

INSPECTION REPORT

VICTORIA ROAD PRIMARY SCHOOL

Ashford

LEA area: Kent

Unique reference number: 118369

Headteacher: Mr. A. Guthrie

Reporting inspector: Mrs. J. Catlin
21685

Dates of inspection: 9th – 12th June 2003

Inspection number: 247883

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

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INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Type of school: Infant and junior

School category: Community

Age range of pupils: 4 – 11 years

Gender of pupils: Mixed

School address: Victoria Road
Ashford
Kent

Postcode: TN23 7HQ

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Appropriate authority: The governing body

Name of chair of governors: Mr. P.J. Goddard

Date of previous inspection: 2nd March 1998

INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Team members			Subject responsibilities	Aspect responsibilities
21685	Jenny Catlin	Registered inspector	Foundation Stage Mathematics Geography History	What sort of school is it? How high are standards? The school's results and achievements How well are pupils taught? How well is the school led and managed? What should the school do to improve further?
9370	Rosalind Wingrove	Lay inspector		Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development How well does the school care for its pupils? How well does the school work in partnership with parents?
17756	Heather Monaghan	Team inspector	Science Art and design Music Religious education Special educational needs	How good are the curricular and other opportunities offered to pupils?

27698	Gordon Phillips	Team inspector	English Information and communication technology Design and technology Physical education English as an additional language Educational inclusion	
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PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Victoria Road has 196 pupils on roll from age four to eleven years of age and is about the same size as other primary schools. The quality of the accommodation is satisfactory. The majority of pupils are from a United Kingdom white heritage. Many children enter the reception class with below average attainment. The percentage of pupils entitled to free school meals is 14 per cent; this is broadly average. The proportion of pupils who speak English as an additional language, at over 7 per cent, is higher than in most schools with seven pupils receiving good support. The other eight pupils are fluent in English. The percentage of pupils identified as having special educational needs, over 23 per cent, is slightly above average. The majority of pupils with special educational needs have learning, speech or communication difficulties with a slightly smaller percentage with emotional and behavioural difficulties. Just over two per cent of pupils have a statement of special educational need; this figure is above average. The school's aim is to establish a relationship between children and school in which it is possible for children to learn and enjoy learning and to strive continually to achieve the best of which they are capable.

HOW GOOD THE SCHOOL IS

Victoria Road Primary School is an under-performing school. Standards in English, mathematics and science have fallen year-on-year since 1999. Children enter the school with below average attainment and leave at the end of Year 6 with standards well below average and in some cases in the lowest 5 per cent nationally. The lessons observed during the inspection were satisfactory but overall, the quality of teaching is unsatisfactory because a significant proportion of pupils under-achieve. The management and leadership are unsatisfactory because they have not succeeded in rectifying the declining standards. The school provides unsatisfactory value for money.

What the school does well

- Pupils behave well and the relationships between pupils and adults are good.
- Children in the reception class are now being given a good start to their education.
- The provision for pupils with special educational needs and those who speak English as an additional language is good and as a result, these pupils achieve satisfactorily.
- Provision for pupils' personal, social and health education is good.
- Pupils' moral, social and cultural development is promoted effectively.

What could be improved

- Standards across the school, particularly in reading, writing and mathematics to ensure that all pupils achieve their full potential.
- Quality of teaching to enable pupils to attain standards that match their abilities.
- The balance of the curriculum and the quality of assessment to assist teachers in their understanding of what pupils can already do and what they need to learn next.
- Leadership and management in evaluating the work of the school and taking effective action.

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

In accordance with section 13 (7) of the School Inspections Act 1996, I am of the opinion, and Her Majesty's Chief Inspector agrees, that special measures are required in relation to this school.

HOW THE SCHOOL HAS IMPROVED SINCE ITS LAST INSPECTION

The things the school is doing well are outweighed by its weaknesses. The school has failed to address some of the key issues identified by the last inspection in March 1998. The school was required to address some health and safety issues and these have been completed satisfactorily. There were issues linked to the provision for information and communication technology and the teaching for the subject. There has been good improvement linked to the curriculum and the resources for this area of learning. The improvement in the teaching of the subject has been satisfactory. The school was also required to develop assessment procedures to enable them to monitor correctly pupils' progress through the school. Although a considerable amount of work has been undertaken in this area, it has been ineffective and is

one of the most significant reasons why pupils are under-achieving. They were required to improve their management skills in order to increase the pace of change and to develop the role of subject managers. These last two areas have been ineffectively addressed and also play a significant part in why pupils are not making enough progress in their learning. The overall improvement in the school since the previous inspection is unsatisfactory and the capacity for improvement is uncertain.

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				Key
	all schools			similar schools	
	2000	2001	2002	2002	
English	B	D	E	E*	well above average above A average B average C below average D well below average E very poor E*
Mathematics	E	C	E	E	
Science	E	D	E	E	

The above information shows that the school's standards in 2002 were well below average when compared to all schools nationally. Compared with similar schools, standards in English were in the lowest 5 per cent and in mathematics and science they were well below the average for these schools. Girls' results in mathematics were significantly below that of boys at the end of Year 6. The school's targets for pupils to reach level 4 and above in English and mathematics were not met. The targets for 2003 are unrealistic and will not be met. The findings of the inspection are similar to those indicated by the school's tests and are that standards by the end of Year 6 are well below average in English, including literacy and mathematics, including numeracy. In the 2002 end of Year 2 tests, standards in reading and mathematics were well below average and in writing, they were in the lowest 5 per cent nationally. Compared with similar schools, standards in writing and mathematics were in the lowest 5 per cent and in reading they were well below the average for these schools. There were no significant differences in the attainment of boys and girls in these tests. Attainment in science, based on teacher assessment, is well below average for pupils of this age. The findings of the inspection are that attainment in reading, writing and mathematics are well below average. Throughout the school standards in art and design, geography, history and science are below average. In design and technology, information and communication technology, music, physical education and religious education standards are average. In all classes, achievement is unsatisfactory for a significant proportion of pupils. Across the school, most pupils with special educational needs and those for whom English is an additional language achieve satisfactorily because of the good quality support offered by teaching assistants. The attainment of children on entry to the reception class is below average although they are making good progress.

PUPILS' ATTITUDES AND VALUES

Aspect	Comment
Attitudes to the school	Good. Pupils' have positive attitudes to their learning and the school has maintained this since the previous inspection.
Behaviour, in and out of classrooms	Good. Behaviour observed in lessons, the dining hall, assemblies and in the playground was good.
Personal development and relationships	Good. Relationships are good and pupils are polite to each other and to adults.
Attendance	Unsatisfactory. The attendance rate of just over 93 per cent is well below the national average. Unauthorised absence is above average. There have

	been recent improvements in this area.
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TEACHING AND LEARNING

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

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.

Overall, the quality of teaching is unsatisfactory because of the under-achievement of a significant proportion of pupils. During the inspection, 4 per cent of the teaching was very good, 33 per cent was good, 58 per cent was satisfactory and 4 per cent was unsatisfactory. The quality of teaching and learning varies from class to class but is at its best in reception and Year 6. In the other classes, with one exception, none of the teaching was better than good and the majority was satisfactory. The work seen in many pupils' books does not reflect their ability and, while the teaching observed during the inspection was generally satisfactory, it is not good enough to guarantee pupils' progress at a level of which they are capable.

A positive aspect of teaching across the school is the good classroom management and discipline, which most teachers maintain. There is a consistent approach to behaviour, which enhances the quality of pupils' learning. As a result, many pupils have good attitudes towards their learning and they enjoy good relationships within the school. The significant weaknesses in teaching are linked to the learning needs of all pupils not always being addressed effectively and the fact that teachers' expectations of what pupils know, understand and do are not high enough. In the lessons where teaching was unsatisfactory, the weaknesses were directly linked to a lack of challenge in pupils' learning which resulted in many pupils making little progress. The teaching of literacy and numeracy skills is not effective in ensuring that all pupils reach their full potential.

OTHER ASPECTS OF THE SCHOOL

Aspect	Comment
The quality and range of the curriculum	Satisfactory. However, there are weaknesses in the breadth and balance of the curriculum. It is also not well adapted to the needs of all pupils. Provision for children in the reception class is good.
Provision for pupils with special educational needs	Good. Provision for children with special educational needs is good and enables pupils to work successfully towards their identified targets.
Provision for pupils with English as an additional language	Good. The provision and support for these pupils is good and they make satisfactory progress.
Provision for pupils' personal, including spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	Good. It is good for moral, social and cultural development and satisfactory for spiritual.
How well the school cares for its pupils	Good. The pupils continue to be provided with a caring and supportive environment as reported at the last inspection.
How well the school works with parents	Good. The effectiveness of the school's links with parents is good. However, parents have a number of concerns about the school.

HOW WELL THE SCHOOL IS LED AND MANAGED

Aspect	Comment
Leadership and management by the headteacher and other key staff	Unsatisfactory. The leadership and management of the school are unsatisfactory because they have failed to address effectively the falling standards. The monitoring of teaching requires further development in order to raise its quality.
How well the governors fulfil their responsibilities	Unsatisfactory. The governing body is effective in carrying out its statutory duties. It is not proactive enough in challenging the school about the standards it achieves.
The school's evaluation of its performance	Unsatisfactory. The school is aware that standards are not high enough and that a significant proportion of pupils are under-achieving. However, it is unable to identify why this situation exists and, consequently, has been unable to rectify the situation.
The strategic use of resources	Satisfactory. Effective use is made of available grants, funds and resources. The governors take into account all possible prices before making a final decision on spending. Staffing levels and resources are satisfactory and classrooms are used well.

PARENTS' AND CARERS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

What pleases parents most	What parents would like to see improved
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Their children like school. • Behaviour in the school is good. • Their children are expected to work hard and achieve their best. • The school is helping their children become mature and responsible. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Information about how their children are getting on. • The school working more closely with them. • The range of activities outside lessons.

Inspectors' judgements support parents' positive views of the school. There are extra-curricular activities taking place which are available to both younger and older pupils, and parents' concerns are not supported in this area. Parents' concerns about the school working more closely with them are not fully supported by the inspection. However, the inspection does support the view of the 30 per cent of parents who responded to the questionnaire noting that their children are not making good progress.

PART B: COMMENTARY

HOW HIGH ARE STANDARDS?

