

INSPECTION REPORT

ST MILDRED'S PRIMARY INFANT SCHOOL

Broadstairs

LEA area: Kent

Unique reference number: 118405

Headteacher: Mrs J Pearce

Reporting inspector: Mr D Manuel
21090

Dates of inspection: 3rd – 6th February 2003

Inspection number: 247890

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

INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Type of school:	Infant
School category:	Community
Age range of pupils:	4 to 7 years
Gender of pupils:	Mixed
School address:	St Mildred's Avenue Broadstairs Kent
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Appropriate authority:	The governing body
Name of chair of governors:	Mr K Aves
Date of previous inspection:	November 1997

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INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Team members			Subject responsibilities	Aspect responsibilities
21090	Mr D Manuel	Registered inspector	Mathematics Information and communication technology Music Physical education Foundation Stage Educational inclusion, including race equality	What sort of school is it? The school's results and pupils' achievements How well are pupils taught? How well is the school led and managed? What should the school do to improve further?
11414	Mrs A Bennett	Lay inspector		Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development How well does the school care or its pupils? How well does the school work in partnership with parents?
32391	Ms L Gabriel	Team inspector	Science Art and design History	How good are the curricular and other opportunities offered to pupils?
10827	Mr M Marjoram	Team inspector	English Design and technology Geography Religious education Special educational needs English as an additional language	

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PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

St. Mildred's, Broadstairs is an infant school for pupils aged between four and seven years. The school is situated in the district of Thanet in Kent, which has been designated as an area of high deprivation. The school serves the surrounding area but also attracts families from outside the area. The school is regularly oversubscribed. The school has 270 pupils on roll (144 boys and 126 girls), which is above average size for this type of school, and has three similar classes in each year group. There are 54 pupils on the register for special educational needs (20 per cent, broadly average), with a further 33 pupils under consideration for inclusion on the register. This is a higher proportion than at the time of the previous inspection. A high proportion of pupils in need of support is in Year 2 and makes up over one third of the year group. This proportion includes several pupils with a range of learning, physical, emotional and behavioural problems. Twenty-seven children are identified as being eligible for free school meals, (ten per cent) which is below the national average. In the past year, 20 pupils entered at other than usual times, many of these with a range of special needs. This is a higher proportion than normal. There are 15 pupils from minority ethnic groups and who speak English as an additional language. Four of these are at an early stage of learning English, the remainder have satisfactory levels of fluency. Attainment on entry to the school covers the full range but is below average overall. The school holds an Investor in People award.

HOW GOOD THE SCHOOL IS

St Mildred's provides a very caring approach for all its pupils, with a strong emphasis on their all-round personal development. The headteacher provides very good leadership and, since her appointment just over two years ago, has managed the changes in the school's priorities well. The school has created a stimulating and inclusive environment which is naturally incorporated into the daily life of the school. Teachers value all pupils equally as individuals, whatever their needs and work hard to enable them to achieve their full potential. This is evident in the good planning and teaching and the above average standards in five subjects by Year 2. Governors and parents acknowledge the efforts of the headteacher and the staff and are strong in their praise for the changes that have been made in the past two and a half years. Much has been achieved, although there are still a few areas for improvement, of which the school is aware. Taking all factors into account, the school provides good value for money.

What the school does well

- Children in the Foundation Stage receive a very good start to their schooling.
- By Year 2, standards in reading, information and communication technology (ICT), art and design, physical education and religious education are above expected levels and in music are well above expected levels.
- The quality of teaching is good.
- The school makes very good provision for pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural education.
- Pupils' attitudes to work and relationships between each other and with all adults in the school are very good.
- The impact of parents' involvement and their contributions to pupils' learning are very good.

What could be improved

- The tracking of individual pupils' progress and the setting of challenging targets in the core subjects of English, mathematics and science need to improve.

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

HOW THE SCHOOL HAS IMPROVED SINCE ITS LAST INSPECTION

The school was previously inspected in November 1997. Improvement in the key issues raised at the time has been good. The school now provides very good opportunities to develop pupils' spiritual

awareness. This high level of provision is evident in many lessons. Further investment has taken place in ICT, especially control devices, and good opportunities are now provided for improving pupils' learning. Standards in ICT are now above expected levels. There are now good opportunities for imaginative work and pupils' independent investigation. Planning for these opportunities begins in the reception classes. Other areas showing improvement since the previous inspection are the provision of a broad and balanced curriculum with a strong emphasis on pupils' all round personal development, better leadership and management from the headteacher and the governing body, better accommodation and range of resources and their use.

STANDARDS

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

Performance in:	compared with			
	all schools			similar schools
	2000	2001	2002	2002
Reading	C	C	C	C
Writing	C	C	D	D
Mathematics	C	D	D	E

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

The school's results in National Curriculum tests for seven-year-olds at the end of Year 2 in 2002, continue a trend of the past three years which is close to the national rate of improvement. However, over the past three years the number of pupils with special educational needs has steadily risen and, with fewer pupils gaining the higher Level 3, this has had the effect of depressing the school's overall score. Results in 2002 were below average in writing and mathematics. Girls do a little better than boys, which is a situation similar to the position nationally. When compared with similar schools, results are average in reading, below average in writing and well below average in mathematics. The school is aware of these trends and has identified writing and mathematics as priority areas for improvement. However, the school's targets for 2003 predict little improvement. This is mainly because well over one third of the current Year 2 pupils have special educational or behavioural needs.

In work seen during the inspection, standards in reading are above expected levels. Standards in mathematics are at expected levels. This is good achievement by pupils over time from a low starting point. Standards in writing are below nationally expected levels. In the other subjects, standards are well above expected levels in music and above expected levels in art and design, ICT, physical education and religious education. Attainment is at expected levels in science, design and technology, geography and history. Improvements compared to the previous inspection are very variable. These variations are the result of changes in the school's priorities, changes in staff and their expertise and the increase in the proportions of pupils with special educational needs.

PUPILS' ATTITUDES AND VALUES

Aspect	Comment
Attitudes to the school	Pupils' attitudes to school are very good. They have very good levels of interest and are fully involved in their activities.
Behaviour, in and out of classrooms	Overall, pupils behave well in lessons and at break-times and lunchtimes.
Personal development	There are very good relationships between pupils and adults throughout

and relationships	the school. The personal development of pupils is also very good.
Attendance	Satisfactory. Attendance is in line with the national average.

TEACHING AND LEARNING

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

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

The overall quality of teaching across the school is good. In lessons observed all teaching was satisfactory or better, with almost one third being very good or better; an improvement from the previous inspection. The good quality of teaching reflects the strong commitment to provide good learning opportunities for all pupils including their continuing all-round personal development. The teaching of children in the Foundation Stage is very good overall and at times excellent. This enables all children in the reception classes to make a very good start to their schooling and achieve well. The reception teachers and teaching assistants work very well together, ensuring that all children develop confidence in a caring and safe learning environment. Teaching is good in Years 1 and 2. The good teaching is particularly evident throughout the school in reading, music and ICT. Good teaching contributes significantly to the good progress that pupils make in their learning.

The good relationships between teachers and other adults have a positive impact on pupils' attitudes to learning, making them keen to get started on their work. Teachers use questions and prompts skilfully, ensuring that pupils of all capabilities are fully involved in whole-class discussions by phrasing questions in different ways. The teaching of basic literacy skills is good. Teachers are implementing the National Literacy Strategy successfully by providing a good range of activities that are matched well to groups of pupils with different needs. The National Numeracy Strategy is implemented well. Number work is strongly promoted and mental calculation is a good feature of all mathematics lessons. Good links are also made with other subjects such as science, ICT and design and technology, when pupils are involved in calculating, measuring and presenting information in graphical form. All pupils achieve well in their learning throughout the school. Pupils' learning is positively influenced by the intellectual and physical effort that they put into their work. Literacy and numeracy skills are effectively extended through opportunities provided in ICT. Pupils are encouraged to work independently and in pairs, sharing ideas and putting them into practice.

OTHER ASPECTS OF THE SCHOOL

Aspect	Comment
The quality and range of the curriculum	The curriculum is broad and balanced and of good quality, enabling pupils to make good progress in their learning.
Provision for pupils with special educational needs	Good. Most of these pupils are supported well by their teachers and teaching assistants through a carefully planned programme of work.
Provision for pupils with English as an additional language	Good. These pupils receive good levels of support which enable them to achieve well in relation to their needs and gain the necessary confidence to improve.
Provision for pupils' personal, including spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	Provision for pupils' personal development is very good. All aspects are promoted very well through a strong emphasis on pupils' all-round development. This is planned well in all lessons and consistently supported in the daily life of the school.
How well the school cares for its pupils	The school provides good levels of care for all its pupils. Their wellbeing and safety are given a high priority. The tracking of pupils' progress needs to be more frequent and more rigorous.

The school has good links with parents and parents themselves are very supportive of the school and its work. They are full of praise for the improvements that have taken place in the past two years.

HOW WELL THE SCHOOL IS LED AND MANAGED

Aspect	Comment
Leadership and management by the headteacher and other key staff	The leadership and management provided by the headteacher and other key staff are good overall. The headteacher provides very good leadership and a very clear educational direction for the work of the school, which now involves others in the management of priorities.
How well the governors fulfil their responsibilities	The governing body is effective and has a good understanding of its strategic role. The governors fulfil all their statutory responsibilities and help to foster very good links in the community.
The school's evaluation of its performance	Priorities are reviewed carefully by the governors on an annual basis. The governing body is more involved in evaluation than at the time of the previous inspection and is developing strategies for monitoring the school's effectiveness and setting new targets.
The strategic use of resources	Good use is made of resources to support teaching and learning and agreed priorities. Staffing and accommodation are good.

The overall efficiency of the school is good. The school successfully applies the principles of best value for money in its quest for continual improvement and, as a result, money is spent carefully. The school's day-to-day financial controls and procedures are very good.

PARENTS' AND CARERS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

What pleases parents most	What parents would like to see improved
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Children like school and make good progress. • Behaviour in school is good. • Teaching is good. • The school expects children to work hard and to achieve their best. • The school is helping children to become mature and responsible. • The school is well led and managed. • The school works closely with parents who feel comfortable about approaching the school with a question or a problem. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • About one sixth of parents who replied to the questionnaire would like to see a more interesting range of activities outside lessons.

The pre-inspection meeting with parents was extremely positive, as were most of the returned questionnaires. The inspection team agrees with what pleases parents most. The team considers that the curriculum is supported by a good range of activities but there are no clubs outside of school time. However, this is a similar picture nationally for this type of school and age range.

PART B: COMMENTARY

HOW HIGH ARE STANDARDS?

