did help pupils understand what they need to do to improve their work, however, more needs to be done in this area. Pupils do not make appropriate use of computers to review and edit written work. The co-ordinator has identified these issues and has plans to address them.
67. Overall, standards in speaking and listening are satisfactory. Pupils of all ages talk freely and confidently. Most willingly take part in class discussion and are keen to share their ideas and views. Teachers' questioning in most classes involves all pupils and teachers value their contributions and use correct and incorrect answers skilfully to reinforce teaching points. This positive ethos enables pupils of all ages and abilities to offer suggestions without the fear of ridicule or embarrassment. This is a significant factor in fostering the good attitudes that pupils have to English.
68. Teaching is good, and there is no unsatisfactory teaching. The improvement in standards in English are particularly evident in Years 1, 2 and 3 and are related to this good teaching there. There has also been an improvement in standards in English in Years 4, 5 and 6 but progress has been slower as there was more to be done. In the better lessons, teachers explain to pupils exactly what is expected. Pupils rise to the challenge, especially when lessons are well paced and both teacher and pupils highlight new learning at the end of lessons. In the less effective teaching, activities are not sufficiently matched to pupils' abilities because worksheets or books used do not provide sufficient challenge and limit independence and originality.
69. Planning is good. There is a well organised planning system to ensure pupils get full and appropriate coverage of the National Literacy Strategy. The co-ordinator has identified the need to identify and disseminate the good and effective teaching strategies and has purchased imaginative resources to support colleagues.
70. The English co-ordinator provides strong leadership and has a clear understanding of what needs to be done to raise standards. The literacy action plan is a good working document, the quality of the teaching of literacy is reviewed and pupils' test results are now analysed. Targets are being set for individual pupils, although the system is not followed consistently in classes. The co-ordinator has produced clear and effective guidance for parents on helping their children develop skills in reading and spelling and provides a strong lead.
71. The school is well resourced for English. It has recently purchased new books for the library and there is a good variety of fiction and non-fiction books as well as reference books for pupils to use. There are plenty of group readers and big books.

MATHEMATICS

72. Standards reached by seven year olds are average. In Years 3 to 6 pupils are now making good progress compared to previously but still standards are below average. The overall level of attainment for 11 year olds is below the national average. In the

most recent national tests, standards were above average at the end of Year 2 when compared to schools nationally and average when compared to schools considered broadly similar. At the end of Year 6 national tests in 2002, standards were well below average for schools nationally and for those considered broadly similar. Standards have fallen away from an average position in 1999.

73. A programme of work is in place to ensure that all parts of mathematics are taught. Good progress in teaching has been made since the time of the last inspection particularly in Years 1 and 2. The quality of teaching for these year groups is good overall. During the inspection, no unsatisfactory lessons was observed and one of the lessons seen was very good. In the better lessons, teachers use very good methods and explanations; in one class, pupils could see how numbers were made up of tens and units on the teacher's 'clothes line' of coloured pegs and in another class the teacher used big bold flash cards to talk about the value of coins. In these good lessons, teachers make sure that all pupils are suitably challenged and check that everyone is working hard and not 'stuck', by circulating around the classrooms helping individuals and groups. Some lessons are less effective because the pupils are not challenged to make the most of their ability and the very good pace of one lesson when the teacher kept pupils of all abilities 'on their toes' is not a feature of all lessons. Sometimes the pace of learning is too slow and teachers do not make the most effective use of time available. There is an over reliance on commercial workbooks so that pupils are not developing their own methods of recording their work as well as they might.
74. Pupils make good progress especially in Year 2 where the majority of pupils are already well on their way towards the standards expected of them at the end of the year. In Year 2 for example, they add and subtract numbers up to 20, are familiar with doubling and halving numbers; they extend number sequences; they know about odd and even numbers and are beginning to understand the place value of two digit numbers. They add ten to two-digit numbers using a number square and are beginning to tackle simple multiplication. They can name common two-dimensional shapes and describe some of their features, they measure in centimetres and recognise 'half past' and 'quarter past' on a clock face. Other pupils, including those with special educational needs also make good progress; although working at a lower level of difficulty they are well supported by their teachers and teaching assistants.
75. In Years 3 to Year 6, there has been satisfactory progress in the teaching of mathematics. No unsatisfactory lessons were observed during the inspection and in the majority of lessons the overall quality of teaching was good. The strengths of teaching varies between classes and there has not yet been a rigorous enough attempt to ensure that the best aspects of teaching are applied in all lessons. The least well-developed part of lessons is the mental 'warm-up' at the beginning. Teachers were observed using very good questioning skills, as in one lesson when the teacher challenged pupils of all abilities to put simple fractions in order and to decide if they were greater or smaller than a half or a quarter. However, there were few examples of teachers using strategies to challenge pupils of different abilities to quickly work out number calculations in their heads. In the more effective lessons, teachers make sure that pupils are set tasks to match their abilities as in one lesson about graphs when some more able pupils had to construct graphs using information provided whilst others had a slightly easier task to answer questions about a graph. In the less effective lessons, teachers do not sufficiently take into account the previous achievements of pupils and instead expect all abilities to complete the same task. Sometimes the planning of lesson content is too heavily reliant on commercial workbooks. The pace of lessons is variable. Some teachers manage the lesson very