The school's results and pupils' achievements

1. Attainment on entry to the reception class, for the current group of children, is lower than that expected for children of this age with many having poorly developed skills in communication, language and literacy, mathematics and personal and social aspects of learning. From this starting point, the majority of children including those with special educational needs are now achieving well. However, many of these children, by the time they enter Year 1, will not meet expected standards for their age in many areas of their learning. This is because they have not been in the class long enough to benefit from the consistently good teaching now offered to them. Attainment on entry to Year 1 is below that expected for children of this age.
2. National Curriculum average points scores in 2002 tests show that pupils aged seven attained well below average standards in reading and mathematics and in writing their results were in the lowest 5 per cent nationally. In comparison with similar schools, results in reading were well below average. In writing and mathematics, they were in the lowest 5 per cent compared with these schools. Standards in science, based on teacher assessment, were also well below average. Few pupils achieved the higher level 3 in reading and mathematics with none reaching this level in writing. Since the last inspection, standards have fallen year-on-year in reading, writing, mathematics and science. This is due to unsatisfactory teaching and assessment which results in a significant proportion of pupils under-achieving. The school is aware that standards in reading, writing, mathematics and science are not high enough.
3. Attainment in National Curriculum tests in 2002, for pupils aged 11, was well below the national average in English, mathematics and science. When compared with similar schools, results were in the lowest 5 per cent in English and well below average in mathematics and science. The percentage of pupils who achieved the higher level 5 was in the lowest 5 per cent for these schools in English and science and was well below average in mathematics. Since the last inspection, test results indicate that standards have fallen considerably in all three subjects. Factors that have undoubtedly affected performance for both key stages are inconsistent teaching and frequent staff changes.
4. In 2002, the test results of boys and girls aged seven in reading, writing and mathematics showed that they were not significantly different, although girls outperformed the boys in all three tests. However, boys aged 11 significantly outperformed the girls in mathematics. With the exception of the 1999 tests, this picture is reflected in test results since 1998. The school did not analyse its results by gender before 2001. However, although more detailed analysis now takes place, the school can give no reasons for these results. During the inspection, there was nothing observed to suggest that there is any significant difference or disparity in the achievements of boys and girls.
5. The trend in results over the past five years in the core subjects of English, mathematics and science for pupils aged 11 is broadly in line with that found nationally. However, in the majority of schools, standards are much higher. The school's analysis of attainment recognises that the test results reflect significant underachievement by pupils aged seven and eleven when measured against national and similar schools comparisons. The school is addressing the attainment of pupils through the implementation of national strategies, systems to improve teaching and learning, improved curriculum and behaviour. However, while behaviour has improved, these have not been successful and

early indications of test results for 2003 indicate that standards will be even lower. The school's targets for 2003 are unrealistic and will not be met.

6. Standards seen during the inspection reflect no improvement on the results shown above. Inspection evidence found that most pupils by the age of seven are attaining standards well below average in reading, writing and mathematics. Speaking and listening skills are better and most pupils attain below, rather than well below, average standards. In their writing, pupils do not always take account of punctuation and experience difficulty retelling a story or describing the characters in a story. In English and mathematics, the overall attainment of 11-year-old pupils is well below the level expected and in science, it is below. The school's focus on raising standards is not having any effect because the work pupils are asked to do is not commensurate with their level of ability and teaching is not good enough to guarantee that pupils make progress at a level of which they are capable. The 2002 group of Year 6 pupils achieved well below average results in the national tests when they were seven. This indicates that pupils made little progress in their learning between Year 2 and Year 6.
7. Inspection findings show that standards in religious education are in line with those expected for the locally agreed syllabus for seven and eleven-year-old pupils. Standards in design and technology, information and communication technology, music and physical education match those expected by the end of Year 2 and 6. Standards in art and design, geography and history are below average by the end of Year 2 and Year 6. Since the last inspection, there are improved standards in information and communication technology which, at the time of the last inspection, were below average.
8. The implementation of the National Literacy Strategy is having little effect on pupils' literacy skills. Generally, pupils are not encouraged to transfer their literacy skills to other subjects; for example, geography and history, and they have limited opportunities for extended writing, research and note taking in other subjects. They express themselves satisfactorily and are more confident when speaking to a larger audience. Pupils listen carefully and, in class discussions, they experience a range of opportunities to express their views. The school's involvement in local and national initiatives, aimed at raising standards, is yet to have any impact on improving standards.
9. The implementation of the National Numeracy Strategy while designed to meet the needs of individual pupils is having a limited effect because the teaching of numeracy skills is not rigorous enough to ensure that pupils make enough progress. Teachers are not successfully using the mental and oral starter in conjunction with the plenary sessions, to consolidate effectively pupils' learning. There is some use of pupils' numeracy skills in subjects across the curriculum such as science, design and technology, history, geography and music. For example, in science, pupils produce graphs to record investigations and in design and technology, pupils use their skills in measuring. In music, they are aware of and count the different beats in rhythmic patterns.
10. Pupils with special educational needs receive good support. They make satisfactory progress towards their targets in literacy and numeracy skills and some make good progress, achieve their targets and no longer need to be on the register. The emphasis on reading means that these skills develop well and enable pupils to take a full part in lessons across the curriculum. Those pupils with statements for emotional and behavioural difficulties achieve well because of the structured support they receive. There is no formal identification of gifted and talented pupils by the school.
11. Pupils who speak English as an additional language are usually supported well in lessons and make satisfactory progress. Many average and higher attaining pupils under-achieve because teachers fail to plan suitable tasks which challenge them in their

learning. In English, there were few examples of extended writing. Most higher-attaining pupils have a sound understanding of the use of speech marks, their work contains some descriptive phrases and on occasions they use imaginative vocabulary. Higher attaining pupils read well. Older pupils read independently and with expression. In mathematics, some pupils in Year 6 are undertaking work at the expected levels in aspects of decimal calculations and have a good understanding of place value. Teachers fail to have high enough expectations of pupils' understanding and their capabilities.

Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development

12. The pupils' attitudes towards learning are good, their behaviour in and around the school is generally good, as are their relationships with one another and with the adults working in the school. Their personal development is also good, and is carefully monitored and recorded by their class teachers. Attendance is unsatisfactory as it is well below the national average for primary schools. However, recent figures indicate that this has improved.
13. Parents confirm that their children are very happy at school and are keen to be there. The majority are eager to learn and to take part in their lessons and any extra curricular activities provided. Indeed, one of the regrets of both pupils and parents is that there are too few such activities particularly for younger pupils. There are cricket, football and netball clubs after school and an occasional guitar club. There is also a mathematics club and a homework club for older pupils. There is also a reading club for pupils in Year 1 and Year 6. Some pupils sing in the school choir and the school arranges an appropriate play at Christmas.
14. Generally, pupils behave well in class. From the reception class upwards they know that they must sit at their desks or on the carpet during different parts of the lessons and they do not wander around unnecessarily. The reception class pupils enjoy their Noah's Ark and other activities, both in the classroom and in their outside play area. They respond quickly when their teacher asks them to change activities or to clear away their playthings. In the rest of the classrooms, pupils work well at the tasks given to them. When asked questions or given the opportunity to show their work to the rest of the class, many hands shoot up to volunteer. However, when asked to produce written work their productivity is poor. Even the higher achieving pupils do not write as much as would be expected in the time allotted. Some classrooms can become noisy with chatter during activities but pupils come to order very quickly when their teacher indicates that they must be quiet. They listen well to their teachers and to one another. They work well in pairs and groups.
15. Relationships between pupils and adults are good and pupils show respect for their teachers and the other adults who work in the school. Relationships between the pupils are generally good. Incidents of anti-social or racist behaviour are usually dealt with promptly and are carefully recorded; however, some parents and pupils told the inspectors that bullying and personal incidents between small groups of pupils were sometimes dismissed as unimportant. There have been two exclusions in the past year. Behaviour generally has shown a big improvement in the last two years with a revised policy agreed. Parents appreciate the work that the deputy headteacher has done in this respect. Classes have their own agreed rules and "Golden Time" has been introduced to reward all pupils. House points are awarded freely.
16. Pupils are well mannered and remember to say "thank you" without too much prompting. They are courteous to visitors and inquisitive about them. They are pleased to have equipment for outside play, but would like more. Older pupils are helpful and take

responsibility for tasks around the school. Each class elects pupils to serve on the School Council and they treat this as being very important although they feel that the school's management team do not do very much to implement their ideas or explain why this is not always possible.

17. Through Circle Time and lessons on citizenship, pupils are learning about their future roles in the community and to respect the needs of other people. The well-planned programme of lessons for the whole school includes issues like kindness, making choices and looking after animals for the younger ones and people's feelings, conflict, puberty and decision making for the older pupils. Years 5 and 6 very much enjoy a guided series of lessons called "Keep it real" which involve role-play about the community. Through the South Kent Education and Business Partnership, they have been part of a pilot scheme to bring the community into schools, with speakers, colourful posters and leaflets about life and the world of work. All these activities are helping to boost pupils' self-esteem.
18. Pupils from different ethnic groups, including those who speak English as an additional language are well integrated into the school. Pupils and staff show respect for the feeling, values and beliefs of others.
19. Unsatisfactory attendance has been a cause for concern for some time. Parents are aware of the need to ensure that their children arrive in school on time but there is too much lateness. Registers are closed twenty-five minutes after the start of morning school. The problem is attributed to the fact that the school is some distance from the homes of most of its pupils so that they are unable to walk to school and are dependent on parents delivering and collecting them. During the inspection, however, it was noted that only a few pupils arrived very late.

HOW WELL ARE PUPILS TAUGHT?

20. Overall, the quality of teaching is unsatisfactory because a significant number of pupils are under-achieving. The work seen in many pupils' books is not commensurate with their ability and while the teaching observed during the inspection was generally satisfactory it is not good enough to guarantee pupils' progress at a level of which they are capable. However, within this there was some good and very good teaching seen. The weaknesses in teaching which contribute to the under-achievement of pupils are mostly in the pace of lessons, in the level of challenge, in teacher knowledge of what pupils already know and what they need to learn next.
21. The quality of teaching for children in the reception class is now good and this has been the situation since January. This is having a positive impact on the children's attainment and many are achieving well. The teacher is secure in her knowledge and understanding of the needs of these children and she knows them well. The planning of work is thorough and effective. The learning intentions of the activities are clear in the teacher's planning and she shares them with the children; all tasks are purposeful and well organised. There are high expectations, routines are well established and the management of the children is good. Adults listen with interest to what the children have to say and, through skilful questioning, develop their knowledge and understanding. There is effective use of the teaching assistants to provide good support to both the teacher and children. They are involved in the planning for, and teaching of some activities, with the teacher. The quality of day-to-day assessment is good, involves all staff and gives the teacher information about what to teach next.
22. The teaching of literacy and numeracy skills is ineffective in too many classes to build on the below average standards with which children enter the school. Teachers do not

expect enough of many pupils, the pace of lessons is slow and this results in a lack of effective learning in lessons. Although the school states that individual targets have been set for improvement, there is little evidence of teachers reminding pupils of these during lessons. Consequently, many pupils are unable to identify what progress they make in their learning. A further weakness in teaching is the poor quality of teachers' questioning skills. These are at their best in Year 6. As a result, teachers do not use effectively the introductory part of lessons to assess, through targeted questions, what pupils already know and what they need to do next. When a group of children are well supported, for example, by teaching assistants, they make satisfactory progress. This is because they are clear about what they have to do and are given the opportunity to show what they have learned.