The school's results and pupils' achievements

1. Children enter reception classes with levels of attainment which, overall, are below those expected for this age. They make good progress in the Foundation Stage (for children who are under five) and by the time they enter statutory schooling at the end of the reception year, most are likely to attain the early learning goals in personal, social and emotional development, communication, language and literacy, mathematics, knowledge and understanding of the world and physical development and exceed them in creative development. Children receive a very good start to their schooling and this positive support is maintained throughout the school.
2. The school's results in National Curriculum tests for seven-year-olds at the end of Year 2 in 2002 continue a trend of the past three years which is close to national levels. In English, the proportion of pupils reaching the expected Level 2 and the higher Level 3 were in line with the national average in reading. In writing, although the proportion of Level 2 and above was at national levels, the proportion attaining the higher Level 3 was below the national average. In mathematics, the proportion of pupils attaining the expected Level 2 and the higher Level 3 was below the national average. This had the effect of depressing the school's overall score. Girls do a little better than boys which is a situation similar to the position nationally. When compared with similar schools, in terms of the percentage of pupils that are eligible for a free school meal, standards are average in reading, below average in writing and well below average in mathematics.
3. The results of these formal tests reflect the increasing proportion of pupils with special educational and behavioural needs. With the appointment of the new headteacher two and a half years ago, a priority was placed upon the all-round development of pupils. The good progress in support of this aim is confirmed by the work seen during the inspection. This reflects the school's particular success in creating a learning environment that supports and motivates all pupils, whether boys or girls, those of all attainment levels and those who speak English as an additional language. This is particularly true for the pupils in the current Year 2, of whom between one third and a half have special educational or behavioural needs.
4. Annual targets are set by the local education authority based on the early assessment in reception. These indicate the percentages of pupils who are expected to reach average and above average levels by the end of Year 2. The school's targets for 2003 show a drop in expected levels due to the higher than normal proportion of pupils with special educational needs.
5. Inspection evidence shows that by the end of Year 2, standards in reading are above levels expected nationally. Standards in mathematics are at expected levels. This is good achievement by pupils over time from a low starting point. This is due to pupils' positive attitudes as a result of good teaching with the emphasis on the direct teaching of specific skills in each subject and on providing specific support and challenge for each individual pupil. Standards in writing are below expected levels and are seen as a priority in the current improvement plan.
6. In the other subjects of the curriculum, all pupils maintain at least satisfactory, and in many subjects, good levels of achievement. Standards are well above nationally

expected levels in music and above expected levels in art and design, ICT, physical education and religious education. Attainment is at expected levels in science, design and technology, geography and history. Improvements compared to the previous inspection are very variable. Standards have improved in reading, music and religious education, have stayed the same in art and design, geography and physical education and have dropped in English overall, mathematics, science, design and technology and history. These variations are the result of changes in the school's priorities, changes in staff and their areas of expertise and the increase in the proportion of pupils with special educational needs.

7. The school has been particularly successful in creating a very positive learning environment to include all pupils. This is particularly relevant for the high proportion of pupils with special educational needs. Most of them have specific problems with reading, writing and number, although a significant minority also has physical or emotional and behavioural difficulties. They achieve well, making good progress towards their targets as a result of the good teaching and the very good extra support they receive from the school's team of well-qualified teaching assistants. They enable these pupils to become fully involved in group learning tasks and help them to retain their focus during whole-class sessions.
8. The needs of the very small proportion of pupils who speak English as an additional language at an early stage, are met effectively and they achieve at the same rate as other pupils. Pupils from minority ethnic groups who are not at an early stage of learning English also achieve well. Higher attaining pupils and some average attaining pupils, however, are not always sufficiently challenged to enable them all to achieve the higher levels they are expected to achieve.

Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development

9. Pupils enjoy school and have very good attitudes towards learning. They arrive happily for school in the mornings, and separate easily from their parents and carers. In the few minutes when pupils line up waiting to go into the building, there is a calm and orderly process. Teachers have music playing in the classrooms at the beginning of each session, so that there is a calm start to the day. Pupils are keen to participate, and even the youngest give confident responses to their names when the register is called. They respond well to praise, and this gives them confidence and raises their level of enthusiasm.
10. Overall, pupils show good behaviour in class. Children in the reception classes settle quickly to the routines of school and behave very well. In Years 1 and 2, pupils behave better in lessons when calm control methods are used. This was demonstrated well in a Year 1 dance lesson when good control encouraged them to concentrate on learning the steps. On a very small number of occasions, inappropriate behaviour by individuals or a small group of boys, disturbed an exciting lesson and hindered learning for the whole class. Pupils behave very well when listening as a whole year group to the headteacher reading a story, or in the dining areas at lunchtime, eating almost in silence. In the playground they play together well, particularly when activities are available for them. Pupils who misbehave understand clearly what they have done wrong, and need little telling off. There is no evidence of any kind of bullying, as confirmed by parents at their meeting, and there have been no exclusions.
11. There are very good relationships between pupils and with all the adults in the school. Pupils like working with an adult, whether it is a teacher, teaching assistant or parent helper. Very good levels of racial and social harmony are evident throughout the school. Minority ethnic pupils are integrated well. Pupils work well together, as observed in a

Year 2 English lesson sharing their feelings about a story. In the Year 2 celebration circle times, when pupils discuss a range of ideas, pupils show developing social skills as they concentrate on the pupil in the centre, and say positive, affirming things about them. Pupils' personal development is now better than at the time of the previous inspection, because a very good caring ethos now pervades the school. The change in focus has allowed pupils more control over their day. Pupils work well on their own, taking turns to use the class computer in the corridor, or in a small collaborative group in the classroom.

12. Reception class pupils have good opportunities to choose their activities and respond excitedly, often without realising that the teacher has introduced a new learning opportunity. For example, two girls who just wanted to dress up as princesses were encouraged to make themselves crowns, which involved drawing the zigzag shapes, cutting them out, colouring in and joining the ends. Pupils are becoming aware of the world outside Broadstairs, and understanding the different conditions for children living in other countries. One teacher, having visited Kenya, showed a video of children playing football with improvised equipment. Pupils wanted to contribute to the things she took next time. One boy wanted to give his goalposts, which had been a Christmas present; his parents agreed and the goalposts are now in Kenya.
13. Attendance is very close to the national average, and unauthorised absence is better than the national average. Almost all pupils in school arrive on time. The computerised attendance registers are now being properly printed off and records kept, as required.

HOW WELL ARE PUPILS TAUGHT?

14. The overall quality of teaching is good. In the 53 lessons observed all teaching was satisfactory or better, with almost one third being very good or better, an improvement from the previous inspection. The previous weakness of the lack of opportunities for pupils to develop independence has been overcome. The good quality of teaching reflects the strong commitment to provide the good learning opportunities for all pupils, including their continuing all-round personal development.
15. The teaching of children in the Foundation Stage is very good overall and at times excellent. This enables all children in the reception classes to make a very good start to their schooling and achieve well. Good quality planning provides children with a wide range of stimulating and relevant learning activities. All staff know the children well, provide good role models and create very good relationships. Activities are well matched to each child's capabilities and there is very good management of the children. The classrooms and learning activities are well organised and children are constantly working and learning. There is careful use of day-to-day assessment of individual children's responses. Teachers' planning takes account of this assessment and this leads to all children having their specific needs fully catered for. The reception teachers and teaching assistants work very well together, ensuring that all children develop confidence in a caring and safe learning environment.
16. Teaching is good in Years 1 and 2. The good teaching is particularly evident throughout the school in reading, music and ICT and contributes significantly to the good progress that pupils make in their learning. The changes in staff and their areas of responsibility have resulted in the rise in standards in particular subjects over the past three years.
17. The characteristics of the good and better teaching include detailed planning to meet the full range of pupils' needs with interesting learning activities. Teachers have clear expectations of pupils and the very good management of pupils results in calm, purposeful working atmospheres in classrooms. Teachers are very aware of pupils

who need additional support and plan effective help for them using the good number of teaching assistants. These support staff are briefed thoroughly and the quality of their guidance is good. Pupils are fully integrated into the activities and supported well, for example when asking and answering questions. The relationships between teachers and other adults in the classroom are very good and a strength of the school. These have a positive impact on pupils' attitudes to learning, making them keen to get started on their work. Teachers use questions and prompts skilfully, ensuring that pupils of all capabilities are fully involved in whole-class discussions by phrasing questions in different ways. Thus, lower attaining pupils gain confidence from being able to contribute successfully and average and higher attaining pupils are challenged to think hard and explain their reasoning. Resources are used effectively to support pupils' learning.

18. Teachers' subject knowledge is used well in the planning of lessons in all classes. Planning takes place in year group teams and this practice ensures that pupils' learning builds successfully on what has been learned earlier. Individual lesson plans provide clear objectives for the specific learning to be achieved by pupils. In most lessons, teachers helpfully discuss these learning intentions with pupils and constantly remind pupils of them as the lesson progresses.
19. The teaching of basic literacy skills is good. Teachers are implementing the National Literacy Strategy successfully by providing a good range of activities that are matched well to groups of pupils with different needs. Teachers provide good opportunities in subjects other than English, to develop pupils' speaking, reading and writing skills. This is particularly evident in ICT and history, where pupils' work contributes to their progress in the basic skills of English. Sessions known as circle time, when pupils hold discussions about issues that relate particularly to their personal development, are successfully used by teachers as opportunities for the development of speaking and listening skills. The National Numeracy Strategy is implemented well. Number work is strongly promoted and mental calculation is a good feature of all mathematics lessons. Good links are also made with other subjects such as science, ICT and design and technology, when pupils are involved in calculating, measuring and presenting information in graphical form.
20. All pupils achieve well in their learning throughout the school. Pupils' learning is positively influenced by the intellectual and physical effort that they put into achieving as well as they can from the experiences that are provided for them. Pupils' learning is also helped significantly by teachers' good understanding of how skills in one subject can be consolidated by experiences in another subject. A range of skills are extended when pupils are provided with suitable opportunities in their computer work. Pupils are encouraged to work independently and in pairs, sharing ideas and putting them into practice.
21. There is consistently good teaching of pupils with special educational needs. The co-ordinator for special educational needs manages her responsibilities well and provides good support for teachers and teaching assistants to promote the learning of these pupils. Work is carefully planned to meet their particular learning needs effectively. Teachers work and plan closely with each other and, where necessary, with colleagues from specialist agencies to devise suitable activities throughout the curriculum. Teaching assistants make a particularly important contribution to the teaching and learning team for special needs. They work closely with teachers on a daily basis to provide sensitive and caring support that successfully promotes pupils' learning. They are clearly aware of the targets set in pupils' individual education plans so that all the adults involved are working together and are helping pupils to learn. They achieve the fine balance that is needed to provide the good levels of support that is necessary for

these pupils to succeed, while at the same time enabling them to work independently when required. The teaching of pupils who speak English as an additional language and pupils from minority ethnic groups is equally good and well planned.

22. The use of homework is satisfactory and has been successfully maintained since the previous inspection. All pupils have regular practice at the basic skills of literacy and numeracy and this effectively consolidates their learning in lessons.