well so that pupils have to concentrate and work hard throughout but at other times the challenge for pupils is not sustained. The school has identified that older pupils are less confident in their problem-solving skills than in some other areas of the subject. In one lesson, the teacher provided exciting mathematical challenges for pupils to investigate patterns in the number of triangles formed by the diagonals in different shapes but this approach is limited.

76. Pupils, including those with special educational needs make good progress in Years 3 to 6 although a significant proportion are working at a level of difficulty below that which is expected. Over half of 11 year olds are well on the way to achieving expected levels of attainment by the end of the year. These pupils use written methods of addition, subtraction, multiplication and division and can do many calculations mentally. They know how to multiply and divide whole numbers by ten and 100 and can recall multiplication and division facts. They understand the decimal system and use this understanding to solve problems involving money and measure. These pupils are familiar with the language of shape. They recognise symmetry and calculate area and perimeters. They can understand data when presented in a variety of charts and graphs. However, almost half of Year 6 are not yet confident in using numbers to three decimal places, multiplying and dividing decimal numbers or solving problems using percentages or ratio and proportion.
77. The co-ordinators and senior management have done a considerable amount of work to identify aspects of mathematics that pupils are finding difficult and some action has been taken to raise standards. The whole of Year 6 for example, has been divided into ability groups. Teachers are keeping quite detailed records of the mathematics attainment of individuals but there are no agreed systems for teachers to have an efficient overview of progress of the whole class or groups within the class so that planning on the basis of ability and previous achievement is difficult and consequently underdeveloped. Some examples of the use of computer technology were observed during the inspection as for example when pupils in one class were working in pairs to produce graphs.

SCIENCE

78. Standards in science are average. Teacher assessment of pupils' attainment at the age of seven in 2002 show that they attain standards which are in line with national expectations. In the 2002 national tests of pupils at the age of 11, standards in science are well below the national average compared with all schools and with similar schools. Although standards in science have varied from year to year following the last inspection, they have followed the national picture of improvement and trends over time are broadly in line with the national trend. In lessons observed and work scrutinised, pupils in both Key Stage 1 and Key Stage 2 achieve standards which are in line with national expectations and they make satisfactory progress.
79. Inspection evidence indicates that standards in the knowledge and understanding of science are average at the end of both key stages. Pupils achieve sound standards in their scientific enquiry and investigative work and there is a good focus on the development of this area.
80. Throughout Key Stage 1, pupils make sound progress. Pupils with special educational needs make good progress in relation to their prior attainment. Pupils know the parts of the body and the five senses and they investigate how they use the sense of smell in order to identify foods. In Year 1, pupils understand that their bodies require food to produce energy and to help humans and animals grow; they can

recognise which foods are healthy and which are not and can categorise fruits and vegetables successfully. They can conduct surveys of favourite cereals within their class and accurately record the results on a tally chart and a bar graph, effectively reinforcing their addition and subtraction skills. Year 2 pupils can identify the properties of a range of common materials and can place them correctly into natural and man-made categories. They make good progress in their investigations of how to effect permanent and temporary changes in materials, such as bread and chocolate; they predict what is likely to happen when they apply heat and they record their findings accurately.