23. A positive aspect of teaching across the school is the good classroom management and discipline which most teachers maintain. There is a consistent approach to behaviour which enhances the quality of pupils' learning. As a result, many pupils have good attitudes towards their learning and they enjoy good relationships within the school.
24. The assessment procedures for recording what pupils know, understand and can do are not followed consistently. There were weaknesses in this area of the school's work at the time of the last inspection. This is mainly due to the turnover of staff and because the system is not secure enough. There is little evidence of diagnostic marking in pupils' work, although the quality of the small amount seen was good. The process of setting individual targets for improvement is not fully understood by the pupils. Few could clearly state what their targets were or what they needed to do to achieve them. Consequently, many pupils have little involvement in their own learning. Homework, when set, is usually appropriate
25. The deputy headteacher has set up systems to track pupils' progress across the school but the system is too new to have any impact yet. Also, the data collected of where pupils are now in their learning has, until this year, been based on teachers' own assessments which are not secure. The greatest barrier to success within the school is many teachers' lack of awareness that these pupils are capable of learning more.
26. Teaching assistants for pupils with special educational needs provide good support. The learning of pupils with special educational needs across the school is satisfactory. There is good support from teachers, teaching assistants and the bilingual teacher, which enables pupils who speak English as an additional language to access the curriculum and their achievement is satisfactory.

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

27. The school provides a satisfactory range of curricular opportunities. Teachers have worked effectively to improve the provision for information and communication technology, which was unsatisfactory at the last inspection. New equipment has been bought, teachers have been trained in its use and they are well supported by an enthusiastic teaching assistant. As a result, they make use of a good range of this technology in their lessons. A computer suite has been set up with appropriate hardware and software and timetabled lessons for each class ensure that all pupils have access to this area. This has been effective in raising standards, which now match those expected for pupils at the end of Year 2 and Year 6.
28. Since the last inspection the school has focussed on the provision for literacy and numeracy, however the effectiveness of this emphasis has been unsatisfactory as standards by the end of Year 2 and Year 6 are well below national averages. At present,

a disproportionate amount of time is spent on literacy with the result that most other subjects are taught in short timetabled lessons. This affects the breadth and balance of the curriculum. Some lessons are very short indeed; these allow insufficient time to develop teaching and the frequent changes of subject fragment the pupils' learning experiences. The teaching of practical subjects such as science and art and design suffer especially from these constraints and the repeated preparation and clearing up of equipment in short lessons is not an efficient use of time. Some planned links between subjects help to make the curriculum more coherent. For example, pupils in Year 5 were learning a Viking song and in Year 2, pupils painted and made a collage in the context of geography work on the rain forest. There are insufficient planned opportunities for applying skills of literacy and numeracy in the teaching of other subjects.

29. All pupils have equal access to the curriculum. Those with special educational needs and those who speak English as an additional language have specific programmes of work prepared for them. In planning the curriculum for these pupils, the school makes good use of the support from a range of outside agencies visit regularly and advise teachers on request. Teaching assistants support teachers well in the classroom, and pupils with special educational needs are encouraged to contribute to oral lessons and make satisfactory progress. Some make good progress and they are removed from the special needs register. There is no formal identification of gifted and talented pupils and the curriculum is insufficiently differentiated for the higher attaining pupils in each class, which results in these pupils making insufficient progress. Consequently, they do not reach the standards of which they are capable and few achieve at the higher levels.
30. Teachers plan the curriculum using nationally recommended schemes of work for many subjects. These have ensured that there has been continuity of curriculum content in most subjects despite the changes of staff in recent years. Assessment is still not sufficiently developed in order for teachers to adapt curriculum planning for the following year. Therefore, the improvements needed in order to raise standards have not taken place.
31. The curriculum is enhanced by some clubs, which take place out of school time. Both boys and girls can take part in netball and football clubs. All junior children have the opportunity to join the school choir, which at the time of the inspection was preparing to take part in the primary schools' music festival. The headteacher shares his love of music by organising an annual visit to the ballet for interested pupils in Years 5 and 6.
32. Provision for pupils' personal social and health education is good. There is a planned programme for each year group, which gives pupils insight into how the local community works. For example, Year 1 is involved with the South Kent Education and Business Partnership and have listened to speakers from a local store. Year 5 have visited the local police station and studied town security. Social and moral issues are discussed and displays in classrooms reflect a recent focus on healthy eating. There is a school council, which meets regularly and the two pupils who represent each class contributed to issues such as the 'One World' day when they were allowed to request the inclusion of aspects of particular interest to their class. There is a buddies system, which trains volunteers from Year 6 to support younger pupils in Year 1. Appropriate policies are in place for sex education and drugs' awareness and parental approval is sought prior to some of the specific programmes. Daily assemblies include a collective act of worship. All statutory requirements for the curriculum are now met.
33. The school has good contacts with other local schools, arranging sports fixtures and successfully taking part in competitions. Last year the team, which entered the design and technology "K-Nex construction" competition, reached the regional finals. Pupils

from Year 6 came second out of 18 schools in a mathematics challenge and very recently, Year 6 pupils won the local petunia growing competition.

34. The school makes good use of its contacts within the local community. During inspection week, a local lichen expert accompanied Year 6 pupils to the neighbouring churchyard to share his enthusiasm for the study of plant growth on the stones there. A visiting musician has demonstrated a range of instruments to the pupils and, as a result, some of them have begun to learn to play the guitar. A group of parents and friends shared aspects of their cultures and religious practices with pupils in a very successful initiative organised by the language support teacher.
35. The school's provision for pupils with special educational needs is good. Work is adapted for them, they are well supported by teaching assistants, take a full part in lessons and make satisfactory progress. The individual programmes of work prepared for them are discussed each term with parents and homework is set when appropriate. The school is aware of the specialist help available and makes good use of support agencies outside the school. Modifications to the building have improved access for pupils with physical disabilities.
36. The provision for pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good. Provision for spiritual development is satisfactory. Assemblies provide pupils with the opportunity to reflect on their own beliefs and those of others. Great respect is shown to the believers of all religions; on one occasion, for example, the deputy headteacher very sensitively enabled a Muslim pupil to explain aspects of prayer and provide correct pronunciation of various Arabic words. Pupils settle to pray and reflect very readily and appropriately. There were a limited number of examples in classes of pupils being encouraged to reflect. For example, Year 6 pupils reflected on moral dilemmas and commented on how Christians might react in a religious education lesson.
37. Provision for social and moral development is good. As they move through the school pupils have progressively more responsibility. Year 6 pupils, in particular, play an active role in helping staff and younger pupils. Pupils in this year were trained intensively by the co-ordinator from the Children's Fund to become "buddies" to younger pupils. One pupil was nominated and won an award for this work. There are team captains, and pupils from Year 6 set up the hall before and after assembly, give out registers, complete tasks around the school and read to Year 1 pupils in a regular reading club. The School Council and citizenship lessons help pupils to develop a sense of social responsibility. There are clear school and class rules, the latter framed in individual classes, which teachers and pupils refer to in lessons. Staff set a good moral example of care and respect.
38. The provision for cultural development is also good. At the time of the last inspection, it was noted that the school did not do enough to celebrate the range of cultures represented in the school population. This situation has been transformed. In a recent 'One World' week, for example, pupils with different religious backgrounds showed others how they prayed and explained aspects of their own culture. A number of parents and other community members also helped. This work is underpinned by a strong anti-racist stance taken by the school that has been recording and dealing sensitively with racist incidents before it became a statutory requirement to record such behaviour. The school has visitors from different cultural groups as well as storytellers, charity workers and artists. The teacher from the English Language Support Service has had a positive influence in the areas of both spiritual and cultural development. She has helped establish positive relationships with parents from minority groups and runs a session during the weekly "Golden Time" sessions when pupils can reflect on beliefs and values.

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL CARE FOR ITS PUPILS?

39. This is a school where teachers know their pupils very well and the staff know parents. Parents are confident that their children will make good progress in the caring, family atmosphere of the school. Procedures for ensuring the health, welfare and guidance of the pupils are good.
40. The headteacher is responsible for child protection. He has just undergone more training to update his awareness of the school's responsibilities. Another member of staff has also undergone training and a third will train shortly. The remainder of the staff know what is expected of them and how to deal with any concerns they may have.
41. The health and safety of all pupils is the responsibility of the governing body. There are regular checks on the safety of the buildings and site. Concerns raised in the last inspection report have been resolved with new fencing and safety gates. The governors have also taken effective measures to ensure the security of the school. The school has a satisfactory Internet safety policy which is understood by all staff, pupils and parents.
42. Pupils learn about personal health and safety. In a design and technology lesson, Year 3 pupils were tasting twelve different types of bread and the teacher made sure they had all washed their hands before touching the food. She also insisted that any bread dropped on the floor be thrown into the bin.
43. In a recent pupil survey, 75 per cent of pupils said that they know that there is a teacher or another adult that they could talk to if they have a problem. The school has good induction arrangements for reception age children and liaises with the local playgroup. Pupils say that they settled in quickly, even those who joined the school when they were older. When pupils are preparing to transfer to one of the eight secondary schools in the area, there are good arrangements for them to visit the schools and a "taster" day is arranged before the summer holidays. Pupils seem confident about making the change.
44. The school is fully inclusive and the provision for pupils with special educational needs is good. The main school building has been adapted so that there is wheelchair access everywhere and a toilet for disabled pupils or visitors.
45. Because the school's attendance is well below average, careful analyses are being made. There is an answer machine installed in the secretary's office so that parents can notify the school if their child is ill. Letters have to be sent to give the reason for absence or to request leave of absence for a holiday although this is discouraged. Parents whose children miss school frequently are contacted. Although there is no permanent education welfare officer at present, the school uses the service to work with parents.
46. The teacher for pupils who speak English as an additional language runs a home liaison clinic for parents weekly. This has helped the parents of these pupils become involved in the life of the school. They contribute to the education of others by visiting classes and taking part in such activities as writing names in other languages and running cookery sessions.
47. Parents are generally pleased with the standard of behaviour and say that it has improved recently. Seventy-eight per cent of the pupils who responded to the questionnaire said that they felt safe at break and lunchtime although only 58 per cent said they can learn well because other pupils behave sensibly. The school's policies for improving pupils' behaviour and self-esteem are beginning to be successful and this was seen during the inspection when the behaviour of pupils was good.