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

23. The school provides a good curriculum for children in the Foundation Stage. All children have good access to the curriculum and benefit from a wide range of activities. Outdoor play provision is now much improved since the time of the previous inspection. This, combined with good teaching, ensures that these pupils are prepared very well for their transfer to statutory education in Year 1. The quality and range of curriculum activities are good in Years 1 and 2 where good use is made of the local community to support and enrich pupils' learning. The quality of learning opportunities provides stimulating activities as seen in subjects such as art and design, ICT, music, physical education and religious education as well as in reading. Throughout the school particularly good thought is given to the provision for pupils with special educational needs and those for whom English is an additional language. The provision for special educational needs pupils, both in the Foundation Stage and in the infant classes, is good with well-defined and understood systems and procedures, and high levels of adult support.
24. The curriculum is broad, balanced and relevant, and covers all areas of the National Curriculum and the locally agreed syllabus for religious education. As a result, pupils make at least satisfactory, and usually good, progress in their learning across the full range of the curriculum. The National Literacy and Numeracy Strategies have been introduced successfully. The school has thought carefully about provision in general, and there are good links between different subjects. The quality and range of learning opportunities are good.
25. Effective policies are in place for all subjects, and equality of access and opportunity for all pupils is ensured and is good overall. In their medium- and short-term planning, teachers within year groups work collaboratively. This means that pupils in the same year groups benefit from experiencing similar subject content and are taught within a secure and supportive learning environment. The school has effective strategies for teaching literacy and numeracy. Drama is used effectively, which enhances the overall quality of provision and results in opportunities for the creative use of speaking and listening skills. Early literacy support programmes are run daily with targeted groups of pupils in Year 1. Mathematics is enhanced by the good use of ICT and good links are made to other curriculum areas. In science the curriculum has a strong emphasis placed on investigation, observation and developing the skill of prediction. This was judged a weakness in the previous report. The school makes good use of the 'Write Dance' programme to develop pupils' co-ordination skills in different curriculum areas. The school also runs a 'Fizzy' programme regularly which is used effectively to further develop co-ordination and balance with small groups of targeted children.
26. There is very good provision for personal, social and health education (PSHE). The policy has recently been amended and each year group is following a programme of study in order to raise the profile of this area of the curriculum. The school uses circle time to promote personal development. The positive attitudes and behaviour promoted have a significant impact on learning. Opportunities to extend health education are

exploited extensively in the cross-curricular context. Pupils learn about keeping healthy and a successful 'healthy eating week' was held, with visits from local retailers providing a variety of food for the children to taste. The school has also adopted the scheme 'Brain gym'. This includes free and constant access to water, and music is played when the pupils come in from lunchtime play to establish a calm atmosphere.

27. Educational visits further enhance pupils' learning. A wide variety of visits are made to such places as museums and wildlife areas, which broaden pupils' experience of the environment beyond their own. Visitors are regularly welcomed into school. Examples include the fire brigade and police liaison officer, as well as a theatre group, a wide range of musicians and visiting foreign teachers. Following a visit to the school from a charity linked to Kenya, the school held an 'Africa day' in order to raise pupils' awareness and collect donated equipment to send to Kenya with an invited teacher from the school.
28. Links with partner institutions are good. The school has improved its links with local nursery schools and with the local junior schools. They also have close links with Gap House, a speech, language and communication school which provides selected pupils with very good support. Good liaison and record-keeping ensure transfer of information with those children who spend time both there and at school.
29. Provision for pupils' spiritual development is very good and a great improvement from the previous report when it was judged to be unsatisfactory. It is promoted very effectively, not only through assemblies and religious education, but through the high standards of teaching strategies in most lessons. In assemblies, pupils are asked to reflect on what makes school a happy place and how other people help them. This encourages them to think about how they might help others. Special moments are created for reflection by the lighting of a candle. Pupils are invited to share values and beliefs, some religious, and how they affect people's lives. Opportunities provided in art and design and music encourage appreciation of the efforts of others and ways to express their own feelings and emotions, particularly demonstrated when playing music and singing together. Pupils are strongly encouraged to reflect on the purpose of life and helping others.
30. Provision for pupils' moral development is very good and has improved since the previous inspection when it was judged to be good. A strong moral code is taught through a whole-school culture which incorporates all aspects of school life and forms the basis of the very good relationships observed during the inspection. Teachers and teaching assistants provide very good role models by dealing with pupils in a calm and confident manner. Pupils are taught right from wrong and interact very well with each other in lessons such as music and physical education. They are given good opportunities to share their ideas about such moral concepts as helping others less fortunate than themselves. The school's values are strongly reflected in the school code that is clearly displayed. As a result of this consistent approach, pupils know and understand the school rules and show high levels of respect for each other and all adults in the school. They are taught to show respect for equipment and take good levels of responsibility for the use of computers. Reception children are also taught to share their outside play equipment in the inner courtyard area.
31. The school makes very good provision for pupils' social development and this has improved from the satisfactory levels judged in the previous inspection. The school fosters a strong sense of community within its teaching day and this approach is firmly rooted in the school's position as an integral part of the local community. From the time they start school, pupils are encouraged to share and to co-operate and this is clearly evident throughout the school. The resulting caring attitudes support their social

development very well. In the playground, they are given good opportunities to share their games together in small groups, both boys and girls and in mixed ages, and so develop high levels of social and racial harmony. Well planned activities provide very good opportunities for pupils to develop independence and extend their social interaction, while at the same time extending their learning in a range of subjects. These successes are much appreciated by parents.

32. Provision for pupils' cultural development is very good and has improved from the satisfactory levels reported in the previous inspection. Examples include a range of music from different cultures, for instance African drumming and Indian dance music. Pupils also appreciate and learn about other faiths, such as Hinduism and Judaism, and the important customs associated with them. Good links are extended to art and design when pupils create their own designs to represent Hindu characters in collage and charcoal pictures. In support of their charitable links with Kenya, pupils are given very good opportunities to learn about the similarities and differences between their own lives and traditions and those of the children in Kenya. After a recent visit by one of the teachers, pupils watched a video of how the children out there said, 'Thank you' for their gifts. Pupils learn about their own cultural heritage through well-planned visits in the locality, including the local church for special occasions. These links are extended through literacy and visits by local artists and a poet. Pupils are also taught to perform traditional country and maypole dances. The very good provision is effective in helping all pupils develop a strong awareness of the multicultural society in which they live and good levels of citizenship.

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL CARE FOR ITS PUPILS?

33. At the time of the previous inspection, the care provided for pupils was reported as very good, and a strength of the school. This high quality of care is still evident. Teachers know the pupils very well, and show this by what they write on end-of-year reports. There are some very strong aspects to the care provided for pupils, such as the break-time supervision by classroom assistants, using playground games and equipment, and the documentation and care for those pupils taking medicines. The previous report commented on the school's good approach to healthy eating, and this continues. Pupils are now provided with bottles of water to sip during the day, and only fruit snacks are allowed at break. The scheme of 'Brain gym' exercises has been introduced, which pupils enjoy.
34. Health and safety matters are taken seriously and governors refer their concerns, such as the deteriorating condition of the fencing around the field, to the local education authority. Great care has been taken to protect pupils during the current programme of building work. Governors' termly walkabouts occur after school hours but it would be more helpful to occasionally conduct such a visit during the school day to identify potential problems. The headteacher manages child protection matters well. All teachers are aware of locally agreed procedures, and the newly qualified teachers received adequate support and training during their first term.
35. Attendance is well monitored, using the school database and a computerised registration system, and has led to small improvements in attendance and punctuality in recent years, particularly after close monitoring of identified pupils. Good behaviour is promoted very well through the school's clear and explicit 'Golden Rules' which pupils of this age find easy to understand, such as: '*Do work hard and don't waste time*' and '*Do be gentle and don't hurt anybody*'. They are displayed throughout the school and frequently mentioned. Behaviour management strategies are now more infant orientated and class teachers and their assistants quickly manage misdemeanours. The personal support and guidance for pupils is particularly good. Positive awards,

such as stickers, are very effective and classes have their own reward systems, leading to 'Golden Time' at the end of the week when pupils may select privileged activities. The school has policies relating to exclusion and to bullying and these are consistently supported by all adults. As one parent told inspectors at their meeting, *'Have you noticed, there have been no complaints about bullying?'*

36. The school has good arrangements for assessing and recording pupils' standards of attainment. Effective use is made of the information gathered in this way to plan for the whole school, for groups and for some individuals. When children first enter the school they are assessed carefully to identify particular strengths and weaknesses. The information is used successfully to form groups and to plan teaching programmes. It is also used as a first step in the identification of pupils with special educational needs and pupils who speak English as an additional language. As a result, early action is taken to support both of these groups of pupils. This is evident, for example in the good provision made for them.
37. The special educational needs co-ordinator (SENCO) works collaboratively with teachers and parents in managing special educational needs provision within the school. The individual education plans (IEPs) prepared for pupils with special educational needs are of good quality. They contain realistic and attainable short-term targets that are shared with parents and pupils and are reviewed regularly. Overall, the IEPs enhance pupils' progress because they form a focus for the work of teachers and their assistants. Ongoing assessment is carried out well by teaching assistants who are frequently responsible for a small group of pupils with special educational needs. Where appropriate, the SENCO liaises with outside agencies in order to obtain the best guidance and advice for pupils in need. All statutory requirements in relation to special educational needs are met fully.
38. The local education authority, through its minority communities achievement service, undertakes the assessment of pupils who speak English as an additional language. As a result, pupils benefit from some specialist help with their learning provided for by the local education authority. In the longer term, the school has access to continuing good quality advice. In lessons, pupils with English as an additional language are supported effectively by teaching assistants and this results in their making good progress.
39. In the core subjects of English, mathematics and science, the assessment and associated tracking procedures are used to identify and place pupils in target groups, as for example for writing and spelling. As a result, teachers provide work that is matched well to pupils' levels of need. A further benefit of this early identification of individual need is that some pupils of average and below average ability are subsequently placed appropriately in the early literacy support (ELS) groups. The extra support that these groups receive has a good impact on raising pupils' self-esteem and improving standards. In Year 2, teachers maintain a file of annotated work for pupils' creative writing. In Years 1 and 2 comprehensive records are kept of each individual's progress and attainment in reading. Speaking and listening is assessed once each term. Finally, Year 2 pupils complete the statutory tests (SATs). However, within this group approach, there is insufficient tracking of individual pupils in most areas, particularly of higher and average attaining pupils. In the most recent years, the proportion of pupils attaining the higher Level 3 in tests has been below the national average. More regular and rigorous tracking of individual progress is required to enable teachers to set greater challenges for these pupils to enable them to achieve the higher levels.
40. Teachers' marking is conscientiously undertaken with some examples that are very effective. For example, in English in Year 1 there are concise evaluative comments

such as *'Excellent joined up writing, work needed on full stops'*. This marking is effective because the teachers know what the pupils are achieving and this is used as an authentic source of reference to plan the next elements of work. It also makes pupils aware of how they are performing and what they need to do next to improve.

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL WORK IN PARTNERSHIP WITH PARENTS?

41. Parents express very strong support for the school and its work. This is illustrated in their responses to the pre-inspection questionnaire. This high level of support is an improvement since the previous inspection. In order to have a clear segregation of parents and pupils at the beginning and end of each day, the school designated an area of the playground behind which parents should wait. Although initially concerned about the arrangements, parents now approve of these measures. Parents find staff very approachable. As one parent said, *'Everything is now more child-centred'*.
42. The few areas of concern mentioned by parents in discussions, relate mostly to written communication from the school. Routine newsletters and information letters are good, but the quality of some other paper-based information, like the pasted inserts in home-school reading books offering advice to parents, and the termly curriculum information sheet, is only satisfactory and needs updating and improving. Teachers write pupils' reports with good insight into their achievements and personal development. They offer guidance on how to improve their work. There is a high turnout for parent-teacher consultation evenings, and parents receive information about how well their children are achieving, including a comparison in relation to national results.
43. There are good numbers of parents working regularly as volunteers in school, and some go on to become teaching assistants. Their work is valued and valuable, allowing small groups to be supervised, or individual pupils heard to read. Parents and other friends of the school get involved in more practical tasks, like painting interior parts of the accommodation and decorating them with murals, organising fund-raising events for parents and for pupils, and developing a science garden in the grounds. The school is hosting a course for the parents of the youngest pupils, supporting parenting skills, and hopes to make this available each year.
44. Pupils take reading books home every night, and there is a very good level of support for reading and other work at home. Parents of pupils with special educational needs participate in reviews of their individual education plans and contribute by helping to meet targets. Overall, the school makes very good provision for those parents who are willing to support their children with work at home.