81. In Years 3 to Year 6 pupils continue to make satisfactory progress in scientific knowledge and understanding. They continue to investigate materials by comparing them for usefulness and fitness for purpose. They demonstrate a good understanding of the need for a fair test when investigating the degree of stretch in tights and when determining how to construct a catapult in order to propel a toy car. Their work on forces enables them to make good links with previous learning about Roman siege engines in history and they can develop a very well focused discussion on how they are going to measure the results of their experiment. As a result, pupils' prediction and testing skills are well developed and they make good progress in this area.
82. In Year 5 and Year 6, pupils retain and develop their understanding of what constitutes a fair test. Their oral discussions help them to refine and consolidate this understanding. Year 5 pupils show much interest in the solar system and the movement and features of the planets. They understand the concept of the orbiting of the earth and know that the angle of the earth in relation to the sun affects the length of the day, the climate and seasonal variations. In Year 6, appropriate emphasis is placed upon the structure and functions of the major organs of the human body. Pupils have sound levels of knowledge and understanding of the digestive and respiratory systems and of the structure of joints, muscles and teeth; they can label their diagrams accurately. They are aware of the need to live a healthy lifestyle and know about the effects of smoking, drugs, alcohol and solvents on the human organs. Pupils have good knowledge and understanding of the life cycle of plants and can explain the different processes of pollination and seed dispersal. They use technical terminology accurately and can define the process of photosynthesis. Most pupils work together steadily and effectively, but a minority of groups do not concentrate fully upon completing the task in hand and have an insecure approach when applying their learning to new situations and problems. Pupils respond orally better than they do in writing.
83. Pupils' attitudes to learning are positive and they make good responses in lessons overall. Pupils enjoy their work in science and display curiosity and interest, asking relevant questions and focusing enthusiastically on practical activities. The vast majority of pupils work collaboratively together and produce worthwhile results from their investigative and practical work. Relationships between teachers and pupils are friendly and mutually respectful and pupils with special educational needs are well provided with work designed to match their abilities. They are well supported by teaching assistants to ensure that they play a full part in lessons.
84. Teaching in science is good overall. Lessons are thoughtfully planned and are delivered at a brisk pace. In the best examples, teachers challenge pupils rigorously, ensuring that they reason out responses to problems themselves and listening carefully to every pupil's contribution and suggestion. Pupils are encouraged to demonstrate their ideas to the rest of the class and to identify areas where they might

need to re-think their proposals or amend their predictions. Pupils are made aware of learning objectives in every class and the use of a range of teaching strategies and activities help to sustain pupils' concentration and their involvement in the lesson. Teachers question pupils to good purpose and their good subject knowledge is effectively used to reinforce and extend learning. Teachers' marking of written work is thorough and generally informative, so that pupils are aware of what they need to do next in order to raise their standards of achievement.

85. Resources are satisfactory in quality and quantity. Suitable materials have been purchased to deliver the theoretical and practical aspects of the science curriculum. The increased use of information and communication technology tools to present work and to encourage research and information-seeking skills is having a positive effect upon standards.
86. The science co-ordinator has been in post for a short time, but has worked very hard to review the science policy, the scheme of work and the quality of science provision in the school. This work has produced a realistic identification of the main areas which require further development and the co-ordinator has formulated sensible plans and strategies by which she will address these in order to raise overall standards. She has drawn up good quality plans to develop the system of data analysis in order to help her identify and tackle the precise areas which cause pupils difficulty. Monitoring procedures appropriately include the scrutiny of teachers' planning, scrutiny of pupils' work and some limited monitoring of the quality of teaching and learning in the classroom. Assessments are well focused upon the progressive development of the basic scientific skills, but they are not yet fully used to target individual needs and difficulties on a systematic basis, so that they inform teachers' planning of future work. The allocation of curriculum time for science is currently barely adequate to ensure full coverage of the Programmes of Study.

ART AND DESIGN

87. Standards by the age of seven and 11 are in line with those expected of pupils of these ages. Evidence was gathered from looking at displays across the school, scrutiny of sketchbooks, discussion with pupils, observation of lessons and photographic evidence. Pupils make satisfactory progress overall and pupils with special educational needs make good progress.
88. In the last inspection, the displays in some areas were judged to be of a good quality and this has been maintained through the good displays seen throughout the school of pupils' work in art. The school's 'Art Gallery' provides pupils with the opportunity to regularly study and evaluate the work of established artists. The present 'Art Gallery' display includes examples and description of the work of Claude Monet, combined with portraits and still-life pupils had completed after studying the work of artists such as Pablo Picasso and observational sketches by older pupils of feathers and trainers. Other displays included an Art Journey where pupils had studied the work of Paul Klee and had created their own artwork by taking a line for a walk, filling spaces with patterns and shapes to build a City-Scape. They then cut shapes of buildings to stick on the background and then used pastels to create a sunset sky. However, the art of non-western cultures is not sufficiently represented in the work studied by pupils.
89. Pupils explore a range of media, draw and then paint portraits of themselves after studying the work of artists such as Vincent Van Gogh. In a Year 1 lesson they were learning about the difference between portraits and self portraits. The teacher showed a portrait of Marie Antoinette and talked about the basic shapes in portraiture.

