

INSPECTION REPORT

THE OAKS INFANT SCHOOL

Sittingbourne

LEA area: Kent

Unique reference number: 118483

Headteacher: Mrs TA Mills

Reporting inspector: Rosalind Johns
22745

Dates of inspection: 7th to 9th July 2003

Inspection number: 247908

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:	3 to 7 years
Gender of pupils:	Mixed
School address:	Gore Court Road Sittingbourne Kent
Postcode:	ME10 1GL
Telephone number:	01795 423619
Fax number:	01795 470577
Appropriate authority:	The governing body, the Oaks Infant School
Name of chair of governors:	Mrs J Burns
Date of previous inspection:	February 1998

© Crown copyright 2003

This report may be reproduced in whole or in part for non-commercial educational purposes, provided that all extracts quoted are reproduced verbatim without adaptation and on condition that the source and date thereof are stated.

Further copies of this report are obtainable from the school. Under the School Inspections Act 1996, the school must provide a copy of this report and/or its summary free of charge to certain categories of people. A charge not exceeding the full cost of reproduction may be made for any other copies supplied.

INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Team members			Subject responsibilities	Aspect responsibilities
22745	Rosalind Johns	Registered inspector	History	What sort of school is it? How well are pupils taught? How well is the school led and managed? What should the school do to improve further?
9977	Fran Luke	Lay inspector		Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development. How well does the school care for its pupils? How well does the school work in partnership with parents?
15917	Bob Cross	Team inspector	Information and communication technology, geography, physical education	How good are the curricular and other opportunities offered to pupils?
15271	Brian Farley	Team inspector	English, religious education, Educational inclusion including racial equality	
14596	Tony Fiddian Green	Team inspector	Mathematics, music, special educational needs, Unit	The school's results and pupils' achievements.
19142	Audrey Quinnell	Team inspector	Science, art, design and technology, Foundation Stage	

The inspection contractor was:

Phoenix Educational Consultants
"Thule"
60 Joy Lane
Whitstable
Kent
CT5 4LT

01227 273449

Any concerns or complaints about the inspection or the report should be raised with the inspection contractor. Complaints that are not satisfactorily resolved by the contractor should be raised with OFSTED by writing to:

The Complaints Manager
Inspection Quality Division
The Office for Standards in Education

Alexandra House
33 Kingsway, London, WC2B 6SE

REPORT CONTENTS

	Page
PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT	5
Information about the school	
How good the school is	
What the school does well	
What could be improved	
How the school has improved since its last inspection	
Standards	
Pupils' attitudes and values	
Teaching and learning	
Other aspects of the school	
How well the school is led and managed	
Parents' and carers' views of the school	
PART B: COMMENTARY	
HOW HIGH ARE STANDARDS?	9
The school's results and pupils' achievements	
Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development	
HOW WELL ARE PUPILS TAUGHT?	11
HOW GOOD ARE THE CURRICULAR AND OTHER OPPORTUNITIES OFFERED TO PUPILS?	13
HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL CARE FOR ITS PUPILS?	14
HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL WORK IN PARTNERSHIP WITH PARENTS?	16
HOW WELL IS THE SCHOOL LED AND MANAGED?	17
WHAT SHOULD THE SCHOOL DO TO IMPROVE FURTHER?	20
PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS	21
PART D: THE STANDARDS AND QUALITY OF TEACHING IN AREAS OF THE CURRICULUM, SUBJECTS AND COURSES	25

PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

The Oaks Infant School educates boys and girls aged between three and seven years. There are 328 pupils on roll which is larger than most other schools of the same type. The school has 12 fewer girls than boys on roll. Fifty two children attend the school's Nursery on a part time basis. There are 90 children in three Reception classes in Year R. The school has 56 pupils with special educational needs which is broadly the national average. Eight of these pupils have statements of special educational needs which is well above the national average. Nine of the pupils with special educational needs, eight of whom have statements of special educational need, attend the school's Swale speech and language unit (The Unit). About two per cent of the pupils are from minority ethnic backgrounds which is lower than in most schools. None of the pupils speaks English as an additional language. Thirty-one pupils are entitled to free school meals, which is below the national average. During the last school year, 13 pupils entered the school other than at the usual time of first admission and five left it at times which were not those of the normal leaving or transfer for most pupils. This rate of mobility is low. In the last two years, one teacher has left the school and two have been appointed. This rate of turnover is low. The school is very popular and has more applications for admission than it has places. Children generally enter the school at average levels of attainment although they have a widespread range of achievement.