48. Procedures for assessing pupils' attainment and progress are unsatisfactory. There is a range of procedures, some of them very detailed and time-consuming, for assessing pupils' work and targets are set based upon the information gathered. The difference between these forecasts, targets and subsequent levels of attainment, however, illustrates that the information received is not used to guide accurately the planning of the curriculum to ensure progress.
49. The day-to-day procedures for monitoring and supporting pupils' progress are also unsatisfactory. Pupils are given objectives for individual lessons and they assess their own levels of achievement in those lessons. They are not, however, given an accurate idea of what the teacher is expecting and their assessment of their work tends to be based on how easy they found the task and if the work produced is neat and tidy. Teachers' marking is also not related to specific success criteria and pupils do not correct or improve one piece of work before moving onto another. They are left to apply improvements to a subsequent piece of work and this is too big a step for most to manage. Pupils do not, therefore, build on previous learning in small steps and, therefore, do not make sufficient progress. The teacher from the English Language Support Service assesses pupils who speak English as an additional language on arrival and thereafter. These assessments enable staff to plan lessons so that these pupils gain access to the curriculum.

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL WORK IN PARTNERSHIP WITH PARENTS?

50. Parents know that their children are happy at school and that they are keen to be there. They are pleased about the improvements in behaviour. However, many have reservations about the education that the children are receiving.
51. Staffing is the biggest cause for concern because of the numbers of teachers some classes have had. Some parents feel that the teachers do not look at the reading diaries, which they complete, and that there are insufficient opportunities for their children to read to teachers. Inspectors saw evidence to the contrary. Parents were concerned about the consistency and amount of homework set. Some hear their children read and many want to support their learning in other ways.
52. Parents of children with special educational needs are fully involved in the preparation of their child's individual education plan and in subsequent years are invited to review the plan and its targets. All parents are notified of their children's targets regularly.
53. Although the staff are willing to talk to parents about any problems and reply positively, there is a strong feeling among some parents that nothing will be done to remedy their concerns. A parents' forum has been running for some years in an attempt to improve the relationship between parents and the school. This was set up to give parents' opportunities to discuss issues with the headteacher. However, this is not well attended by parents. Nevertheless, a positive aspect of this initiative is that parents are able to come into school to look at their children's books, either at the termly meeting with teachers or during the other half of the term on a specified day. There are also meetings about the curriculum and other important matters. Attendance at these meetings is not good and only two parents attended a meeting arranged to discuss drug awareness. There has been a further recent initiative, led by the senior management team, which has given parents opportunities to give their views on improving communication between home and school.
54. Parents are invited to attend assembly on Wednesday mornings when certificates are presented for pupils' achievements. On the Wednesday of the inspection, Year 6 presented an assembly on the theme of 'teamwork' and about 20 parents attended.

Parents are also welcomed as helpers in class or with school visits. Recently the Friends of the School organisation has ended, as the small group of parents who ran it could no longer continue for various reasons. There was also a difference of opinion about how the money raised should be spent. However, a group of parents have been active recently in improving the area where the reception children play.

55. Since the last inspection, parents now receive a very informative newsletter every half term. Many letters are sent home explaining what is happening in school and detailing forthcoming events and visits. The school's prospectus and the governors' Annual Report to parents are both informative documents, which give all the information required by law. The end of year reports on pupils' progress give parents detailed information about what their children have studied and how they have responded. They do not, however, give any targets or suggestions for how to improve. Reports in a new, computerised format are due this summer. The home/school agreements are signed and returned by parents, but if they are not, the school contacts parents to remind them.

HOW WELL IS THE SCHOOL LED AND MANAGED?

56. The leadership and management of the school are unsatisfactory. At the time of the last inspection, management lacked the rigour necessary to move the school forward and this situation still exists. It also stated that the role of subject leaders was insufficiently developed to monitor and evaluate the quality of the curriculum effectively. This situation has also not improved and consequently standards have dropped year-on-year since that time. The senior management team's monitoring, evaluation and development of teaching are not rigorous enough to ensure that teaching is good enough and that pupils are given every opportunity to achieve their best. There are some new systems in place to track pupils' achievements through the school. However, these are too new to be having any effect.
57. The senior management is aware that standards are not high enough and that a significant proportion of pupils are under-achieving. However, they are unable to identify why this situation exists and consequently, have been unable to rectify the situation. There has been a large turnover of staff in the past few years and many of the staff now in place are inexperienced and comparatively new to the school. As a result, the school lacks a clear vision of the educational direction they need to take in order to raise standards.
58. The monitoring, evaluation and development of teaching is in place but the procedures are not effective in identifying teaching that is not good enough. The use of day-to-day assessment to tell teachers how they need to adapt future lessons is under-developed. This has a negative impact on the subsequent quality of teaching. Therefore, not all pupils achieve as well as they could. The monitoring of learning by subject managers is in the very early stages and this has remained unchanged since the last inspection. While all in the school are working very hard they are not focussing effectively on why standards are so low and what they need to do to improve them.
59. Leadership and management of special educational needs are good. Since her appointment last year the special educational needs manager has put in place efficient systems for the identification and support of these pupils. She works closely with all members of staff to monitor the individual education plans prepared for each pupil. These plans are reviewed each term and discussed with parents so that pupils' progress can be checked and new targets set. Pupils are well supported in class by teaching assistants and parent helpers. All receive training and are encouraged to share this and

their expertise with the team at weekly review meetings. There are plans to improve the provision for these pupils further by keeping and analysing evidence of their supported and unsupported work as well as maintaining the records of progress over time. The governor with responsibility for special educational needs shares his specialist knowledge and ensures that the school receives all available support from outside agencies.

60. The governors fulfil their statutory duties suitably. However, they are not effective in their role in holding the school to account for standards. A new and experienced Chair of governors is aware of the strengths and weaknesses in the school's work. Much of the information given to governors about standards and particularly national test results is not easily understood by them. Consequently, while they are aware that standards are not high enough they are not clear as to why nor are they aware of the extent of the under-achievement of a significant proportion of pupils.
61. There has been no formal evaluation of the cost effectiveness of the spending decisions against standards of work produced by the pupils. It is not easy to see how effective the school development plan is as a tool for improvement. It does not prioritise areas for development effectively, the success criteria are too vague and, therefore, the school is unable to evaluate effectively the success of any developments. For example, the action plans for both geography and history include a target for the subject manager to monitor teaching and learning in both subjects. This has not taken place and, at the time of inspection, there were no plans for it to happen. There are also no clear links to the school budget and it is difficult to identify whether the school can afford all the improvements highlighted.
62. Financial management is satisfactory and effectively supported by the school's administrative staff. Information and communication technology is used to support financial planning and regular budget statements are monitored by the school. The school makes appropriate efforts to seek best value when purchasing goods and services and all specific grants have been used appropriately for their intended purpose.
63. The school now has an appropriate range of qualified staff in order to fulfil the demands of the National Curriculum. However, this has not always been the case. Appropriate staffing is provided for pupils with special educational needs. The school's accommodation is satisfactory although the outdoor play provision for the youngest children is very small. However, best use is made of the limited space available. There have been good modifications to the building for wheelchair access and this has ensured that all pupils can participate in the school's activities. The school's resources to support pupils' learning are satisfactory. The learning resources for pupils with special educational needs are sound. Resources for information and communication technology and physical education are good. Resources for English, mathematics, art and design, design and technology, geography, history, music and religious education are satisfactory. Resources in the classroom are organised suitably and are accessible to the pupils which supports their independent learning skills.

WHAT SHOULD THE SCHOOL DO TO IMPROVE FURTHER?

64. In order to raise standards in the school, the governors, headteacher and staff should:

1. Raise attainment across the school by:
 - Providing consistent and good quality teaching across the school;
 - Ensuring that all pupils, particularly higher attaining pupils, are provided with consistent and suitable challenge;
 - Improving the quality of teachers' lesson planning and day-to-day assessment;
 - Improving pupils' understanding of their own learning. (*paragraphs 2 - 9, 11, 20, 22, 24, 76, 78, 79, 80, 84, 87, 92, 96 and 97*)

2. Improve the balance of curricular provision and assessment by:
 - Ensuring that each subject develops in a coherent and progressive way;
 - Ensuring that nationally recommended subject guidance is modified and adapted to meet the needs of pupils;
 - Ensuring that curriculum planning focuses more specifically on what pupils are expected to know, understand and do;
 - Ensuring that each subject is taught for an appropriate amount of time within each class and that time is used effectively to increase cross-curricular links;
 - Improving the marking of pupils' work to help them know what they have done well and what they need to work on to improve;
 - Ensuring that effective and manageable assessment arrangements are securely in place and are fully understood by teachers so that the full range of pupils' attainment and progress can be monitored by the class teacher;
 - Ensuring that all available school data is analysed and evaluated in order to better monitor progress and that teachers are provided with this information in a clear format;
 - Ensuring that the analysis of data is used effectively to modify the curriculum and its planning to better meet the needs of all pupils. (*paragraphs 25, 28, 30, 48 and 49*)

3. Improve leadership and management by:
 - Rigorously monitoring teachers' lesson planning;
 - Rigorously monitoring the quality of teaching;
 - Effectively monitoring the quality of assessment;
 - Analysing and evaluating performance data in detail;
 - Ensuring that the information on standards given to governors is fully understood by them;
 - Ensuring that all subject leaders consistently monitor and evaluate standards in order to raise achievement;
 - Ensuring that all staff are supported in their development of the full range of subject expertise. (*paragraphs 56, 58, 60, 61, 81, 89 and 90*)

In addition to the key issues above, the following minor areas for development should be considered for inclusion in the action plan.

- i. Improve the presentation of pupils' work.
- ii. Work more closely with parents to improve their view of the school.

PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS

Summary of the sources of evidence for the inspection

Number of lessons observed

41

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

31

Summary of teaching observed during the inspection

	Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
Number	0	2	15	26	2	0	0
Percentage	0	4	33	58	4	0	0

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

Information about the school's pupils

Pupils on the school's roll

	Nursery	YR – Y6
Number of pupils on the school's roll (FTE for part-time pupils)	n/a	196
Number of full-time pupils known to be eligible for free school meals	n/a	28

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Special educational needs

	Nursery	YR – Y6
Number of pupils with statements of special educational needs	n/a	5
Number of pupils on the school's special educational needs register	n/a	46

English as an additional language

	No of pupils
Number of pupils with English as an additional language	15

Pupil mobility in the last school year

	No of pupils
Pupils who joined the school other than at the usual time of first admission	25
Pupils who left the school other than at the usual time of leaving	29

Attendance

Authorised absence

	%
School data	6.5
National comparative data	5.4

Unauthorised absence

	%
School data	0.5
National comparative data	0.5

Both tables give the percentage of half days (sessions) missed through absence for the latest complete 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
176	2	0
1	0	0
5	0	0
0	0	0
0	0	0
0	0	0
1	0	0
0	0	0
0	0	0
4	0	0
0	0	0
0	0	0
4	0	0
0	0	0
0	0	0
0	0	0
0	0	0
5	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)	9
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	21.7
Average class size	28

Education support staff: YR – Y6

Total number of education support staff	10
Total aggregate hours worked per week	192

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Financial information

Financial year	2002-2003
	£
Total income	516, 261
Total expenditure	526, 486
Expenditure per pupil	2, 619
Balance brought forward from previous year	54, 792
Balance carried forward to next year	44, 567

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

Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 1 for the latest reporting year	Year	Boys	Girls	Total
	2002	10	19	29

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		Reading	Writing	Mathematics
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	*	*	*
	Girls	13	11	14
	Total	19	17	22
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	66 (81)	59 (65)	76 (69)
	National	84 (84)	86 (86)	90 (91)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	*	*	*
	Girls	14	17	16
	Total	21	26	24
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	72 (77)	90 (73)	83 (92)
	National	85 (85)	89 (89)	89 (89)

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

* Because only 10 boys took these tests the numbers have been omitted.