Good links with history were made where pupils knew that she was not alive today because they could tell from the dress she wore.

90. The focus across the school on close observational drawing show good progress overall in this area and good examples were seen on display and in sketchbooks. From the earlier self portraits of the younger pupils to sketches of trainers and drink cans by older pupils, show a good development of close observational drawing skills and make interesting arrangements of objects and complete 'still life' drawings using pencil, pen, charcoal and pastel. In a lesson observed in Year 5 the teacher exemplified the quality of teaching that has helped in the development of these skills. The teacher gave a very good introduction where she taught skills of observation and how to gain visual information to create own ideas and they practised these skills, prior to completing large still life drawings of vegetables, which were of a very good standard. Further landscape work is continued in Year 6 where pupils study the work of David Hockney, Van Gogh and Max Ernst. However, pupils have only limited opportunities to use malleable materials and work collaboratively on large-scale projects, particularly three-dimensional work, printing, weaving and the also in the study of famous designers. The use of information and communication technology to support pupils' learning is well developed and good examples were seen across the school. These ranged from the infant firework pictures to the lesson observed in Year 4 where pupils were using the 'Colour Magic' program to develop the brush techniques used by Vincent Van Gogh in a painting.
91. The quality of teaching overall is good and this is enhanced by the skills of the subject co-ordinator who has expertise in the subject, especially in the area of drawing. In the lessons observed, teachers demonstrated a sound subject knowledge, and lessons were productive because pupils were well managed. Pupils enjoy art and design work, work hard in lessons and are developing the ability to evaluate their own work and the work of others. There are no arrangements to look at teaching and learning however.
92. Sketchbooks are used regularly and provide a record of work completed by pupils. However, they are not used sufficiently as a working document in which pupils' experiment with and practise skills and techniques and furthermore there is too much wasted space in the books by pupils drawing on every other page.
93. The subject is led and managed effectively. The co-ordinator is knowledgeable and has carried out a thorough review of provision for the subject. There is a clear plan to improve provision and raise standards through the further development of teaching and the improvement of assessment procedures. Links with the community through the School Arts Week brings together parents, a teacher from the secondary feeder school with students from the school working with the pupils. Talents are discovered, such as the school caretaker who is a water colour artist, who share their skills with pupils. In the 'Arts Week' pupils are able to sample all the areas that are at present undeveloped in the school, such as clay work, three-dimensional modelling, tie and dye, marbling, collage, batik and weaving. Pupils interviewed stated that they thought the week was very good, but were disappointed that they have not had the opportunity to continue with the activities after the arts week. Resources are good overall and used effectively in lessons.

DESIGN AND TECHNOLOGY

94. Inspection evidence indicates that standards are above those expected for pupils' aged seven, but below those expected by the age of 11. Pupils make good progress

in Year 1 and Year 2 but this is not continued in Year 3 to Year 6 because the scheme of work is not followed sufficiently well to maintain the good progress. The co-ordinator has worked hard to develop the policy and scheme of work, ensuring the provision of good resources and in arranging training for staff in the teaching of skills in design and technology. However, with the exception of Year 1 and Year 2 this has had limited impact. Furthermore, this was confirmed by a sample of pupils from Year 6 who when interviewed about the design and making skills used in design and technology, showed limited understanding. The subject co-ordinator has developed a portfolio to record samples of work and photographs of completed projects done in each year and samples of pupils' planning. However, whilst the evidence of the work planned in the scheme of work is fully covered in Years 1 and 2 and partly covered in Year 5 and 6, there is no evidence at all for Years 3 and 4. The co-ordinator has no opportunity to look at teaching and learning in classes. Pupils with special educational needs make good progress overall because they are well supported by the teaching assistants.

95. Only a small number of lessons were observed during the inspection; of the lessons seen pupils were enjoying their design and technology activities. They are enthusiastic and discuss and exchange ideas readily. They respond positively to their teachers' suggestions as to how they might improve their work. For example, in a Year 2 class pupils were shown a range of different types of puppets by their teacher, such as sock, glove, finger and rod puppets and discussed the task of designing a puppet to use when telling or reading a favourite story.