HOW WELL IS THE SCHOOL LED AND MANAGED?

45. The leadership and management provided by the headteacher, senior staff and governors are good overall. The headteacher provides very good leadership and a very clear educational direction for the work of the school. Since her appointment just over two years ago, she has identified key priorities for improvement and has managed the changes well. In achieving these aims, she has created a stimulating and inclusive environment which is naturally incorporated into the daily life of the school. Good monitoring procedures of teaching and learning have enabled her and most subject co-ordinators to share the best practice in subjects to the benefit of all. The senior management team is effective and committed to the continuous improvement of the school.
46. The co-ordinators for English and mathematics manage their areas of responsibility effectively and make significant contributions to good curriculum planning. In other

subjects the leadership and management in the Foundation Stage, music, ICT and religious education are particularly good and reflect the high quality of provision in these areas. The management of special educational needs is good and the resources allocated for these pupils are used efficiently. Together with the whole staff, the co-ordinator promotes the full inclusion of all pupils and ensures that the new Code of Practice has been fully implemented. The particular needs of the very small number of pupils who speak English as an additional language and those of minority ethnic groups are also managed well.

47. Despite having several new members, the governing body is effective and has a good understanding of its strategic role. The school improvement plan has an important strategic place in identifying a range of short-, medium- and long-term priorities and targets very clearly. These priorities are reviewed carefully by the governors on an annual basis. Individual governors attend a range of appropriate training courses and play a full and active part in the life of the school. The governing body is developing strategies for evaluating the school's effectiveness by monitoring the school's National Curriculum test results and setting new targets, such as those in writing and mathematics. The governors fulfil all their statutory responsibilities and help to foster very good links in the community.
48. The monitoring of the agreed priorities in teaching and the curriculum by the headteacher and other key staff is good. Monitoring is closely linked with the school's own appraisal procedures, which meet statutory requirements for performance management. Staff have considerable individual strengths in subject knowledge and these are successfully shared to contribute to whole-school development in curriculum planning and teaching.
49. The school's aims and values are specific and relevant. They are communicated well to staff and parents, reflecting the strong team commitment among staff and governors to provide the best education for each individual pupil. This commitment is reflected in the strong and caring values that the school promotes. The school fosters very good relationships and these are greatly valued by parents and seen as significant improvements in the past two years. Provision for children in the Foundation Stage is managed very effectively and positively influences their learning. There are good procedures for admitting children and they settle quickly into class routines.
50. The school has a good number of qualified and experienced teachers to meet the needs of all pupils and cover the full requirements of the National Curriculum. They have well-defined responsibilities and work co-operatively as an effective team. Changes in staff and changes in the responsibility areas of many teachers have brought a new impetus to certain subject areas. Teachers and pupils are well supported by a good number of well-trained and effective teaching assistants. They make valuable contributions to the work of the school and in particular to the very good progress made by children in the Foundation Stage and by pupils with special educational needs. The very efficient administrative staff, caretaker and cleaner are valued team members. Their duties are carried out promptly and pleasantly and they contribute significantly to the smooth running of the school.
51. Arrangements for staff training are good and the headteacher holds regular professional development interviews with all teachers. These interviews have been successful in helping them to improve their performances. Induction procedures are thorough and new members of staff, including newly qualified teachers, feel adequately supported when they join the school, enabling them to settle quickly and successfully into their new roles.

52. The quality of the accommodation is good and effectively supports teaching and learning by providing all the facilities and teaching space necessary to teach all subjects of the National Curriculum effectively. The school has responded well to two weaknesses identified at the time of the previous inspection. The inner courtyard has been turned into an attractive outside play area for children in the Foundation Stage. This secure area is now used very well to enhance the outdoor facilities and create good opportunities for imaginative play and the use of large wheeled toys. The gymnastic apparatus has been moved to the larger hall, and is no longer a health and safety concern. Classroom accommodation is appropriate for the number and ages of the pupils and allows the curriculum to be taught effectively. Very good quality displays of pupils' work throughout the building enhance learning. The large collages displayed in halls and corridors are exceptional.
53. Building work, which is almost complete, will provide a better entrance area and office space, releasing additional rooms for small-group work. The accommodation is maintained and cleaned to a good standard. There is a good-sized hard play area, a quiet area with seating, and an enclosed play area for younger pupils. The metal fence around the field, however, is in poor condition and disintegrating in places. The extensive Second World War air-raid shelters, reopened by the caretaker and the school postman for supervised visits during two recent summer fêtes, also contributed to adults' and pupils' understanding of recent history.
54. The quantity, quality and range of learning resources are good and effectively support learning in all areas of the curriculum. Resources are particularly good in music and are used imaginatively to support pupils' high levels of interest and attainment. The shortfall in programmable toys in ICT work, mentioned in the previous inspection report, has been improved. Resources are very good in music and religious education, and good in English, mathematics, science, design and technology, geography, art and design, ICT, physical education and in the Foundation Stage; resources for history are satisfactory. There have been good improvements in the quality and quantity of resources for learning since the previous inspection. They are in regular use as, for example, when a constant flow of pupils use computer programs in the corridors throughout the day to reinforce and extend their skills. The library is well stocked with fiction and reference books, and is timetabled for use by each class.
55. The overall efficiency of the school is good. The school has built successfully on the sound standards of financial planning reported at the time of the previous inspection. The headteacher and governors have developed suitably structured procedures that very effectively support the school's educational priorities. This is a process that involves all members of staff in an annual review of the work of the school in order to identify and agree future priorities. A good example of the school responding to the analysis of its current position is the increase in the number of teaching assistants, in order to provide more effective support for all pupils and so support the school's strong inclusive policy. Good use is made of new technology in all aspects of school life to improve efficiency levels and to support the curriculum. Resources are used effectively to support teaching and learning, particularly in English, mathematics, ICT, music and art and design.
56. The school successfully applies the principles of best value for money in its quest for continual improvement. Staff and governors are good at consulting and involving all those concerned in decision-making about spending. Full consideration is given to alternative providers for services and resources in order to acquire cost effectiveness and, as a result, money is spent carefully. The school's day-to-day financial controls and procedures are very good, enabling the headteacher and governors to closely

monitor and evaluate spending decisions. The most recent financial audit of a year ago made a small number of recommendations and the school has responded to these.

57. Taking into account the below average levels of attainment on entry, the good teaching and learning which take place, the very good leadership, improvements in the quality of education provided and the personal development of pupils, and the average unit costs, the school provides good value for money.

WHAT SHOULD THE SCHOOL DO TO IMPROVE FURTHER?

58. In order to raise standards in English, particularly writing, mathematics and science by the end of Year 2, the headteacher, staff and governors should:
- (1) Extend the current assessment procedures which focus on group targets and progress in order to:
 - (a) track the progress of all pupils individually to monitor their progress more rigorously; (paragraphs 2, 8, 39, 77, 80, 87 & 90)
 - (b) set more challenging targets for higher and average attaining pupils to ensure a higher points average in annual test results. (paragraphs 2,8, 39, 71, 74, 77, 80, 87, & 90)

Other matters for consideration by the school

Improve the condition of the metal fence around the field which is disintegrating in places. (paragraphs 34 & 53)

PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS

Summary of the sources of evidence for the inspection

Number of lessons observed	53
Number of discussions with staff, governors, other adults and pupils	29

Summary of teaching observed during the inspection

	Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
Number	2	13	24	14	0	0	0
Percentage	4	25	45	26	0	0	0

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

Information about the school's pupils

Pupils on the school's roll	YR – Y2
Number of pupils on the school's roll (FTE for part-time pupils)	270
Number of full-time pupils known to be eligible for free school meals	27

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Special educational needs	YR – Y2
Number of pupils with statements of special educational needs	1
Number of pupils on the school's special educational needs register	54

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	20
Pupils who left the school other than at the usual time of leaving	10

Attendance

Authorised absence

	%
School data	5.7
National comparative data	5.4

Unauthorised absence

	%
School data	0.3
National comparative data	0.5

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

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

Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 1 for the latest reporting year	Year	Boys	Girls	Total
	2002	43	47	90

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		Reading	Writing	Mathematics
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	33	35	37
	Girls	40	40	38
	Total	73	75	75
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	81 (85)	83 (87)	83 (92)
	National	84 (84)	86 (86)	90 (91)

Teachers' Assessments	English	Mathematics	Science
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Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	35	36	37
	Girls	41	39	40
	Total	76	75	77
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	84 (80)	83 (85)	86 (86)
	National	85 (85)	89 (89)	89 (89)

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

Ethnic background of pupils

Exclusions in the last school year

Categories used in the Annual School Census	No of pupils on roll	Number of fixed period exclusions	Number of permanent exclusions
White – British	157	0	0
White – Irish	0	0	0
White – any other White background	9	0	0
Mixed – White and Black Caribbean	1	0	0
Mixed – White and Black African	0	0	0
Mixed – White and Asian	0	0	0
Mixed – any other mixed background	0	0	0
Asian or Asian British – Indian	2	0	0
Asian or Asian British - Pakistani	0	0	0
Asian or Asian British – Bangladeshi	0	0	0
Asian or Asian British – any other Asian background	2	0	0
Black or Black British – Caribbean	0	0	0
Black or Black British – African	0	0	0
Black or Black British – any other Black background	0	0	0
Chinese	0	0	0
Any other ethnic group	1	0	0
No ethnic group recorded	19	0	0

The table gives the number of exclusions, which may be different from the number of pupils excluded.

Teachers and classes

Qualified teachers and classes: YR – Y2

Total number of qualified teachers (FTE)	11.3
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	23.8
Average class size	30

Education support staff: YR – Y2

Total number of education support staff	17
Total aggregate hours worked per week	246

Financial information

Financial year	2001/2002
	£
Total income	559,029
Total expenditure	592,821
Expenditure per pupil	2,237
Balance brought forward from previous year	82,269
Balance carried forward to next year	48,477

Recruitment of teachers

Number of teachers who left the school during the last two years	2
Number of teachers appointed to the school during the last two years	3

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

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Results of the survey of parents and carers

Questionnaire return rate

Number of questionnaires sent out	270
Number of questionnaires returned	98

Percentage of responses in each category

	Strongly agree	Tend to agree	Tend to disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know
My child likes school.	69	30	1	0	0
My child is making good progress in school.	65	32	1	1	1
Behaviour in the school is good.	52	45	0	0	3
My child gets the right amount of work to do at home.	51	36	8	0	5
The teaching is good.	68	31	0	0	1
I am kept well informed about how my child is getting on.	47	46	5	2	0
I would feel comfortable about approaching the school with questions or a problem.	72	23	4	0	0
The school expects my child to work hard and achieve his or her best.	60	39	0	1	0
The school works closely with parents.	44	51	5	0	0
The school is well led and managed.	60	37	0	0	3
The school is helping my child become mature and responsible.	56	43	0	0	1
The school provides an interesting range of activities outside lessons.	23	34	12	5	26

(Figures in each row may not total 100 due to rounding up and down.)