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

Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 2 for the latest reporting year	Year	Boys	Girls	Total
	2002	16	14	30

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys	8	10	12
	Girls	9	5	12
	Total	17	15	24
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	57 (73)	50	80 (83)
	National	75 (75)	73 (71)	86 (87)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys	8	9	13
	Girls	6	6	8
	Total	14	15	21
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	47 (63)	50 (87)	70 (93)
	National	73 (72)	74 (74)	82 (82)

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

Results of the survey of parents and carers

Questionnaire return rate

Number of questionnaires sent out	196
Number of questionnaires returned	48

Percentage of responses in each category

	Strongly agree	Tend to agree	Tend to disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know
My child likes school.	50	40	6	4	0
My child is making good progress in school.	31	46	15	4	4
Behaviour in the school is good.	27	65	4	4	0
My child gets the right amount of work to do at home.	25	55	8	4	8
The teaching is good.	38	44	8	8	2
I am kept well informed about how my child is getting on.	38	31	21	6	4
I would feel comfortable about approaching the school with questions or a problem.	44	42	10	4	0
The school expects my child to work hard and achieve his or her best.	56	34	4	4	2
The school works closely with parents.	31	38	27	4	0
The school is well led and managed.	25	42	19	8	6
The school is helping my child become mature and responsible.	25	63	6	2	4
The school provides an interesting range of activities outside lessons.	21	21	29	21	8

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

Strength:

- Children are given a good start to their education.

Area for development:

- The provision for children's physical development.

65. The provision for children in the early years of their education has improved significantly since January 2003 and is now good. This is due to the appointment of an experienced and enthusiastic teacher who quickly identified areas for improvement and has successfully implemented them. This provision is an improvement since the last inspection with many children now making good progress in their learning. Children are admitted full-time in the September before their fifth birthday. An effective programme of meetings and visits prior to starting school ensures they have a confident, happy start to their school life. At the time of the inspection, there were 26 children in the reception class. The school is now providing them with a secure and caring environment, with daily routines firmly established. The programme of activities is well planned based on the recommended areas of learning for this age and fully supports the children's intellectual, physical and social development. During the term before they enter Year 1 more formal work, linked to the literacy and numeracy strategies, is introduced.
66. Attainment on entry to the reception class varies considerably but, overall, is below that expected for children of this age. From this starting point, the great majority of children, including those with special educational needs, are now achieving well. However, many of these children, by the time they enter Year 1, will not meet expected standards in many areas of their learning. Some children are now making such good progress in their personal, social and emotional skills that their attainment in this area meets the expectations normally seen. However, although the children are now making good progress, over 30 per cent will enter Year 1 with attainment below that which could be reasonably expected of children of this age. Overall, attainment on entry to Year 1 is below expectations although there are some potentially higher attaining children. Assessment of children's attainment is judged against the standards most children are expected to achieve by the end of reception year.
67. Accommodation is satisfactory. The reception classroom is spacious, which allows for the easy movement of children, and provides sufficient quiet areas for them to read books, act out role-play and to make large constructions. The classroom is an exciting and stimulating environment, where children's work has prominence and is displayed effectively. There is a small outdoor play area which allows for the development of children's physical skills. The accommodation allows the development of children from the early years of their education through to the full National Curriculum. The quality of teaching is good.

Personal, social and emotional development

68. Teaching is good and the children's personal and social development are given a high priority, to good effect. They are happy to come to school, are well cared for and as a result they feel secure in their surroundings. They start the day with enthusiasm and know the classroom routines well, putting their reading folders into the correct container and settling quickly on the carpet. They listen attentively to adults and some will offer ideas when questioned. The teacher provides good opportunities so that children can develop independence when working in small groups. This promotes their personal development effectively and develops initiative and an early responsibility for their learning. When working unsupervised for short periods, it is evident that they are building good relationships with one another. For example, when involved in role-play about Noah in his Ark, the children worked well alongside one another and shared the resources appropriately. They are usually well behaved, play agreeably and many talk to each other about what they are doing. Less than 50 per cent of children will meet the expected standard in this area of their development and a few will exceed this.

Communication, language and literacy

69. Effective teaching enables most children to make good progress even though standards remain below average. They are provided with a wide range of activities, which support the development of language and literacy. From the start of their school life, they begin to develop their personal and social skills alongside those for speaking and listening. Staff offer frequent opportunities for children to talk with an adult and actively seek to extend the children's vocabulary. Children learn to listen attentively, follow instructions carefully and develop a growing vocabulary, enabling them to speak with increasing confidence in a variety of situations. The teacher works effectively within the structure of the literacy strategy and their teaching is good. Many children soon develop an understanding that words and pictures carry meaning. They know how books are organised and, with support, recognise some familiar words in simple texts. Good use is made of the literacy strategy to introduce children to phonics, for example, recognising the initial sound of a selection of toys and objects. The development of early reading skills is good with many children recognising words and objects that begin with the letter 'r'. Many recognise other initial letters and use early reading skills such as predicting what the next word is likely to be or getting clues from pictures. Higher attaining children can recognise most letter sounds at the beginning or end of simple words. Most children are aware of the purpose of writing and can write their names. Children are introduced to a cursive-style of writing from an early age. This is effective and some children, with support, quickly develop this style and attempt to write in short sentences. The children make good progress overall although by the time they enter Year 1 a significant proportion are unlikely to attain the expected standards in reading and writing. Their skills in speaking and listening have improved and sometimes match those expected for children of this age. Children achieve well in this area of their learning.

Mathematical development

70. Most children make good progress in their mathematical development due to the good quality teaching they receive. They are provided with a good range of practical activities for the development of their mathematical skills and there is good quality direct teaching. Many count numbers up to 9 and are making good progress in reciting number names in order from one to 9 and beyond. The higher attaining children show an appropriate understanding of addition and subtraction when solving problems involving nine objects and can find one more or less than a number up to nine. They gain a good foundation for future mathematics work through play in the 'sand' and with activities involving pattern making. Many work on the computer to differentiate between different shapes and use

their early mouse skills to click and drag their chosen shape. There is good development of children's literacy skills. These children are achieving well although less than 60 per cent are likely to achieve the expected standard by the time they enter Year 1.

Knowledge and understanding of the world

71. Most of the children enter the school with some general knowledge and, with the benefit of good teaching, some children are likely to achieve the expected standard for this area of learning by the end of the reception year. The children's knowledge and understanding of the world are developed well through relevant topics about themselves. They know their learning environment well and move confidently and with independence around the different areas on offer to them, both inside and outside the classroom. They talk about where they live and are knowledgeable about how seeds grow into plants. They understand that plants have leaves, flowers and roots. The children know the routine for the day and understand there are different times for daily events. They all enjoy making models using construction apparatus and talk about what they have built. They are familiar with the people in their school who help them and are well supported in investigating their surroundings or finding out things for themselves.

Physical development

72. Teaching is good and some children's physical development is in line with that expected for children of this age. Manual dexterity is satisfactorily developed through their play with games and jigsaws, and many opportunities are provided for children to develop their skills of cutting, sticking and using construction kits. They use modelling materials, pencils and brushes and show a growing ability to manage small items. Fine motor control is well developed in children's use of construction kits. Children use the outdoor space with an awareness of others and travel around the area without collisions. Their skills of balancing, climbing and riding two- and three-wheeled toys are as expected for their age. Children have satisfactory opportunities to play on wheeled toys, to climb and balance. Physical education is timetabled and planning shows a good range of gymnastic and games activities that promote the larger-scale movements of the children. Already, they have good control over their bodies and have a sense of their own and other people's space. There are good links with earlier learning and children handle tools, objects and pencils with growing confidence and skill. Physical skills are developed well through good teaching. Achievement in this area of learning is good although a significant proportion will not attain expected standards in this aspect of their learning.

Creative development

73. Teaching is good with children working well towards the expected standards for their age with a few already near to achieving it. They respond enthusiastically in a variety of ways to what they see, hear, smell, touch and feel. The opportunity to participate in playing musical instruments promotes a range of creative skills, such as describing the sound their chosen instrument makes and making up a simple rhythm. Higher attaining pupils move in time to the beat of the music. All children enjoy singing, recognise familiar songs and number rhymes and sing with enthusiasm. Through role-play, the children develop their own situations spontaneously. This makes a good contribution to their speaking and listening skills. Children are achieving well although about 40 per cent will not achieve expected standards in this area of their learning.

ENGLISH

Strengths:

- There is a range of activities to develop speaking and listening skills;
- Pupils are keen to experiment with words;
- There is coverage of all areas of the curriculum;
- There is good support for pupils with special educational needs and English as an additional language.