GEOGRAPHY

96. No lessons in geography were observed during the inspection. However, when taking into account the pupils' work analysed during the inspection, the displays of work based on geographical study around the school and discussions with pupils related to previous work in the subject, standards are at expected levels.
97. In Year 4, pupils had carried out an investigation into the plans to build a new airport on the Hoo Peninsular near to their community. They had investigated environmental impact and had produced a series of posters either for or against the project. The work was of high standard and the pupils had clearly enjoyed the experience. In a Year 2 class, there was work related to comparing France with England and children had been studying the cultural and physical differences.
98. Pupils enjoy geography, showing good levels of knowledge. For example, two Year 6 pupils studying a text on the damage done by a tornado in North America, could identify the countries that made up the continent. Information and communication technology is beginning to be used effectively to support pupils' learning in geography. Year 2 pupils had used the Internet to find information about the United States of America and produce a reference book. The new computer suite offers teachers and pupils a much-improved access to the Internet.
99. Leadership and management in the subject are unsatisfactory at present. Currently there is no co-ordinator for the subject. A member of staff will be assuming the role in January and she has already begun to monitor work in the subject in preparation for her role. She recognises that the current curriculum organisation in the school means that too little geography is taught. There is no review of pupil performance or of the quality of teaching and learning.

HISTORY

100. Standards in history are above national expectations by the time pupils reach the ages of seven and 11. A significant number of pupils make good progress through the imaginative links, which are forged between other subjects. Teachers' plans and schemes of work are well linked to the development of the historical skills.
101. Pupils in Year 1 and Year 2 have good chronological skills; they sequence events and stories accurately and have a good understanding that life in the past was different from their own experience. They are also aware that there were differences between the lives and circumstances of rich and poor in the Victorian period and they can link these with differences in lifestyle. In Year 1, pupils have good opportunities to handle and examine a range of artefacts linked with Victorian methods of doing the laundry and of cooking, and they can compare and contrast household objects from the past with those they find in their own homes today. Pupils are increasingly aware of the process of change taking place over time and develop their speaking and listening skills well in their discussions of the reasons for these changes, for instance, Year 1 pupils recognise that changes in power, such as steam and electricity, have brought about improvements in the lives of ordinary people. In Year 2, pupils continue to demonstrate good standards in their chronological and recall skills. Oral responses to questioning about the life of Louis Braille show interest and curiosity and several pupils provide extended and articulate answers.
102. In Year 3 to Year 6, pupils build upon the knowledge, understanding and historical skills they have acquired in Key Stage 1. Year 3 pupils begin to consider interpretations of Boudicca's revolt against the Romans and can understand that different groups have different explanations and views of the same event. They make good progress in identifying the similarities and differences between different versions of the revolt and are learning how to place the most important factors in order of priority. By Year 6, pupils develop their historical skills and interests strongly in their study of Britain in the 1930s and 1940s. Pupils have a good understanding of the role of propaganda in World War II; they interpret the poster sources successfully, showing insight and thoughtfulness in their interpretative work. Good essay writing skills are developing in Year 6; pupils plan their work logically and effectively identify the key points related to historical problems. Individual pupils develop deeper interests in aspects of the period and produce well researched and well presented projects which they present to the class confidently and knowledgeably. These presentations are enthusiastically received by their peers who listen carefully and ask interesting and relevant questions at the end. Good emphasis on self-evaluation and self-criticism encourage pupils to produce work of their best quality. Map work is well developed to provide pupils with an overview of the areas of conflict.
103. Pupils have good attitudes to their learning in history in both key stages. There is an evident sense of enjoyment and enquiry and pupils work together amicably and collaboratively to produce good quality work. They gain in confidence in developing their speaking and listening skills and they grow in competence as historians, in their information-seeking and writing skills. Class discussions are often of good quality and resources, including the Internet, are well used to further research activities.
104. Teaching is good in both key stages. Teachers have good subject knowledge and make fruitful and meaningful cross-curricular links in their planning to develop all of the historical and literacy skills. Pupils have plentiful opportunities to consider a variety of interesting historical sources and to extend their knowledge and understanding of periods and events, which appeal to them. Searching and challenging questioning often raises the level of classroom discussion and debate and teachers value the contributions of every pupil. Teachers have high expectations

of pupils and good emphasis is placed upon recording learning in history in a variety of styles and forms. Pupils respond well to this challenging approach, developing well as independent learners as they mature.