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

59. Children start in the reception classes in the September following their fourth birthday. Parents and children have good opportunities to get to know staff before they start school through visits to the classrooms. Children attend full time from the outset, with one third of the admission starting at weekly intervals. By the third week of term, all are admitted full time. Attainment on entry varies significantly from year to year, but in two of the past three years has been below average. Good routines and work habits are established as soon as children enter the school. Consequently, all children are familiar with classroom rules and procedures and make good progress in developing basic social and academic skills. All children achieve well and make good progress in the Foundation Stage. They make particularly good progress in early reading skills and in aspects of creative and personal development. As a result, by the end of the reception year, most are likely to achieve the early learning goals in: communication, language and literacy; personal, social and emotional development; knowledge and understanding of the world; and physical development, and exceed them in creative development.
60. The quality of teaching is very good. This is an improvement from the previous inspection when teaching was reported to be satisfactory overall. The classrooms are welcoming with attractive displays which celebrate the children's work and show them how much their work is valued. Equipment is particularly well organised so that children are able to choose from a wide range of resources to support their learning. Teachers and their teaching assistants work together very well, intervening at opportune moments by posing questions and probing understanding. This allows children to develop skills at their own levels of need. The sessions are very well organised and provide children with a very good range of suitable indoor and outdoor activities, which are securely based in structured play. Detailed planning identifies closely the activities for every day in every area of learning within the class. Assessment procedures are very good and identify exactly what the children have achieved and what they need to learn next. The outdoor area is used regularly for small groups of children to develop their physical and social skills.

Personal, social and emotional development

61. All children make good progress and achieve well. Most are likely to reach the early learning goals in this area of learning by the end of reception. Children learn to develop good self-help skills through quiet encouragement and show good self-care skills when moving about the classroom and the school. This is reflected in the confident way in which they find their own space and develop their own sequences of movement in outdoor activities. Teaching is very good. Teachers encourage children to learn to take turns and share equipment during indoor and outdoor activities. Skills of co-operation are developed further through structured learning activities. For example, in the designated role-play areas children act out various roles in pretend situations such as shopping in the supermarket or being fire fighters answering a call.
62. Children develop secure relationships with others and learn to communicate with each other in positive ways through speech and actions. This was demonstrated well when children were encouraged to add their own words to explain 'Golden Rules' such as '*Always tell the truth*'. The very good start that children make in their personal, social

and emotional development is reflected in the very good relationships, attitudes and personal and social development found in the reception classes. Adults use positive encouragement and this is reflected in the high self-esteem and confidence that the children develop quickly. All the children's answers and comments are received positively and welcomed by all adults working in the classroom. All children are willing to attempt new activities and this gives them good opportunities to find out what they can and cannot do.

Communication, language and literacy

63. All children make good progress and achieve well. Most are likely to achieve the early learning goals in communication, language and literacy. The quality of teaching is very good and results in children making good progress in speaking and listening skills. The teachers and teaching assistants successfully encourage children to talk about their personal experiences and they do so, confidently and happily, using appropriate language. Questions are used well to inspire children to talk freely about their work and to comment about stories they have heard, such as *'We're all going on a Bear Hunt'*. As a result, children use correct vocabulary and repeat sound words such as *'swoosh'* and *'splosh'* very expressively. Thinking skills are developed well through focused questions and prompts. The role-play areas, such as the 'supermarket', the 'fire engine' and the 'telephone box', provide good opportunities for children to talk together in focused activities that are carefully planned to promote the use of specific language.
64. Children make good progress in developing their early reading skills and habits due to good teaching of reading. Children learn new initial and end sounds in a progressive way. Stories are carefully chosen to match children's interests and give good opportunities to learn about the way stories are structured, as well as learning to recognise key words by sight. Children quickly develop into confident readers who talk at length about their favourite stories. They ask and answer questions, indicating the good thinking going on during their learning. The teaching of writing is effective. The school chooses to teach joined handwriting from an early stage. Children make good progress in developing their writing skills. Many suitable opportunities are provided for children to write about the things that interest them, for instance what they should wear to keep warm in winter. They make good attempts at spelling the words they do not know using their knowledge and understanding of letter sounds and names to help them. Most write their first names unaided, forming most letters correctly. The well-structured teaching in this aspect of learning is reinforced when participating in 'Write Dance' sessions.

Mathematical development

65. Most children make good progress and achieve well. A majority of children are likely to attain the early learning goals in mathematical development by the end of the reception year. Good teaching ensures that different challenges are matched to children's needs based securely on assessments of their previous experiences. Particular emphasis is placed on teaching children to count and recognise numbers. This is done effectively through the use of number tracks to which children regularly refer and the provision of different resources, such as coloured beads and linking blocks, to help their learning. Well-structured activities make sure that children get regular opportunities to read, order and count groups of objects accurately up to ten and sometimes beyond. This was demonstrated well when children were involved in activities such as responding to the teacher showing a particular digit and children holding up the matching unit block. In another session a group passed round a purse. At a given time the receiver would count the pennies inside, then add some of his own for the next receiver to count. Other children checked the answers given.

66. Children have a good knowledge and understanding of regular shapes such as a circle, square, rectangle and triangle, and develop suitable language for describing the size and position of objects. They also effectively develop their mathematical ideas when sorting and threading different shapes. They correctly identify patterns of colour in twos or more and recognise other shapes such as oval and diamond. Children's learning is effectively supported through these well-planned activities involving interesting tasks and spontaneous play.

Knowledge and understanding of the world

67. Most children are likely to attain the early learning goals by the end of the reception year. Very effective teaching through carefully planned themes and activities helps children to make good progress in learning about the world in which they live. For example, as part of an investigation into materials, they tested them and grouped them according to their properties, such as being smooth, rough, bumpy etc. The classroom science table and displays showed a good range of interesting objects related to the theme. As a result of the teacher's close questioning, when looking closely at different parts of the human body, the children correctly identified the head, shoulders, etc and down to the ankle and foot. Children's knowledge is effectively reinforced through links with science, geography, history and ICT. Children use computers regularly and know that these function by using sound, text and pictures. Children confidently use the mouse control, for example to dress a teddy bear in a particular order and to their own preferences. They also access an art program to create their own pictures of *'Things that need air'*. They use 'draw', 'fill' and 'spray' controls to design and colour kites, windmills and hot-air balloons. They greatly enjoy operating tape recorders in small groups to listen to stories such as, *'A New Dog'*, following the words carefully.

Physical development

68. By the end of the reception year, all children make good progress and achieve well. Most children are likely to attain the early learning goals. Teaching is good. Teachers plan sessions for all reception children in a rota and enable them to enjoy their learning through a range of indoor and outdoor activities. Children have a good awareness of space around them when moving individually and with a partner. They move confidently into new spaces, giving due consideration to their own and others' safety. In describing what they are doing, the lessons contribute effectively to their speaking and communication skills. Children also enjoy the use of large wheeled toys and show good control over these. These activities support their personal and social skills of sharing and taking turns. They also develop early road-safety skills when responding to the controlled traffic lights and the pedestrian crossing users. Suitable emphasis is given to developing hand control through early drawing, writing and painting skills. As a result of the good opportunities provided for writing, most children have a firm pencil grip and form most letters correctly. They also show good control when using the computer mouse to carefully colour spaces between the lines of the shapes that they have designed.

Creative development

69. Children make very good progress in their creative development and most are likely to exceed the early learning goals by the end of the reception year. Teaching is very good. In response to the well planned and stimulating experiences provided by the teachers, children have a great enthusiasm for music. Children sing regularly and enjoy different aspects of music. They perform their own concert to parents. Teachers provide good opportunities to introduce children to music from different cultures, such as South

American and African. Children listen carefully, sing tunefully and enthusiastically, clapping rhythms in time with the beat. Children also develop good knowledge of colours. They build on this good understanding and mix tones to match particular shades of colour to collage patterns they had made previously. The pictures were of good quality with carefully matched shapes and colour tones, reflecting children's close observational skills. Children enjoy working with the good range of construction kits to make model toys and vehicles. Early investigation and exploration skills are taught well through a good range of activities. In one activity, children had created a wide range of models with moving parts, including racing cars, cranes, windmills, lorries, trains and a robot.

ENGLISH

70. By the end of Year 2, standards attained by pupils in English overall are at nationally expected levels. They are above national expectations in reading and handwriting, satisfactory in speaking, listening and spelling but are below expectations in writing. Overall, this represents a decline since the previous inspection when standards in all aspects of English were judged to be above average. This decline reflects the changes in the school's intake. Throughout the school, pupils with special educational needs make good progress in their learning. This is due to the good teaching and the effective support that they have from teaching assistants. Pupils who speak English as an additional language and other minority ethnic pupils also make good progress because they receive similar help that is of good quality. Overall, achievement is good.
71. The school's assessment data shows that the previous and current Year 2 pupils started school with below average attainment in English. The numbers of pupils departing and arriving has been high. Most pupils joining the school at the later stages were either below or well below average ability. There is a significant proportion of pupils, between one third and a half, in the age group with special educational needs. The school has taken some action to improve standards of attainment. For example, pupils whose pace of learning is so slow that they do not achieve sufficiently well and those who do not reach standards of attainment that reflect their capability are given extra support. Through accurate target setting these groups now receive work in lessons that is well matched to their level of need. However, these good measures have not yet had a significant enough impact on improving standards in writing in Year 2. The use of target setting to improve standards should now be extended to include every individual pupil, particularly the higher and average attainers.
72. The quality of relationships within the school is very good. Consequently, pupils express their ideas confidently knowing that they will be appreciated. Teachers provide good opportunities for pupils to develop their skills in speaking and listening in English, in other subjects and in activities such as the assembly that celebrates good work. In one assembly, pupils from classes within Years 1 and 2 expressed clearly a number of significant or outstanding features of their work. For example, some pupils in Year 1 explained concisely how they had made their model of a house in design and technology using a variety of different materials. In connection with their history topic, older pupils in Year 2 effectively applied skills developed in literacy to compose a thank-you letter to Florence Nightingale. A good feature of learning is that teachers assess pupils' competence in speaking and listening on a regular basis.
73. Pupils achieve well in reading as a result of teachers' recognition of the importance of this aspect of their development. By Year 2 most pupils read confidently for their age. Most pupils are enthusiastic about books and correctly identify the author and illustrator of a given text. Some predict the outcome of their story. Higher attaining pupils read fluently and with expression, using inflection and intonation effectively to capture the listener's interest. Lower attaining pupils recognise many words. They confidently use a

variety of strategies to decode unknown words. These include pictures, context and their good use of letter sounds that have been well taught. All pupils read regularly, both at home and at school, choosing from the school reading scheme books and from the school library. Parents are actively involved in helping their children. This is clear from the detailed records of home-school links that are well maintained by teachers, support staff and parents. Pupils have regular planned opportunities to use the library and, as a result, they develop good library skills. They know how to locate both information and fiction books in the library.