Areas for development:

- Raise standards in reading and writing;
 - Improve the presentation of work throughout the school;
 - Celebrate pupils' work in displays around the school;
 - Improve assessment procedures;
 - Increase the rate of improvement.
74. Standards by the end of Year 2 and Year 6 are well below the national average. In national testing for Year 2 pupils in 2002 standards were well below the national average in both reading and writing. Initial indications from this year's tests show that this situation has not improved. In 2002, standards by the end of Year 6, were also well below the national average. Work seen during the inspection and the results of the school's own tests show this still to be the case.
75. The speaking and listening skills of pupils are average and often above the standards seen in their written work. Pupils in Years 1 and 2 listen well in class discussions and make suitable responses. Higher attaining pupils in Year 2 are beginning to develop an understanding of aspects of formal vocabulary, for example using "My sister and I" rather than "Me and my sister." Further up the school the difference between oral and written work is quite marked. For example, in a Year 4 lesson pupils expressed well orally how to make a poem lively and interesting, modelling accurate and imaginative use of adjectives. Their written poems, however, lacked these features. In Year 6, pupils work well in discussions with partners and develop ideas and opinions in broader situations. A range of curriculum areas contributes to the development of speaking and listening skills at this age, including religious education and citizenship lessons.
76. Standards in reading are well below average throughout the school. By the end of Year 2, half of the pupils are below expected levels. The pupils heard reading of this age adopted appropriate strategies when encountering unknown words but displayed little real enthusiasm for reading. By the end of Year 6, pupils' standards are still well below average. Most pupils of this age read quite fluently but below average pupils read only occasionally to adults in school or at home. Consequently, they can be on the same book for a very long time. Higher attaining pupils have basic library skills.
77. Standards of written work are well below average throughout the school. In last year's writing test at the end of Year 2 no pupils achieved the higher level 3. Initial evidence from this year's test, show this still to be the case, with half the pupils of this age performing well below the national average. By the end of Year 6, standards are still well below average. For example, the majority of pupils can structure their writing but have difficulty sustaining ideas to stimulate the reader. Standards of handwriting, punctuation and presentation are particularly weak throughout the school. There is a lack of quality work, in terms of presentation and content, on display in most classrooms and this gives pupils little to which to aspire. Handwriting is inconsistent, with, for example, Year 2 pupils holding pencils in a variety of ways, some with styles that make it very difficult to achieve neat results. The joining of letters is inconsistent and pupils often underline

words and titles in freehand and cross out arbitrarily, making many pieces of work look scruffy. The content of a number of pieces of work shows evidence of underachievement. For example, two high quality poems were seen in Year 6, one from a below, another from an above average pupil, which were not identified in the teacher's marking to be of particular merit. If these pieces had been praised, perhaps re-written neatly or word-processed and displayed, the self-esteem of the pupils concerned would have been boosted and others would have a clearer understanding of what constitutes quality work. While there are some opportunities for extended writing in other subjects, for example history and geography, there are insufficient to help raise standards.

78. Overall, the teaching seen during the inspection was satisfactory; however, the lack of progress over time observed in pupils' work shows that it is not good enough to raise standards substantially. In most lessons seen, pupils worked hard to complete their tasks but did not always understand what the teacher intended them to achieve. Pupils write objectives in their books and then judge their own work, but this is often based on how easy or difficult they found the task rather than on whether they had really improved their skills. In some lessons, the initial activity does not relate to or stimulate subsequent tasks. For example in a Year 6 lesson, a high quality poem was used initially. The teacher skilfully helped pupils to understand both the emotions embodied in the work and the writing skills employed. The pupils' follow-up activity, however, was unrelated to this piece of work, although successful in itself. In another lesson seen in Year 4, the teacher successfully created the atmosphere needed for pupils to write a poem but pupils had to write a long objective in their books before starting work, which served to undermine pupils' concentration and the subsequent poems were of limited quality. The attitude of pupils towards aspects of the subject in most lessons seen was good, with pupils keen to experiment with words. Regular homework is used to develop pupils' basic skills, particularly spelling. The good work done by teaching assistants, alongside the use of appropriate learning materials and tasks, ensures that pupils with special educational needs and those who speak English as an additional language make progress commensurate with their abilities.
79. Leadership and management are satisfactory. Some of the marking seen in books is supportive and detailed but there is a lack of insistence on the quality of presentation. There are also examples of assessment not being used to get pupils to focus on gaps in their understanding and revisit skills before moving onto a new task. There are a range of formal assessment procedures, some very detailed and time-consuming but these have not helped raise standards. The subject leader works very hard to develop the subject. She ensures that the whole range of the curriculum is covered and monitors both planning and teaching. Areas of weakness were identified from last year's national tests and focus lessons have been devised to improve on these aspects. At present, these actions have not raised standards sufficiently. The subject contributes to the cultural development of pupils with texts from a range of cultural traditions used in lessons. The library is well used although the shelves are rather over-filled and some books are quite old.
80. At the time of the last inspection, standards in the subject were considerably higher and therefore improvement in the intervening period has been poor.

MATHEMATICS

Strength:

- Pupils' attitudes to the subject are positive.

Areas for development:

- Raise standards across the school;
 - Improve teachers' assessments of what pupils already know, understand and do;
 - Ensure that teaching meets the needs of all pupils.
81. Standards by the end of Year 2 and Year 6 are well below average. This finding is significantly worse than the judgement made at the time of the school's last inspection when standards matched the national average. Achievement for pupils with special educational needs and those who speak English as an additional language is satisfactory due to the extra support they receive in class and the greater accuracy in teachers' assessment of these pupils' individual needs.
82. By the end of Year 2, most pupils can count reliably beyond 50. They know about odd and even numbers and can recall specific examples but many become confused when they are working independently or when the numbers are greater than 12. Some pupils are confident at halving and doubling numbers up to 20 and identify the multiples of two. They know the names for simple three-dimensional shapes, such as cube, cylinder and pyramid. Higher-attaining pupils, through looking at the number of edges and the shapes of faces, are beginning to develop an understanding of the properties of simple three-dimensional shapes. Pupils learn to measure length using centimetres and metres and, through using halves and quarters, begin to understand the concept of time. However, pupils in Year 2 have few strategies for either adding on or back when completing simple addition and subtraction problems. Consequently, there is an over reliance on apparatus, for example, interlocking cubes. Few pupils are confident or know the number bonds to 20.
83. By the end of Year 6, most pupils multiply a number by 10 or 100 quite confidently and understand that multiplying by 100 is equivalent to multiplying by 10 and then by 10 again. Most are reasonably confident working with percentages and give the correct answer to 60 per cent of 50. Few can respond rapidly to oral questions and many are not confident at explaining how they work out answers to given number problems. However, in one lesson observed many pupils, by the end of the session, could interpret a simple pie chart based on earlier work involving probability. In this lesson, higher-attaining pupils constructed a pie chart to show the percentage of pages in a magazine that had news, sport, stories and jokes.
84. The quality of teaching and learning is unsatisfactory because a large proportion of pupils are under-achieving. They range in quality from very good to unsatisfactory. This is due to teachers' weak knowledge of what pupils' already know and what they need to learn next. Consequently, much of the work taught does not effectively take into account the needs of pupils at different levels of attainment nor does it build effectively on existing knowledge and understanding. In only one lesson was a teacher observed constantly reminding pupils of previous learning to enable them to use their existing skills and knowledge. The management of pupils is a strength and pupils generally concentrate hard and persevere when given challenging work and teacher attention. Those left to work more independently allow their attention to wander away from their tasks. Teachers do not assess pupils' learning effectively and there is little evidence that individual targets for improvement are understood by the pupils. Marking of work is satisfactory, but the marking does not consistently inform pupils of their strengths and of areas for development. There are very few displays of work around the school help to

give the subject importance in pupils' eyes or to celebrate achievement. There is some evidence of pupils' developing numeracy skills in other subjects, for example, in design and technology. Classrooms have notice boards listing mathematics vocabulary that make a satisfactory contribution to pupils' developing literacy skills.

85. The school has implemented the National Numeracy Strategy and all classes have a daily numeracy lesson. Teachers use the framework as the starting point for their lesson planning. Lessons follow the guidance for a three-part lesson. There are occasions when the introductory session lacks pace or the plenary is ineffective: the challenge is often too easy and pupils are unable to make clear links with their own learning, understand and move on. The most significant weakness however, apparent in lessons and from scrutinising pupils' books and folders, is the lack of consistency in the way teachers match the work to pupils' differing needs. This impairs the rate of their learning.
86. Leadership and management of the subject are unsatisfactory because the level of improvement since the last inspection is unsatisfactory. Standards have fallen year-on-year since 1999 and the achievement of most pupils is unsatisfactory. The deputy headteacher, as the manager for the subject, has worked hard to provide support for teachers' planning and their assessment of what pupils know, understand and can do. However, although there have been significant developments initiated by him, much of this is too new to be having any impact on standards. For example, teachers do not understand the new tracking system introduced last October. Its purpose is to record what pupils already know and to set targets for future learning through the school. However, the system does depend for its success on teachers being able to assess pupils' current attainment and this is the most significant weakness throughout the school. There is no up-to-date portfolio of assessed, levelled and moderated work to assist teachers to make consistent judgements relating to levels of attainment. Therefore, although systems are in place, the tracking of pupils' progress through the school is ineffective and, as a result, the school cannot be assured that pupils are making progress. The subject manager is aware of the gender difference in performance by the end of Year 6. However, the analysis, both of this and why standards are so low, has not been sufficiently detailed to pinpoint specific areas for development.
87. Senior staff have monitored teaching but much of this is not rigorous enough to make clear what is effective and what needs to be improved. In addition, although pupils' work has been monitored, there is insufficient focus on pupils' standards. The subject meets the requirements of the National Curriculum but the variable quality of teaching and the poor use of day-to-day assessment do not ensure that all pupils receive suitable work. The school needs to ensure that the National Numeracy Strategy is used to best effect and ongoing assessment is used to plan suitably challenging work to meet the needs of all pupils.

SCIENCE

Strength:

- Pupils in Year 6 have a good understanding of electrical circuits.

Areas for development:

- Raise standards across the school;
 - Improve teachers' assessments of what pupils already know, understand and do;
 - Ensure that teaching meets the needs of all pupils;
 - Increase the teaching of practical scientific investigations.
88. The standard of pupils' work in science is below that expected nationally both for seven-year-olds and for those aged eleven with few pupils achieving at the higher levels. This is better than the results last year but below those reported at the last inspection when results throughout the school were found to be in line with those nationally.
89. When pupils enter Year 1 their knowledge and understanding of the world is below that expected for pupils of this age. Teachers' assessment of pupils' work by the time they are seven indicates that standards are below national levels and that they are less confident in their knowledge of some parts of the science curriculum. In particular, they achieve less well in the practical aspects of scientific enquiry. Findings during inspection support this judgement.
90. Pupils in Year 2 know that seeds need water, warmth and light to grow and discuss whether pots are always needed as well. They know that seeds will not grow in a refrigerator because it is too cold but think they will not grow in a dark cupboard either. Very little written work was available from any of the pupils in Year 2. There have been many changes of teachers during the past year. Work in the pupils' folders shows that in Year 1 they are taught about living things, materials and physical processes. Much of their written work is in the form of worksheets which makes for efficient recording for early writers. However, all pupils are frequently given the same worksheet so there is little expectation of higher attaining pupils demonstrating their ability or extending their literacy skills. Most worksheets are related to the learning of scientific facts such as the sources of sound and the names of parts of a plant. There is little evidence of practical investigations requiring pupils to sort, compare measure and explain their observations.
91. Pupils throughout the junior part of the school continue to cover a range of science topics and to use printed worksheets regularly to record their work. The quality of most of this work is poor, carelessly written and rarely corrected. There is insufficient use of information and communication technology to record experimental data. Written work in Year 6 shows a disproportionate emphasis on practising for the national tests at the expense of the planned teaching programme and indicates that pupils' understanding is below that expected nationally. A discussion with pupils in Year 6 shows that they have a good knowledge of some parts of the science topics they have studied but that there are significant gaps in their understanding. This explains their poor performance in national tests. For example, most pupils have a good understanding of electrical circuits and switches and can explain the voltage of different batteries. However, some are unable to explain the difference in the brightness of bulbs in series and parallel circuits and some higher attaining pupils cannot describe a short circuit or explain resistance, which they need to be able to do in order to achieve at the higher levels. Pupils have carried out some investigations involving setting up fair tests and analysing the data collected. These are often done in groups, which are too large to allow all pupils to be fully involved in the activity. Some of the higher attaining pupils are unaware of how to interpret a range of data collected from repeated tests in order to draw valid conclusions from their investigation. This indicates that there has been insufficient teaching of practical

scientific investigations to reflect the increased emphasis on this aspect of the curriculum.