105. Resources are adequate and pupils have access to a variety of reference books, artefacts and other historical source material. The provision of more primary source material would benefit pupils' investigative and interpretative skills. Wall displays are colourful and are suitably linked to the curriculum; these add a further dimension to pupils' knowledge and understanding. Visits to sites of historical interest in the locality are satisfactory overall and pupils have suitable opportunities to listen to and question visitors who come in to relate their own memories about experiences in the past.
106. Scrutiny of pupils' work and teachers' planning gives the co-ordinator some overview of the strengths and weaknesses in the delivery of the subject across the school but there are inadequate systems in place to enable the co-ordinator to monitor the quality of teaching and learning on a regular basis and to ensure that assessment of work in history informs teachers' planning of future work. Assessments in history are largely informal and are not sufficiently systematic to ensure that suitable progress is being made in the full range of historical skills.

INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY

107. Standards at the end of Year 2 and Year 6 are above expected levels. There have been recent rapid developments in the subject as a result of the provision of a new networked computer suite and staff training that is giving teachers growing confidence when teaching the subject. Consequently, many pupils make good progress throughout the school in developing their basic skills in this subject. Pupils with special educational needs are supported well, particularly in the computer suite where more able pupils are sometimes paired with less able. Pupils show good support for their peers that are of clear mutual benefit. The school has effectively addressed some of the criticisms made of the subject in the previous inspection through the enthusiasm of the co-ordinators who have laid a solid foundation for further improvement.
108. By the end of Year 6, pupils are able to perform all the necessary operations, locating and opening files, copying and pasting work from one application to another, checking their spelling, saving and printing work. They can access websites and use them to research topics they are studying. Year 5 pupils were able to search databases and to sort information against different criteria. Pupils show good understanding of the benefits of information and communication technology and how it is changing the world. They can also identify some problems the users of technology are likely to encounter and many pupils are able to give informed accounts of how they have tackled and learnt to overcome such problems. Many of the pupils have access to information and communication technology at home and bring a good level of expertise to the subject.
109. Good access to the new computer suite and increased focus on acquiring skills in using information and communication technology in the curriculum is leading to improvements in standards. The school has recently acquired broadband through the local authority's network. This means that now all pupils have their own e-mail address and are becoming familiar with the application, many of them having their own address on computers at home. Teachers actively encourage pupils to share experiences and knowledge of applications and programs. Pupils' attitudes and behaviour are very good and they work together and support each other very well.

110. The quality of teaching is good. Teachers use the computer suite effectively to develop pupils' knowledge and skills and to support learning in some other subjects. Planning for lessons is thorough and appropriate. Teachers encourage pupils to work together, sharing their expertise. Assessments of pupils' skills are made within lessons and pupils have a folder of work that allows teachers and the co-ordinators to evaluate pupils' progress over time.
111. Leadership and management of the subject are good. There are two enthusiastic co-ordinators. They monitor and evaluate the subject and have a clear understanding of the steps necessary to build on the progress made. Appropriate controls have been established to ensure pupils are protected from inappropriate content and access to the computer suite is effectively managed. All staff have now completed the first stage of national training and some are now moving on to further training. The school has also developed useful links with a Beacon Grammar School that has provided them with specific training in the use of information technology. The link continues and the co-ordinators feel that it has been very useful to the school. Parents are given clear information as to how the subject is taught and how the Internet is used to support learning. Parents are asked to sign an agreement allowing their children to use the Internet at school.
112. As well as the computer suite for pupils in Year 3 to Year 6 there are computers in some classrooms and in the library for Year 1 and Year 2. These are not yet used effectively but the co-ordinators have identified the need to tackle this issue. The use of information and communication technology in other subjects to promote improved standards, has been rightly identified as the next priority. The school employs a part-time technician and he ably provides technical support for the co-ordinators. Resources for the subject have improved considerably over the past two years but there are still gaps in the school's resources and provision, for example, in using sensors to gather and display data from science experiments and using computers to help pupils to design in technology. The school's ratio of pupils to computers is in line with national targets and plans are in place to increase the number with laptop computers.