74. By the end of Year 2, standards in writing are below expected levels overall. The proportion of pupils attaining the expected level in writing is satisfactory; however, the number of pupils attaining the higher levels is low. The strengths in writing are in the presentation of pupils' work, especially handwriting. Most pupils write in a neat cursive script that is taught systematically and to good effect from when they start in reception. Learning is enhanced further through pupils practising skills learned from teachers' good implementation of the innovative 'Write Dance' programme. This initiative links expressive movements and co-ordination of physical exercise with the flowing movements of joined handwriting and was observed, for example, in a lively fun lesson in Year 2. Pupils improved their co-ordination of hands and fingers through moving to imaginative music. In writing, sentences are usually structured correctly with many pupils using full stops and capital letters to mark sentence boundaries, although this knowledge is not always used consistently. Standards of spelling are broadly satisfactory. Most pupils show a sound understanding of basic spelling patterns, although these are not always applied well when writing independently. Pupils are familiar with different writing styles and write for different purposes, such as poetry, a story or a description. Overall, most pupils do not write in sufficient length or depth, especially when engaged in extended writing.
75. The teaching of English is good. All lessons are planned well and in line with the requirements of the National Literacy Strategy. Teachers make regular amendments in order to meet pupils' individual needs. As a result, work is generally well matched to the levels of capability within each class. The school recognises that some of the average and higher attainers within the grouping arrangements are not making as much progress in their writing as they need to. These pupils are now placed in groups in classes and receive specific focused support. However, this has not yet had a significant impact on raising standards. There is a growing awareness by all teachers of the importance of demonstrating good examples of work for their pupils as they try to raise the overall standard of writing. This was evident in Year 1 when pupils built a simple profile of the characteristics of the ogre in the story of '*Jack and the Beanstalk*'. Their writing was accurate because the descriptive words and phrases that they selected were discussed thoroughly for meaning and reflected well the ogre's attributes. In a highly imaginative and ambitious drama lesson in Year 2, pupils considered features of some of the characters in the story '*Nabulela*'. They rehearsed these through 'thought tracking' and in so doing showed a good understanding of characterisation.
76. The good teaching of lower attaining pupils is characterised by teachers valuing pupils' answers and developing their self-esteem. The teaching of pupils with specific special educational needs in small groups focuses effectively on the development of academic, personal and social skills. This enables pupils to make good use of the range of teaching and learning opportunities provided by the SENCO and support staff. As a result, most pupils in this category make good progress and achieve well.
77. In writing, pupils are set challenging but realistic targets. Teachers undertake assessments each term and record the progress of individuals within the groups. Most

pupils have appropriate self-knowledge of their learning. However, as not all pupils have targets, some do not know how well they are doing or how much progress they are making. Teachers mark pupils' work positively and encourage effort through praise. Homework is mostly reading and spellings and these regular activities have a beneficial impact on raising standards.

78. Literacy is used well to support other subjects and promote cross-curricular links. Recorded evidence of a very good example of this was seen in a Year 2 class in connection with geography. The pupils presented illustrated recommendations to Thanet District Council suggesting improvements to the Ramsgate Boulevard site. In response, a representative from the local county council met with the pupils to discuss their ideas. The local radio station interviewed a sample of pupils and this was relayed on the radio. Finally, the activity was reported in the local paper. ICT is used soundly to support learning in English. A good feature is that pupils develop well as independent learners and are frequently observed working purposefully with computers in classes and corridors.
79. The subject is well led. The co-ordinator has a good understanding of the strategies for future developments in this subject. She monitors planning regularly and scrutinises daily lesson plans when observing colleagues at work. The arrangements for monitoring performance through direct observation are well established. Resources for literacy are good in range and quality and relate closely to the needs of the subject. Similarly, the range and quality of resources in the library are also good and they are managed successfully by the library co-ordinator.

MATHEMATICS

80. The 2002 test results at the end of Year 2 show that standards were below average. This is accounted for by the relatively high levels of pupil mobility within the school and the high level of pupils with special educational needs, found in the previous Year 2 and also evident in the current Year 2. The proportion of pupils reaching the higher Level 3 is much lower than expected. Standards and achievement have fluctuated over the past three years but the rate of improvement during this period has been very close to the national trend. More focused teaching resulting from the introduction of the National Numeracy Strategy has helped teachers to improve their planning and make good use of the high quality support provided by classroom assistants. However, assessment procedures are still not sufficiently refined to track individual pupils' progress rigorously enough.
81. Inspection evidence shows that most pupils reach expected levels of work in Year 2 but the proportion of higher attaining pupils is lower than expected levels as a result of the high number of pupils in the age group with special educational needs. The school's assessment data shows that this year group started school with below average attainment in mathematics. Taking this factor into account pupils achieve well, making good progress to attain their present expected levels.
82. Teachers ensure that mathematics lessons are fully inclusive and that pupils are wholly involved in all mathematical activities. This enables all groups of pupils, including those with special educational needs and those who speak English as an additional language, to achieve well in relation to their prior attainment. Almost all make good progress in their learning. The teaching of pupils with special educational needs is very well organised and teaching assistants are well briefed to develop pupils' confidence and understanding. They provide good support for teachers and pupils. In all lessons seen, this ensured that pupils sustained their concentration well when engaged in small-

group tasks and during whole-class sessions. At the same time the sensitive nature of the support encourages pupils to develop their capacity as independent learners.

83. Pupils in the current Year 1 entered the school with average levels of skills in mathematics. They make good gains in their knowledge and understanding of number, and in the other aspects of mathematics including shape, measuring and handling data. In particular, as a result of the emphasis that teachers place upon the basic skills, pupils make good progress in acquiring strategies to deal confidently with number problems as observed in the introductory part of lessons. Most pupils learn to add and subtract mentally numbers up to 20 and, given coins to spend, identify quickly which objects they can and cannot afford. They measure a range of objects using non-standard units such as hand widths and plastic cubes and accurately identify the names and properties of common two- and three-dimensional shapes. In Year 1 most pupils are attaining expected levels with an expected proportion of them attaining higher levels.
84. In Year 2, pupils develop a secure knowledge of the place value of each digit in numbers to 99, confidently learning multiples of two, three, four and five. They are familiar with mathematical operations and mathematical signs and use these accurately to make up number stories. They estimate and measure length accurately and tell the time to the half-hour. They extend their knowledge of the particular features of common two- and three-dimensional shapes. This was demonstrated well when a group of higher attaining pupils made a large number of different irregular eight-sided shapes by using a geo-board and rubber bands. Good links are made with ICT when using a computer program to discover which shapes fit together best and later when learning to rotate shapes when investigating symmetrical patterns. They also learn to enter instructions to control the route of a robot model. Their ability to use the classroom based computers to aid and extend their learning is being developed well.
85. Teachers have been well trained and supported in their adoption and implementation of the National Numeracy Strategy. They use it consistently to guide their planning and in this way ensure that pupils' learning develops progressively as they move through the school. The three-part lesson structure is firmly established and most lessons begin with a brisk mental mathematics session. In the most successful of these, pupils respond enthusiastically and learn quickly as a result. In a lesson in Year 2, for example, the teacher's stimulating introduction, challenging them to respond quickly with their number petals, captured their interest immediately and challenged their calculation skills.
86. The quality of teaching and learning is good. The very good relationships established within the classroom are the key to successful teaching and are at the heart of teachers' skilful management of behaviour. Their encouraging manner ensures that both they and their pupils enjoy the lessons and the subject. Pupils see that their contributions are valued and join in discussions confidently. Teachers plan carefully to provide appropriate levels of challenge for the wide range of attainment and ages seen in most classes. Throughout the school, pupils demonstrate good levels of interest in mathematics. In a successful lesson in Year 2, this was evident in the teacher's continuous monitoring and assessment of pupils' learning and in her confident approach. Learning was also well supported by her careful management of resources to reinforce pupils' understanding of symmetry.
87. Mathematics is well managed. There have been regular observations of teaching by the headteacher and co-ordinator and this has resulted in the sharing of good practice. Teachers assess pupils regularly in their groups against the key objectives of the National Numeracy Strategy. However, these procedures are not yet sufficiently refined

or rigorous to track individual pupils' progress closely enough to ensure that all pupils reach their full potential, particularly the higher and average attaining pupils.

SCIENCE

88. Standards attained by pupils in Year 2 meet expected levels. Standards show a decline since the time of the previous inspection when they were judged to be above average. This can be accounted for by the relatively high levels of pupil mobility within the school and the high proportion of children with special educational needs, which is particularly to be found in the current Year 2. The proportion of pupils reaching the higher Level 3 is much lower than expected. Both teaching and learning are satisfactory, as is the quality of provision. Overall, achievement is satisfactory. Pupils with special educational needs and those who speak English as an additional language make sound progress and achieve satisfactorily. No significant differences between the performance of girls and boys were observed during the inspection.
89. Throughout the school the investigating strand of the subject is developing well, as teachers provide many opportunities for pupils to carry out experiments. In these aspects of the subject, pupils achieve well. In Year 1, pupils were testing items that attract magnets, grouping together items that do attract and those that do not attract. Pupils were encouraged to predict what would happen before investigating, and then test their theories. This they did effectively. In Year 2, pupils were observing the rate of melting of an ice balloon in water and in air and then observing how the rate of melting was increased by adding salt. Having identified the effect that salt had, pupils related this to icy road conditions found in winter and learnt why salt and other chemicals are used to melt ice on roads. All pupils develop the expected levels of skills, knowledge and understanding by experimenting and discovering for themselves. They work well in small groups, discussing ideas, sharing equipment and recording their findings.
90. The quality of teaching seen is satisfactory overall. In a very good Year 2 lesson, as a result of good questions and prompts from the teacher, pupils described materials using appropriate scientific vocabulary and sorted them according to their differences and similarities. Teachers' planning is good and there is evidence of consistency of work and levels of attainment throughout each year group. Resources are well prepared to assist all pupils to investigate and find out things for themselves. Teaching assistants are well organised so that pupils of all levels of attainment are able to record their work carefully. All teachers question pupils effectively to assess knowledge and understanding. The recording of pupils' progress is related to the science unit programmes of work. However, this results in insufficient tracking of each individual pupil and the setting of necessary challenges to plan the next steps in learning in key scientific skills, particularly for the higher and average attaining pupils.
91. The co-ordinator leads the subject well. She has revised the scheme of work which ensures full coverage and which teachers are using well in their planning. She has produced a science portfolio in which pupils' work has been levelled and agreed by the teachers for all attainment targets. There are adequate procedures in place for regular monitoring of the subject and this has given the co-ordinator a better overview of what is happening throughout the year. As part of this process the co-ordinator identified an inconsistency in the time spent on teaching the subject which has now been addressed. Resources, including information books, are satisfactory. The use of science tables is taking on a higher profile throughout the school and proving of great interest to pupils. There are adequate opportunities to develop literacy, numeracy and the ICT skills of wordprocessing, information retrieval and data handling. Good quality visits are made to farms, the beach and the park, and science theatre groups visit the school to enhance the curriculum. The school's next project is to develop a wild garden in its grounds.