92. The quality of teaching is unsatisfactory because of the unsatisfactory achievement of pupils over time. Pupils in Year 2 use their own experience of running around at playtime to discuss how their bodies changed and apply this in the context of health and regular exercise. Teachers prepare their lessons thoroughly. Appropriate recording sheets are prepared to support pupils' observations outside the classroom. Teachers make use of the school grounds and local environment and pupils are grouped appropriately and supported well on these visits. Information and communication technology equipment is used well by Year 4 pupils for collecting data in habitat observations in the school grounds. The teacher in Year 1, for example, when observing a good variety of leaves in the classroom did not give pupils the opportunity to sort or classify according to their own criteria. Some activities are too closely directed. On some occasions, teaching does not build effectively on previous learning and some teaching opportunities are missed. For example, several pupils studying lichens on gravestones were unable to apply previous learning on sun and shadows and relate this to their required comparisons of plant growth on each side of the stones.
93. Teachers' expectations of pupils, particularly the higher attaining pupils, are not high enough and work is not sufficiently challenging to allow these pupils to reach the standards of which they are capable. Lesson content is often guided by contexts from a nationally recommended scheme of work but teachers do not always display enthusiasm for the subject and the majority of pupils complete work set without care over its presentation. Teachers' marking of pupils' work is insufficiently analytical in most classes and pupils are unaware of what they need to do to improve. When some pupils' work is uncorrected, they make insufficient progress and misconceptions are not identified or explained. Some assessment records are kept but these are not used in planning future work so, when science topics are taught again in the following year, teachers fail to find out or build effectively upon what pupils already know. However, in both infant and junior classes, pupils with special educational needs and those who speak English as an additional language make satisfactory progress because of the good support they receive in lessons from teaching assistants.
94. Leadership and management is unsatisfactory because although teachers use the nationally recommended scheme of work to plan activities in all aspects of the science curriculum, planning, teaching and learning are not monitored by the subject manager. Consequently, she does not have an overview of the taught curriculum or the pupils' progress throughout the school. She has updated the policy, which is due to be reviewed soon. She orders and checks the resources, which are adequate, appropriately stored and easily accessible to all teachers. A detailed analysis of test results is carried out and weaknesses in pupils' understanding are identified. However, this is not used to improve the planned teaching programme across the school so it is not yet effective in raising standards.

ART AND DESIGN

Areas for development:

- Raise standards across the school;
 - Raise the profile of art and design in the school.
95. The standards of work in art and design are below that expected for pupils of this age. This represents a decline in standards since the last inspection when they were found to be satisfactory. Art and design does not have a high profile within the school and very little was on display around the school or in any of the classrooms. Judgements of standards are based on the lessons observed, discussions with teachers and pupils, and work in the pupils' sketchbooks and folders.
 96. Teachers use a nationally recommended scheme of work and regular lessons are timetabled for all classes. There is some planned development of materials used. Pupils in Year 1 make small three-dimensional models of fruit in salt dough and junior pupils use clay to make thumb and coil pots. The teaching programme includes the study of artists' work. Pupils in Year 5 have studied Das Lamn animal paintings and have used pastels to create a similar effect. Photographs of an earlier classroom display show pupils' colourful studies of still life in the style of Cezanne.
 97. Pupils in all classes have sketchbooks for art and design but these are not used to explore media for example, paint and pastels or for experimenting with skills for example, to discover the effects that can be achieved with a range of mark making using different pencil techniques. Most sketchbooks contain partly finished pencil drawings, which are then sometimes repeated in later work with little improvement. There is little planned differentiation for the more able pupils and little evidence of improvement in most sketchbooks. Work is mainly unmarked and where teachers have added comments these are insufficiently analytical and would not support improvement.
 98. Teaching is unsatisfactory. Teachers prepared their rooms beforehand so that no teaching time was lost. In a lesson in Year 2, pupils used their knowledge of rain forests well as a context for painting and collage. Some pupils used thoughtful observations of book illustrations to represent palm trees with patterned trunks, and some selected thin brushes to attempt winding creepers. There was insufficient teaching of skills and techniques during the practical part of the lesson and the plenary evaluation was not analytical so pupils were unaware of how their work could be improved.
 99. Pupils in Year 5 attempted very ambitious collaborative group work in paint and textiles that was to be completed over several weeks and were to tell a story for Year 1 pupils. This context made good links between literacy and art and design and interested most pupils. The teacher introduced good ideas as to how the design might be achieved and most pupils worked collaboratively on the task set. There was insufficient time for development during the practical lesson due to curriculum time constraints. Pupils had to clear their work to prepare for the next lesson and the brief plenary session did not allow time to develop useful evaluations.
 100. Pupils with special educational needs and those who speak English as an additional language were supported well by teaching assistants, took a full part in lessons and made satisfactory progress.
 101. The leadership and management of the subject is unsatisfactory because although the subject is adequately resourced timetabled sessions are often too short to allow teaching

to be developed in this practical subject. The headteacher has taken on this responsibility, since the teacher responsible for the subject has been on sick leave since November. There is no monitoring of teachers' planning, or of teaching and learning, and no planned opportunities to share good ideas or teachers' expertise.

DESIGN AND TECHNOLOGY

Strengths:

- Consistent build up of skills;
- Extra challenge from, and success in, external competition.

Area for development:

- Develop the role of the subject manager in monitoring teaching and learning.

102. Standards in the subject are at the level expected for pupils of this age by the end of Year 2 and Year 6. It was only possible to observe two lessons during the inspection. As a result, judgements about standards in the subject are based on those lessons, scrutiny of work, photographic evidence and the records that teachers keep. By the time they reach the end of Year 2, pupils have made a range of puppets including shadow, stick and some attractive examples with moving parts. They make different types of vehicles using K'NEX, Lego and egg boxes. They also examine different types of materials before moving on to creating their own musical instruments from those materials thought suitable. By the end of Year 6, pupils work through a detailed design process before making. For example, in a topic on designing playground equipment, they start with visiting a playground and making detailed sketches of actual swings and roundabouts. These sketches include views from different sides and angles, particularly of how the different parts of the equipment join and move. They then design their own piece, examine possible materials and complete a planning sheet outlining the order of the making process including what they will do if their ideas do not work. This pattern of work is seen throughout the school. Year 4 pupils made containers following the same process and finished with an evaluation of their success. Year 5 pupils designed and made theatres with moving characters and are carrying on the movement theme in a camshaft project with the aim of creating a moving nursery rhyme.
103. The examples of pupils' work kept by teachers in folders show finished pieces of a good quality, an interesting range and with attractive decoration. The school has had some success in design and technology projects. For example, last year they entered a K'NEX competition to build a bridge and Year 5 pupils won the award for the whole county. Year 6 pupils have entered another competition entitled, "Young Engineers for Britain."
104. Overall teaching is satisfactory with one of the two lessons observed judged as good, the other satisfactory. A feature of the good lesson was the interesting ranges of examples of bread presented for pupils to try before moving onto creating their own sandwiches. Pupils in both lessons were very interested in their tasks and understood the processes they needed to undertake before they reached the making stage of a project.
105. The leadership and management of the subject are satisfactory. The resources available to the subject have been well organised to provide teachers with the support needed for projects to succeed. The curriculum covers the range expected and teachers are becoming confident with the topics that they teach. The subject manager has not monitored lessons but does scrutinize planning and the work on display and

purchases appropriate support materials as a result of her observations. The pattern of working has good end of unit assessment opportunities and pupils evaluate their own work realistically.

GEOGRAPHY

Areas for development:

- Raise standards by ensuring that all pupils have the opportunity to develop their geographical knowledge, skills and understanding;
- Ensure an adequate amount of time is devoted to the subject.

106. By the end of Year 6, standards are below those expected for pupils of this age because the pupils make insufficient progress during their time in the school. This is reflected in the small amount of recorded work in pupils' books and the lack of evidence that work is set for pupils of different abilities. Standards at the end of Year 2 are poor as evidenced in the poor quality and very small amount of work in pupils' books. This has resulted in poor progress by the age of seven.
107. In Year 6, pupils identify the main mountains and regions on a world map. They also have a satisfactory understanding of how continental and coral islands are formed. They have little idea of major towns and cities in the United Kingdom and are unable to place them on a map. There is little evidence of pupils building on previous learning as they move from Year 3 through to Year 6. The small amount of work available in all year groups clearly indicates that insufficient time is spent studying this subject and therefore pupils do not have sufficient opportunities to develop their geographical skills or to reach appropriate standards for their age. Pupils in Year 2 have identified the features of their locality and have drawn a bird's eye view of their bedrooms.
108. Teaching is unsatisfactory across the school due to the small amount of work completed by pupils. In a satisfactory lesson in Year 6, pupils investigated weather patterns in different areas of the world and correctly transferred the information they gained onto a bar graph to show temperatures and rainfall in major cities across the world. However, very few could name the major cities at the start of the lesson although some could name the correct continent for Canada and China. In this lesson, pupils attained levels broadly appropriate for their age because the lesson built on their previous learning on the mountainous regions of the world. In addition, there were good links with the earlier numeracy lesson on data handling. A weakness of the teaching was the lack of a plenary session to enable the teacher to evaluate the pupils' learning in order to assess what they needed to learn next. In a good quality Year 2 lesson, the very recently appointed supply teacher started with a discussion about what pupils already knew about Australia. She explained how much of the knowledge of Aboriginal people has been passed down by word of mouth. There was good use of questions to extend and further develop pupils' language skills, for example, that extended Aboriginal families are called 'clans'. Pupils were very interested in the lesson due to the teacher's good subject knowledge and her brisk, no-nonsense approach that ensured that they all stayed on task. Consequently, pupils achieved well in the lesson.
109. The school teaches the range of knowledge and skills expected by the National Curriculum but does not make provision for pupils to practise previously acquired skills with sufficient frequency. As a result, pupils' understanding is not as well developed as it should be. There are inconsistencies in quality and depth of planning and in the time allocated to the subject across the school. Planning is not customised to the pupils to

meet all their needs. This impedes their learning and the progressive development of their skills.