MUSIC

113. The standard of singing of seven year olds and their melodic and rhythmic awareness is in line with national expectations. There was insufficient evidence during the inspection to make a judgment about other aspects of their musical knowledge such as their ability to explore how different musical sounds can be arranged or how music can create different moods and effects. It was not possible during the inspection to observe any music lessons for 11 year olds but the quality of singing in assemblies, which was tuneful, joyful and confident, indicates that this part of their musical accomplishments is at least in line with national expectations.
114. The subject co-ordinator has made sure that all teachers have a programme of work to follow which gives pupils a range of musical experiences including listening to a variety of music from both British and other cultures. Teachers in Years 1 and 2 bring their whole year group together for weekly music lessons when they are given the invaluable help of a friend of the school who provides piano accompaniment. Pupils make good progress in these lessons and have built up a repertoire of songs many of which they sing with accompanying actions. During the inspection, the pupils were observed to be really enjoying their singing and this became sheer joy for Year 2 pupils when it was time for their 'Prehistoric Parade' with appropriate dinosaur

actions. Teachers of the younger pupils show huge enthusiasm themselves which is 'caught' by the pupils. These pupils demonstrate a good knowledge of the names of musical instruments and how each produces sounds. They take it turns to try these instruments to provide rhythmic accompaniment to songs. The quality of teaching in the lessons observed in Years 1 and 2 was good.

115. Pupils' attitudes to music are satisfactory although it is clear from talking to them and their teachers that a musical culture within the school has not yet been established. The subject co-ordinator has made considerable progress since her appointment in making sure that music is a regular part of pupils' education and has arranged a number of events such as pupils involvement in the Rochester Music Festival and the local schools' festival. About 20 pupils receive brass or woodwind tuition from a visiting teacher and this term a further 20 have started guitar lessons. Attempts to encourage interest in recorder playing have not succeeded; lots of pupils have started the lunchtime clubs run by the subject co-ordinator but numbers have gradually fallen away. Undaunted, the co-ordinator intends having another try. Music is a regular feature of assemblies; the headteacher has introduced the idea of listening to music as pupils enter and leave. This has involved a determination to change pupils' attitudes and to develop their appreciation. Assemblies for younger pupils have to rely on taped accompaniment for singing that is less effective than the piano playing of the co-ordinator in the upper school. Pupils sing in performances at Christmas time and there have been other occasions such as the Jubilee celebrations. The musical and dramatic expertise within the staff have not been fully utilised however, to make connections between pupils' musical talents and other expressive experiences such as dance and drama.
116. The school has a collection of a range of musical instruments. These are sufficient for pupils to take it in turns in small groups to practise rhythmic or simple melodic accompaniment to class singing. There are insufficient instruments for teachers to easily organise lessons for pupils to explore sounds independently or begin to try simple compositions. This part of the music curriculum, including the use of the school's computer software for composing, remains underdeveloped.

PHYSICAL EDUCATION

117. Standards in physical education are in line with those expected at the end of Year 2 and at the end of Year 6. Pupils reach at least the expected standards in swimming by the time they are 11 years of age (to swim 25 metres) and many exceed this because of the good opportunities they have to learn how to swim at the nearby swimming pool.
118. By the end of Year 2 pupils are able to send and receive passes using a hockey stick. They are beginning to learn how to judge distance and direction when passing and when to pass and when not to pass. They are able to interpret music and represent objects such as snowflakes in a Christmas scene. They are able to move rhythmically and expressively. By the end of Year 6 pupils are able to throw, catch and bounce different types of balls using tactics to find a space. They have well-developed passing skills in hockey and are well aware of the need to play safely and how to tackle within the rules of the game. In gymnastics, pupils are able to build a series of connected movements using the floor and larger apparatus. They have a good understanding of the importance of warming up and cooling down before and after exercise and of the effect of exercise upon their bodies.
119. The quality of teaching is satisfactory. In the very best lessons, the lessons begin with a lively "warm-up" where the teachers demonstrate vividly what is expected of

the pupils. The teachers move the lessons on well, dramatically emphasising in dance movements what pupils should try to emulate. The teachers have very good subject knowledge and successfully encourage all the pupils to try hard to be as good as them, for example in holding their heads up “like a soldier on guard outside Buckingham Palace”. As a result, pupils aspire to and reach standards well above those usually found for their age. They “dance gracefully through the night sky.” Teachers maintain the pace of learning well and set increasingly challenging practices so that pupils’ skills are tested and extended.