ART AND DESIGN

92. Standards attained by the end of Year 2 have been successfully maintained at above expected levels since the previous inspection. All pupils achieve well and both teaching and learning are above expected levels, as is the quality of the planning of activities provided. Pupils with special educational needs and those who speak English as an additional language achieve the same good standards due to good support from teachers and teaching assistants. All pupils display considerable interest in the subject and they are keen to acquire skills, knowledge and understanding. These are similar judgements to the previous inspection, despite the change in the nature of the intake, and represent good progress.
93. Pupils are given good opportunities to investigate and explore a wide range of materials and processes. These opportunities are reflected in the good quality observational drawings of historical artefacts produced by pupils in Year 1 and in Year 2 using a range of materials to make a collage. Other good opportunities for pupils to express themselves creatively are seen in the displays in classrooms and around the school, which are bright, attractive and stimulating. They follow the school's policy on display, and include a wide range of different media used such as different types of painting, printing and the use of different textures and materials, including modroc'. These different materials are particularly well used in the many three-dimensional displays and demonstrate the above average skills of pupils. A key feature is also the confidence and independence that the teachers are developing in the pupils, ensuring that work is displayed and celebrated.
94. Pupils are given good opportunities to develop their skills in links with other curriculum subjects. Good examples of this are seen in Year 2, illustrating the poems of Korky Paul together with written poems of their own in his style. Other good links are made with history in illustrations of Florence Nightingale and hospitals in her time. In Year 1, traditional fairy story scenes have been illustrated, such as the *'Three Little Pigs'* and *'The Elves and the Shoemaker'*, again making links to different curriculum subjects. The work produced by pupils is of good quality. Computer art programs are used effectively at planned points throughout the school as a media for artwork. Pupils are enthusiastic in responding to these well-planned activities and develop their ideas and artistic skills successfully. The school uses 'Write Dance' well to develop pupils' co-ordination skills through a combination of curriculum subjects, including art and design.
95. The quality of teaching is good. Teachers plan lessons well to inspire pupils. The co-ordinator regularly monitors and observes lessons for all year groups. By regularly observing the displays around the school, looking at individual work and observing pupils using tools, techniques and materials, she ensures that pupils' skills, knowledge and understanding develop systematically as they move through the school. Teachers' plans also identify links with other subjects that they believe will enhance pupils' learning; for example in an African project, good use is made of photographic evidence to show cross-curricular links and provide well for pupils' cultural development. These activities ensure the continued good achievement and teachers' enthusiasm and high expectations of pupils' work.
96. The curriculum is further enhanced by inviting local and parent artists into the school to demonstrate their skills and work with pupils, such as one who painted a playground mural which provided the opportunity for pupils to appreciate art and design work of high quality. Visits by classes to the local community, the beach or Dover Castle inspire follow-up artwork and observational drawings. The co-ordinator provides good leadership of the subject. She has recently undertaken a reorganisation of the good

resources within the school to provide better access and storage and has identified areas to further develop the subject, such as increasing the range of more modern art resources and linking up with the local Turner Centre, when it opens next year, to include gallery visits.

DESIGN AND TECHNOLOGY

97. By the end of Year 2, standards attained by pupils in design and technology are at the expected level. This represents a decline since the previous inspection when standards were judged to be above average. However, this is partly reflected in the change of the nature of the intake. Since the previous inspection, the school has adopted national guidelines for design and technology to support teachers in their planning. As a result, pupils achieve well and cover a balanced curriculum that develops their knowledge, understanding and skills in a structured and systematic way. However, there is as yet no consistent system for tracking the development of key skills through the planned programme of work. Pupils with special educational needs make good progress in their learning. This is because of the good teaching and effective support that they have from teaching assistants. Pupils who speak English as an additional language make satisfactory progress because they also receive additional help that is of good quality.
98. All pupils show good levels of interest in their work. Pupils in Year 1 have produced their own design for a model of a house. They construct the model round a rectangular frame and successfully apply the specific skills of cutting, joining and assembling. In discussion, some higher attainers correctly distinguish between flat and three-dimensional shapes. They compare their model to the original design and say whether or not it is an accurate representation. Lower attaining pupils competently use construction kits to try out ideas when making models of houses.
99. By the end of Year 2, most pupils extend the skills of cutting and joining successfully. They do this when sewing together pieces of material to make puppets. Pupils develop good skills of speaking and listening as they concentrate hard when their teacher is modelling work and when they discuss their own ideas and those of others. They apply their knowledge of mathematics accurately when they measure the lengths of the pieces of material that are to be joined. Recorded evidence also shows good links to other subjects. For example, in history pupils have made a castle with a working drawbridge. They have used balsa wood and a dowel to make a trebuchet. The completed Victorian doll's house incorporates many of the skills that pupils have learned successfully in design and technology. In lessons observed there was no use made of ICT. However, recorded evidence shows that this aspect of learning is satisfactory.
100. The quality of teaching is good. Teachers prepare lessons thoroughly that build successfully on pupils' prior experiences. This ensures that skills are consolidated well and then developed systematically so that there is progression in learning. This was observed in two good lessons in Year 2 that involved pupils in puppet making. The planning, designing and initial making had been developed in previous sessions. In the continuation lessons the teachers had high expectations of the pupils. Resources were used very well and there was good quality support from the teaching assistant. As a result, all pupils achieved at least satisfactorily and some achieved well. The review of work at the end was used effectively to share the successes of the lessons. An overall strength in these lessons and in another lesson which was satisfactory, is the good quality of support provided by teaching assistants. This helps to promote sound or good standards of attainment.

101. Design and technology is managed well by the co-ordinator. She has a clear overview of the subject through implementing a range of monitoring strategies. These include scrutiny of teachers' planning and some observations of teachers and pupils at work in classrooms. Classroom displays are monitored to ensure that the scheme of work is being followed. In addition, the co-ordinator maintains a portfolio of completed work that shows subject coverage. There are examples of pupils' completed work around the school and in the design and technology area. Together these give a favourable impression of pupils' achievements in design and technology. However, the samples of work are not annotated to national criteria so they do not in themselves give a clear indication of standards of attainment. Resources for design and technology are good in range and quality. The designated technology area provides a good learning environment and it is timetabled for regular use by each class.

GEOGRAPHY

102. By the end of Year 2, standards attained by pupils in geography are at the nationally expected level. These standards have been maintained successfully since the previous inspection. The school has adopted the national guidelines for geography to support teachers in their planning. As a result, pupils achieve satisfactorily and cover a balanced programme of work and develop specific subject skills in a structured and systematic manner as they move through the school. The high proportion of pupils with special educational needs make good progress in their learning. This is because of the effective support that they have from teaching assistants. Pupils who speak English as an additional language make satisfactory progress because they also receive help that is of good quality.
103. From the earliest stages pupils begin to develop a sense of place through the study of the school site and the surrounding locality. In Year 1, links with other subjects are promoted well as the pupils successfully develop early mapping skills. For example, they draw pictures of fairytale buildings such as *Rumplestiltskin's* cottage or the individual houses of the '*Three Little Pigs*'. Year 2 pupils develop mapping skills in links with an imaginary location on the Island of Struay in the '*Katie Morag*' series of stories. They apply mathematical knowledge relating to co-ordinates successfully when identifying and recording the locations of these positions. Higher attaining pupils are suitably challenged when introduced to the use of a key as an extension of this work.
104. By the end of Year 2, most pupils have a satisfactory awareness of distant localities and demonstrate appropriate map work skills. They show sound understanding of geographical vocabulary when describing some of the distinguishing features of places such as a rainforest, desert or mountain. Higher attaining pupils are becoming familiar with atlases but as yet not all are able to explain some of the physical features of a country or a locality from the information provided on a map. Pupils in both age groups have good opportunities to undertake field trips in connection with their studies. These include the immediate locality, Quex Park Museum and further afield to Dover Castle. In conjunction with the school's religious education co-ordinator, strong links are being developed with a school in Kenya and an exchange of letters has already taken place to this distant location. All of these worthwhile activities enhance the curriculum and make a valuable contribution to improving pupils' learning and raising standards of attainment.
105. The quality of teaching is satisfactory. Teachers set appropriate tasks designed to develop pupils' study skills. Work is suitably matched to pupils' different levels of need. As a result, different groups of pupils in each class work successfully at their own level. A good feature of teaching is the effective deployment of teaching assistants to support pupils. As a result of this overall good provision most pupils make sound progress in their learning. Pupils with special educational needs and those who speak English as

an additional language make satisfactory progress because they benefit from sound teaching. Moreover, they receive additional support in lessons that is of good quality.

106. In the lessons observed there was no use made of ICT. However, recorded evidence shows that this aspect of learning is at least satisfactory. There is a wide range of resources of good quality that includes good computer programs to support pupils' learning. The Internet is used effectively, under supervision, as a research tool. There are good links to citizenship and PSHE through developing pupils' sense of community responsibility. There are also good links to cultural development through the African project and through musicians from other cultures visiting the school.
107. Geography is managed well by the co-ordinator. She has a clear overview of the subject through implementing a range of monitoring strategies. These include the scrutiny of teachers' planning, observing teachers and pupils at work in the classroom and sampling pupils' work. School and classroom displays are also monitored to ensure that the scheme of work is being followed. She has developed an extensive portfolio of annotated work that clearly shows pupils' levels of attainment and the development of their knowledge, understanding and skills in geography.

HISTORY

108. By the end of Year 2, most pupils attain expected levels. Both teaching and learning are satisfactory as is the quality of the curriculum provided. These factors result in nationally expected levels of achievement by the end of Year 2. All pupils, including those with special educational needs and those who speak English as an additional language, achieve satisfactorily and there is no difference in the standards of boys and girls. Although this judgement shows a decline in standards since the previous inspection, this can be accounted for both by the high levels of pupil mobility within the school and the high level of children with special educational needs currently in Year 2.
109. Teachers successfully encourage pupils' interests in the past initially by focusing their attention on changes in their own lives and in the lives of familiar adults. These interests, linked to a wide range of sources of information including artefacts, books and pictures, encourage them to ask and answer questions about the past. The pupils' knowledge and understanding of the passing of time is effectively promoted in both Year 1 and Year 2 by the regular use of timelines and the sequencing of events over the last fifty years linked to the Queen's Golden Jubilee celebrations. Pupils go on to acquire knowledge about people and changes in the past and, by listening to stories, they begin to appreciate the difference between fact and fiction. By looking at the lives of people such as Florence Nightingale in Year 2 this was effectively promoted by looking at the impact she had on people's lives, both in the past and linking to the present. Pupils were able to discuss, share and record ideas they had on why things were happening at that time to how it affects us now. This work was effectively built on in literacy, in extended writing and in ICT, when pupils programmed a model robot, portraying a nurse, to travel routes to collect medical supplies and tend to patients.
110. The quality of teaching is satisfactory. Teachers make good use of historical artefacts to bring the past to life. In reception there is a mystery history box with an old style hairdryer hidden inside for the children to feel and guess what it is. In Year 1, pupils were motivated well by an interesting collection of old and new household contents. Using good observational skills and being encouraged to use the correct vocabulary they successfully compared them. The written task provided an opportunity to label these correctly, the higher attaining pupils were successfully extended by having to write sentences comparing old with new.

111. The leadership and management of the subject are satisfactory. Improvements since the previous inspection include the adoption of schemes of work that have been written in line with national guidelines, to support teachers' planning and to ensure the progressive development of pupils' knowledge, skills and understanding. A particular strength of the history curriculum is the variety of links that teachers establish between history and other subjects including literacy, art and design, design and technology and ICT. There are also well-planned links with the local community which makes learning more meaningful for the pupils. There are procedures in place for regular monitoring of the subject. The co-ordinator has identified the need to raise the profile of history within the school and update and extend current resources, which at present are only adequate.

INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY (ICT)

112. Standards are above expected levels by the end of Year 2 and the school provides well for the subject. This is very good improvement since the previous inspection when standards were judged to be satisfactory but overall provision was unsatisfactory. Teachers make regular and good links with other subjects and create good opportunities for pupils to develop their skills. As a result, all pupils make good progress and achieve well. National funding has provided the school with new computers, Internet access and opportunities for research and independent learning. Other more recent funding has provided training for teachers and has helped improve their expertise in relation to their planning for, and teaching of, the subject. Pupils of all attainment levels, including those who speak English as an additional language and those with special educational needs, make good progress in learning basic skills due to very good support from teachers and teaching assistants. Pupils are confident to use their skills for research and to record their work. They talk enthusiastically about their use of ICT both inside and outside school. By the end of Year 2, pupils use machines with confidence and enjoy making things happen.
113. Year 1 pupils quickly learn how to turn on a computer, access programs and respond correctly to commands on screen using the mouse control. In English they develop good familiarity with the keyboard and assemble simple text such as, *'Floppy likes Biff, Chip and Kipper'*, when sharing ideas about their reading book. They learn to use the delete and capitals keys effectively to create such text. Art and design programs are used well for drawing and pattern making. Pupils are confident in the use of a variety of different controls such as drawing, spraying and filling shapes with colour. They develop good early control skills when creating a set of instructions to move a robot model to different points on a grid. Teachers plan regular access and opportunities to try things out and these give pupils confidence.
114. Year 2 pupils build enthusiastically on their knowledge and understanding. They have controlled access to the Internet and CD-Roms for research, for example finding out about Hindu Gods and information about the shrine room. In an interesting follow up to previous written work about Florence Nightingale, the teacher attached a picture of Florence to the robot model and on a grid identified certain areas for medical supplies and patients. Pupils had to create sets of instructions to send Florence to collect supplies and then deliver them to the proper patient. Pupils make good use of digital cameras to record their work in art and design, design and technology and drama, such as those taken to show different characters and their masks in their play *'How Night Came'* on the theme of myths and legends. In links with mathematics, teachers challenge pupils to design symmetrical patterns and to produce block graphs and pie graphs to show results of surveys into such topics as 'favourite vegetables' and 'what we want to be when we grow up'. Pupils respond keenly and achieve well.

115. The quality of teaching is good. Planning for ICT shows much improvement since the previous inspection. There is a good scheme of work to ensure the progression of learning and coverage of the requirements of the National Curriculum, including control work and data handling. Lessons have clear learning objectives and are timetabled on a weekly basis for reception classes and Years 1 and 2. Teachers' good subject knowledge and challenging activities promote pupils' enjoyment of ICT and make them keen to learn new skills. Teachers keep checklists to ensure that all pupils have similar regular access to the computers in their classroom to complete the tasks set before new skills are taught.
116. The co-ordinator leads the subject well and has had a significant influence on the development of the subject. She observes teaching and learning and supports colleagues as necessary. The school makes efficient use of all its equipment. An Internet safety policy is in place, which is signed by all parents as children join the school.

MUSIC

117. The school makes very good provision for music and as a result most pupils achieve very well and attain standards that are well above expected levels by the end of Year 2. These are very good improvements since the previous inspection when standards and provision were satisfactory. In support of the school's commitment to promote the all-round development of pupils, the enthusiastic co-ordinator provides very good support for planning and teaching in the subject commencing in the reception classes. Regular inspiring lessons in all year groups help all pupils learn musical skills and develop a real enthusiasm for music.
118. Year 1 pupils learn how to use their voices expressively singing songs in lessons and assemblies, such as *'If I were a Butterfly'*, with actions to add to their enthusiasm. In lessons, they compose and perform simple and more complex rhythms based on their knowledge of the value of different notes. Some clapped rhythms while others played untuned instruments to explore and arrange sounds in different tempo and dynamics to represent different characters in a story.
119. Year 2 pupils build very effectively on their musical knowledge and skills. In one excellent session pupils from all classes combined to sing the song, *'How many people here for dinner'*. They performed very well together, matching the rhythm and duration of notes with clapping and sang each chorus to a different rhythm. Good subject knowledge and strategies used by the teacher enabled her to promote high levels of interest and enthusiasm among the pupils. Their skills were then extended to sing in two parts and then three parts. This they did very well, each maintaining their own parts tunefully and in the required rhythm to achieve a very impressive overall effect, well above expected levels. Very good contributions are made to pupils' spiritual, moral and social development through teachers making them aware of how they can express their own thoughts and feelings and, particularly, appreciate the efforts of other pupils.
120. The quality of teaching is very good and results in very good achievement by all pupils. Pupils of all levels and backgrounds are stimulated and very sensitively supported and, as a result, show good attitudes to learning. The curriculum is carefully planned to meet the requirements of national guidance and covers a wide range of activities and different styles of music making. Teachers encourage pupils, even at this young age, to appraise their own work and work co-operatively with others. Appropriate links are made with technology through the use of programs to develop listening and composing skills. The school has also produced its own CD of songs written especially for the school and sung by pupils of all ages. Very good provision is made to support pupils'

cultural development when introducing music from Africa. Pupils have regular opportunities to play some African instruments to accompany the singing.

121. Each year, separate musical performances are held for each year group, including reception year, and are very enthusiastically supported by parents. All children and pupils participate in these performances and some write their own songs. There are very good resources to support the scheme of work. The co-ordinator has great enthusiasm for celebrating and developing the subject and leads it very well. She observes other teachers on a regular basis and also demonstrates model lessons to other teachers, ensuring that they are given support in planning and the use of resources. Good links with local musicians are evident and include visits to demonstrate and promote stringed, brass and percussion instruments and a local band. The school also exchanges visits to performances with the local junior school to promote further interest in the subject.

PHYSICAL EDUCATION

122. Most pupils attain standards by the end of Year 2 which are above expected levels, a similar judgement to that made at the time of the previous inspection. All pupils achieve well and make good progress. Pupils with special educational, emotional and physical needs and those who speak English as an additional language are fully integrated into lessons and mostly attain standards that are similar to their peers. There is no difference in performance between boys and girls or other groups, as a result of teachers' careful strategies to engage all pupils actively and fully in their learning. The physical education programme includes all the essential aspects of the subject for infant schools, including dance, games and gymnastics. A weakness from the previous inspection – that the apparatus was out of date and limited space in the hall restricted its use – has been much improved, with new apparatus being erected in the second hall.
123. In gymnastics, most Year 1 pupils demonstrate a wide range of balances with good levels of control and co-ordination. Their movement between balances to link these basic actions is also well controlled. They show a growing awareness of space and work enthusiastically. When given the opportunity, they thoughtfully evaluate their own performance and the performances of others. In dance, Year 1 pupils move imaginatively in response to music, co-operating well with partners to support each other's learning. This was demonstrated well when they learnt a traditional circle dance, learning such movements as swinging partners, do-seh-do, making arcs and moving on. Pupils listened carefully to instructions and were clearly used to working within well-established routines. Year 2 pupils successfully extend their gymnastic skills, emphasising different ways of stretching with smooth transition of shapes and sequences. All pupils are appropriately dressed for physical activity and have a good awareness of safety issues, particularly when involved in putting out and clearing away apparatus under supervision. They develop their games skills well with the emphasis on hand/eye co-ordination to produce good quality passing and receiving skills with a ball and a partner. The observed lesson was sequenced well to introduce new challenges and pupils responded well to these. In this particular lesson, very good support was provided by the teaching assistant to enable a pupil with severe learning difficulties to participate with his peers.
124. The quality of teaching and learning in lessons seen was good. Teachers have good knowledge of the subject and the needs of pupils. They ensure that pupils are aware of the need for warm-up and cooling-down sessions to prepare properly for physical activities. Teachers' planning is based firmly on the adopted planning. It provides very clear guidance and results in well-structured lessons and the systematic development

of pupils' basic skills. A good balance is struck between focused teaching, challenge and suggestions about how pupils might improve their skills. Teachers and pupils are well supported by teaching assistants in the successful integration of all pupils into lessons. This inclusive approach is a strong feature of teaching in physical education. The co-ordinator is knowledgeable and hardworking and provides satisfactory support to colleagues. There are formal arrangements for monitoring teaching and learning to identify what works well and what does not. The school has chosen to introduce the 'Write Dance' programme which links expressive movements and co-ordination with the flowing movements of joined handwriting. This is an added feature of lessons and works very well. Resources in the form of large apparatus, small apparatus and sources of music are of good quality and used effectively.

RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

125. By the end of Year 2, standards of attainment in religious education are above the expectations of the national guidance and the Kent Agreed Syllabus on which the school's work is based. All pupils achieve well in the subject. This represents good improvement on the previous inspection when standards were judged as average. Improvements stem from a number of factors. The religious education policy has been reviewed and updated. The scheme of work that has been formulated follows national guidelines and links well to the locally agreed syllabus. Teachers' professional knowledge and understanding has improved significantly through continuing professional development. Resources to support learning have been expanded and are readily accessible to teachers. Alongside the introduction of the new scheme of work, the school has introduced a policy for spiritual development and a well thought out assembly programme that complements work in religious education. Overall, the subject makes a good contribution to pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. All of these features have impacted beneficially upon teaching and learning. Pupils with special educational needs make good progress in their learning. This is due to the good teaching and effective support that they receive from teaching assistants. Pupils who speak English as an additional language make good progress because of the good quality support they receive.
126. By the end of Year 2, most pupils have a good knowledge of Christianity, Judaism and Hinduism. In lessons, pupils showed in discussion with the class teacher that they understood what some Hindu symbols stand for. They could explain why Hindus worship at home and in the Mandir. Importantly, they could talk about what was precious to those of the Hindu faith, with respect for their feelings. Their levels of understanding and appreciation are well developed. Recorded evidence shows that pupils also learn about Chinese culture and the traditions associated with the celebration of the Chinese New Year. Pupils study the importance of Old and New Testament messengers, for example Moses. They also learn about the Salvation Army, the Archbishop of Canterbury and Mother Teresa. The school celebrates the achievements of these contributors through displays of good quality. Through these experiences, pupils gain a good understanding of how believing in a god affects the behaviour of people of different religions.
127. The quality of teaching is good overall. The most effective teaching is characterised by teachers' good management of pupils combined with the effective use of resources. In particular, teaching assistants are deployed well and to maximum effect. Consequently, pupils of different attainment levels achieve well in relation to their capabilities. Teachers use religious artefacts and other resources effectively to mount displays of good quality that celebrate religious and cultural diversity. In turn, pupils are keen and interested to learn.

128. Religious education is managed well by the experienced and knowledgeable co-ordinator. She has a clear overview of the subject through implementing a range of monitoring strategies. These include the scrutiny of teachers' planning and some observations of teachers and pupils at work in classrooms to ensure that the requirements of the locally agreed syllabus are met fully. Good procedures are in place to assess and record pupils' achievement and progress. The co-ordinator maintains a portfolio of evidence that contains representative samples of work across all classes in connection with spiritual development. There are good book resources and artefacts that are used effectively to support learning. Limited use is made of ICT in religious education, but the co-ordinator is seeking additional resources to widen learning opportunities. The school makes good use of local churches and visitors from the local community to enhance the curriculum.