110. Leadership and management is unsatisfactory because there is no agreed system for assessing pupils' learning although the subject manager does monitor lesson planning to ensure it covers the school's agreed areas of learning. However, the programme of work is so brief that it is of very limited use. It lacks the necessary detail needed to enable teachers to plan effective learning opportunities. Teaching and learning have not been monitored or evaluated in order for her to understand their impact on standards. The school has made poor progress since the last inspection when pupils' attainment was judged to be average at the end of both Year 2 and Year 6.

HISTORY

Areas for development:

- Raise standards by ensuring that all pupils have the opportunity to develop their geographical knowledge, skills and understanding;
 - Ensure an adequate amount of time is devoted to the subject.
111. The standards are below average by the end of Year 6 because the pupils make insufficient progress across the school. This is mainly because insufficient history has been taught during the year. Standards are also below average by the age of seven, because progress is unsatisfactory in Year 2.
112. Year 6 pupils talk about life in Britain since 1948 and investigate the changes that have happened. They identify some reasons why changes have taken place but they are not so sure why aspects of the past have been represented and interpreted in different ways. They have studied the Victoria era and identified similarities and differences between then and now. They have a weak sense of chronology and have difficulty placing the events of different times in the correct period.
113. In Year 2, pupils are unable to talk with any coherence about periods of history they have studied and it is not clear from the curriculum planning across the school why these pupils have covered life 60 years ago when a very similar area of history is being taught in Year 6. This goes some way to explaining why there is a lack of continuity in pupils' learning across the school. However, in the lesson seen, pupils were learning about how children learnt in the 1800s but they had trouble in identifying how things have changed and what is now available in classrooms compared to the 1800s. By the end of the lesson, the class teacher encouraged the pupils to review what they had learned and overall, learning was satisfactory.
114. The school teaches the range of knowledge and skills expected by the National Curriculum but does not make provision for pupils to practise previously acquired skills with sufficient frequency. As a result, pupils' understanding is not as well developed as it might be. Planning is not customised to the pupils to meet all the pupils' needs. This impedes the progress they make and the progressive development of their skills. There are weaknesses in ensuring that pupils' do not cover the same historical period in different years.
115. Leadership and management is unsatisfactory because it has not been successful in meeting the school's aims for the subject, which are 'to provide some continuity' in their teaching. The programme of work is so brief that it is of very limited use. It lacks the necessary detail needed to enable teachers to plan effective learning opportunities. There is no assessment system in place. There has been no monitoring of teaching and

learning although the subject manager is aware that standards and achievement are unsatisfactory. There is little use of information and communication technology to support pupils' learning. The school has made poor progress since the last inspection when pupils' attainment was judged average at the end of both Year 2 and Year 6.

INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY

Strengths:

- Pupils achieve well;
- Good coverage of all aspects of the curriculum;
- Appropriate development plan for subject;
- Good improvement since last inspection.

Areas for development:

- Pursue the plans to increase learning opportunities within the classroom;
- Further develop systems for assessing pupils' skills.

116. Standards in all aspects of information and communication technology are at the levels expected for pupils by the end of Year 2 and Year 6. By the end of Year 2, pupils enter, save and retrieve their work. For example, they access information from a database and subsequently enter details about themselves to make a class database. They can programme a "turtle" and develop this work with similar on-screen activities. They do most of this work in the computer suite but also access information and communication technology activities in the classrooms to develop literacy and numeracy skills. In all this work, they show good mouse control but reading difficulties sometimes slow their efforts. The skills of pupils and the range of their work are gradually developed in Years 3 to 6. They learn how to read, write and reply to emails, how to search branching databases and work from spreadsheets and use drawing programs for a range of purposes. By the end of Year 6, they are able to bring these skills together to present a multi-media presentation, manipulating text, graphics and photographs to create their own "guide books" of the school. They can access CD-ROM's, use digital cameras and sensor devices to support work in science.

117. All of the teaching seen in the subject during the inspection was at least satisfactory with half of it good. A feature of the good teaching was lessons having purpose and pace and the encouragement of pupils to demonstrate their skills to each other. These features are an example of the teachers concerned having high expectations of pupils' abilities and potential. The swift pace observed is particularly important, as the computer suite is too small for all to work there at the same time. The school has identified this difficulty and is making appropriate arrangements for purchasing sufficient laptops to be able to have the type of lessons presently run in the suite in the classroom. This will give pupils more time to develop their skills and should result in a further raising of standards. Extremely good use is made of the skills of the information and communication technology manager in lessons and she works with pupils during the mornings in the suite with literacy and numeracy activities related to their lessons.

118. The leadership and management of the subject are satisfactory and the subject manager has developed appropriate action plans for the development of the subject. She has identified the difficulty for teachers in making accurate assessments of pupil skills as a

large proportion of the time when pupils are working on new skills in the computer suite they have to be with the remainder of the pupils. This should improve when more of the learning of new skills takes place in the classroom. A useful assessment and monitoring tool for the subject leader is the information and communication technology book, which stays with pupils as they move through the school. The school has its own website and it is planned to become more interactive to give more information to pupils and their parents when using it at home.

119. At the time of the last inspection standards in the subject were judged as unsatisfactory, with teachers having insecure subject knowledge, difficulties with hardware and software and only a portion of the curriculum being covered. All of these issues have been addressed and the subject has made good progress in the intervening period.

MUSIC

Strength:

- Standards have been maintained since the last inspection.

Area for development:

- Ensure that the subject makes a suitable contribution to pupils' developing spiritual development.

120. Pupils throughout the school attain the standards expected for their age and this mirrors findings at the last inspection.
121. Younger children learn to clap to simple beat and rhythm and most demonstrated improvement in these skills during a lesson observed in inspection week. Older pupils study a more complex syncopated rhythm and clap to this with some success. Pupils in Year 6 listen to music from Africa and South America and try to identify a cyclic pattern. They have a good knowledge of the sounds made by different instruments and can identify a mandolin from the taped sequence. This makes a good contribution to pupils' cultural development.
122. Teaching is well structured, for example, having identified cyclic patterns in taped pieces Year 6 pupils will go on to use this in their own compositions the following week. Teachers make good use of the resources available and use a range of modern technology with confidence to illustrate their teaching. A collection of CDs is available and these are used in lessons and in school assemblies. There are missed opportunities to link the subject to pupils' spiritual development because teachers do not identify them in their lesson planning.
123. The leadership and management are satisfactory and have succeeded in maintaining standards since the last inspection. The subject is well resourced and the detailed scheme of work is effective in supporting the teaching of the subject throughout the school. Specific timetabled sessions are allocated to music teaching in each class. Recently the school enjoyed the visit of a local musician who played a variety of instruments to the pupils. Since then a small guitar club has been formed which practises after school. The school has a choir which performs at the Ashford Music festival and the headteacher organises an annual visit to the ballet for interested pupils in Years 5 and 6.

PHYSICAL EDUCATION

Strengths:

- Good curriculum coverage;
- Social development enhanced through pair, small group co-operation;
- Thorough development of basic skills;
- Pupils are enthusiastic about the subject.

124. Pupils throughout the school attain the standards expected for their age and this mirrors findings at the last inspection. During the period of the inspection, the focus of physical education lessons was summer balls games. In this aspect of the curriculum standards are in line with those expected nationally. Pupils in Years 1 and 2 develop the skills appropriate for a number of ball games including moving into space, marking, feinting to pass etc. They work well in pairs and in small group activities. They show great enthusiasm for physical tasks. In the junior classes, pupils were seen developing the specific skills for the games of cricket and tennis. Pupils' skills of throwing, catching, running to intercept, hitting with cricket bats and tennis racquets are all average. In Year 6 there was however, a group of girls with well above average throwing and catching abilities for their age and gender. This is perhaps reflected in the fact that at the time of the inspection the school netball team was top of the local league. No secure judgement can be made about standards in gymnastics, dance or swimming, none of which occurred during the inspection but all of which are covered in a comprehensive scheme of work. In all the lessons seen pupils co-operated well and pupils with special educational needs, including one in a wheelchair, were integrated well.
125. All of the teaching seen was satisfactory, with the lesson seen in Year 6 being good. As a result, all pupils including those with special educational needs and those who speak English as an additional language achieve satisfactory standards. All lessons have appropriate warm-up activities, with teachers pointing out which of these activities particularly related to the focus of the lesson. In the Year 6 class, a pupil led others in stretching, showing knowledge of which body parts needed to be prepared for the activity to come. She had the respect of her peers who all copied her movements well. As lessons developed, teachers introduced specific teaching points to improve performance. Not all lessons concluded with a warming down activity. This would have been particularly beneficial for a Year 1 class who were rather over-excited as they made their way back to the classroom. Pupils behaved well in lessons and tried hard to improve their performance.
126. Leadership and management are good and there is full coverage of the curriculum. The subject manager is well aware of the constraints of the physical nature of both inside and outside areas and thinks that standards would be higher in gymnastics if the hall had a better floor and general facilities. It is also difficult, given the nature and size of the school field, to run full-scale games and athletics events. The football team, for example has to play all its inter-school matches away from home. The subject benefits from clubs for football and netball. The subject contributes to the cultural development of pupils through the inclusion of dance from a range of cultures.

RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

Strength:

- The range of teaching strategies.

Area for development:

- Develop assessment procedures.
127. During the last inspection, standards in religious education were found to be in line with national expectations. During this inspection, one lesson was seen so judgements are based on this and on scrutiny of pupils' work and discussions with teachers and pupils. Standards are judged to be in line with the expectations of the locally agreed syllabus at both key stages.
 128. Teachers use a range of teaching strategies to make the subject interesting to all pupils. For example, in a Year 2 lesson, pupils who were learning about Hanukkah, made a driedle and learned how to play a game that is played by Jewish people at their festival. Pupils in the junior school learned the story of the Hindu god Ganesh and demonstrated their understanding through drama.
 129. Sometimes lessons are very short and during the lesson observed, children were keen to play the game they had made but were not able to complete this in the time allocated. The range of work in pupils' folders illustrates a variety of content with sensitive studies of many religious practises and beliefs from different cultures. Children in Year 2 have recently studied the Chinese New Year and the Christian festivals of Easter and Christmas. Pupils in Year 6 have completed work on Hindu and Muslim deities and festivals as well as discussing issues and beliefs relating to death and the after life in different cultures.
 130. Pupils show interest in the topics covered and remember teaching well as illustrated in their confident responses to questions in an assembly about the symbolism linked to the Star of David.
 131. The leadership and management of the subject are satisfactory. The school follows the Kent agreed syllabus, which identifies curriculum content for each year and plans for continuity and progression. Teachers are well supported by the subject manager who maintains a good range of resources and plans for visiting outside speakers if they are requested. There are no formal assessment procedures in place.