120. Where teaching is satisfactory but has some weaknesses, the lessons begin purposefully and are well planned. The objectives of the lesson are carefully explained and pupils begin their activities enthusiastically, listening carefully to instructions and planning willingly and constructively together. However, the pace of learning falls because an unnecessary large amount of lesson time is taken up with taking out, assembling and testing large apparatus. Some of this apparatus is cumbersome and difficult for even older pupils to manage.
121. The co-ordinator provides a positive lead and has looked carefully at the long-term needs of this subject to produce a detailed plan for improvement. This has included initiatives to promote pupils’ awareness of exercise for health through the “healthy schools” scheme and in promoting links with outside sporting groups such as the local soccer club. The co-ordinator, with the help of other staff, ensures that the curriculum is enriched by a good range of out of school activities. However, while the co-ordinator has given training to other teachers about how to teach, for example “the top sports” initiative; there have been no planned opportunities for the co-ordinator to visit lessons to look at the quality of teaching going on and the effectiveness of recent initiatives that have been introduced.
122. Resources are inadequate because despite a good range of small equipment, some of the large gymnastic apparatus used by pupils between the ages of seven and 11 is heavy and out-dated. Its storage is problematic and teachers and pupils struggle to remove it from the spaces in which it is stored. As a result, it has a detrimental impact on the standards pupils are able to reach in their lessons.

RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

123. By the ages of seven and 11, pupils attain standards, which are in line with the targets identified in the locally agreed syllabus.
124. By the age of seven, pupils understand the main celebrations of the Christian calendar, such as Christmas, Easter and Harvest. They know that churches are used to celebrate the most meaningful events in people’s lives, such as baptism, marriage and death. By Year 2, they have a sound ability to recognise the need for rules and laws in their own classrooms and on a wider scale; they can relate these ideas with the law-giving events of the Old Testament. These concepts are reinforced by their study of Judaism where they are aware of the law found in the Torah scrolls and they know that a synagogue is differently arranged from a Christian church. Most pupils understand the function of the main parts of churches and synagogues. In Year 2, pupils study the story of Rama and Sita and know that Divali is a Hindu festival of lights. Their investigation of Rangoli patterns is used for some of their work in art and design and they make well-crafted and colourful Divali lamps out of clay.

125. By the age of 11, pupils have a satisfactory knowledge and understanding of aspects of Christianity, Judaism, Hinduism, Sikhism and Islam. They are aware of the major symbols of these religions and know about the major religious texts and the main religious festivals and foods associated with these faiths. Pupils can compare the values and beliefs of the major world religions and they can find common elements, such as the belief in a deity, the Creation myth and the promotion of positive moral and social values. Year 5 show a sound understanding of some of the rituals used in Islamic worship and can use the compass on a prayer mat appropriately. They use vocabulary accurately. In Year 6, they begin to discuss ideas about God the Creator and His portrayal in the poetry of the Psalms. They are beginning to explore the feelings evoked by anger and how dealing with this is directly linked to their own experiences in life. The personal and social education curriculum is integrated into these discussions and the majority of pupils express their ideas openly in the classroom. Most pupils listen respectfully to each other's views and are prepared to develop a dialogue between themselves. Recording of learning in religious education is often too brief and lacking in depth; there are few opportunities for pupils to produce pieces of extended writing to develop their ideas. Pupils' presentation of their work is variable in standard and is an area which requires further development.
126. Pupils make satisfactory progress in religious education. Cross-curricular links with other subjects are not as well developed as they are for history and limited use is made of art and music to promote their skills of enquiry and reflection. Pupils respond well to opportunities to investigate beliefs different from their own, but they do not always make the most of opportunities to reflect on feelings and common experiences.
127. The quality of teaching is good overall. Teachers have good subject knowledge and encourage all pupils to take part in class discussions and to explore their own views and feelings. Teachers listen to pupils' views with respect and pupils are encouraged to work together collaboratively in pairs and groups. Teachers have high expectations of pupils and make good efforts to challenge them with new ideas and concepts.
128. Resources for religious education are adequate; the school has a range of artefacts which link to the world faiths outlined in the agreed syllabus. However, insufficient use is made of the resources available in the locality and further afield to give pupils opportunities to visit and experience places of worship other than Christian churches.
129. The co-ordinator has drawn up an appropriate policy and scheme of work for religious education, based upon the locally agreed syllabus. Pupils make some visits to the local church for services. However, the co-ordinator has limited time and opportunity to monitor the quality of teaching and learning in the subject; scrutiny of teachers' planning and some sampling of pupils' work provide some overview of standards being achieved. Assessments are informal and recording procedures are not sufficiently systematic to ensure that pupils' progress is carefully tracked nor that assessment informs teachers' planning of future work.