HOW GOOD THE SCHOOL IS

This is a good school. Good leadership, management, teaching and learning promote good achievement for the pupils. This is reflected in the above average standards found in some subjects, for example, English and science in Year 2. Overall provision for the pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good. The school's aims are well implemented and ensure that all pupils are fully included in the school's activities. However, in those subjects where standards are average, for example, mathematics, some pupils are not progressing as well as they could. The school gives good value for money.

What the school does well

- Provision for pupils in the Unit is very good and ensures that the pupils make very good progress.
- Standards in English, science, geography, art, music and religious education are above average.
- Consistently good quality teaching and learning means that pupils achieve well as they move through the school.
- The good leadership and management of the headteacher and key staff promote the pupils' learning well.
- Provision in the Nursery and Year R gives the children a flying start to their education.
- The pupils' good behaviour and attitudes result in a happy and purposeful atmosphere in which to learn.

What could be improved

- Achievement in those subjects such as mathematics where standards are average.
- The quality of information given to parents, for example, about what their children are to be taught.
- Aspects of strategic and budget management such as the governors' involvement in the earliest stages of school development planning.

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

HOW THE SCHOOL HAS IMPROVED SINCE ITS LAST INSPECTION

The school was last inspected in February 1998. Of the key issues for action identified by that inspection, two, ensuring that the statutory information provided for parents and that schemes of work were completed have been well met. The third issue has been dealt with satisfactorily. A school development plan with financial links has been drawn up and is monitored satisfactorily. This inspection judges most other aspects of the school to be at overall similar levels to those identified in 1998. Above average standards in English, science, art, and geography and average standards in design and technology and physical education have been maintained. Standards are lower in mathematics, history and information and communication technology but have risen in music and religious education. Although the overall quality of teaching and learning remains good, there was not as much very good teaching as in the previous inspection. This represents satisfactory improvement.

Nevertheless, because of the sense of unity and commitment of the headteacher, staff and governors, the school has a good capacity to improve in the future.

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				Key
	all schools			similar schools	
	2000	2001	2002	2002	
Reading	B	B	C	D	well above average A
Writing	C	B	C	D	above average B
Mathematics	C	B	C	D	average C
					below average D
					well below average E

The table shows that, in 2002, standards compared with all schools were average in reading, writing and mathematics. Compared with similar schools based on the numbers of pupils known to be entitled to free school meals, standards were below average. Over time, standards in the tests in writing and mathematics have risen slowly. The trend in reading has been broadly level. In the assessments made by teachers in science in 2002, standards were average compared with all schools and well below average compared with similar schools. The school set and exceeded its own demanding targets for pupils to reach Level 2 and above in English and mathematics in 2002.

The findings of the inspection are that, in Year 2, standards are above average in English, including literacy, science, geography, religious education, art and music. They are average in all other subjects including mathematics, and numeracy. Standards have improved in English compared with the school's 2002 national test results as more pupils are now at above average standards. This is because the use of assessment information to plan the pupils' work has improved in English and science. The judgement of the inspection is confirmed by the provisional results of the school's 2003 end of Year 2 national tests.

Children in Year R are on course to reach above average standards in their personal and social development, their knowledge and understanding of the world and their physical development. They are on course to reach similar standards to those found in most schools in communication, language and literacy, mathematical development and creative development.

Pupils with special educational needs achieve good standards compared with their previous learning. Pupils in the Unit achieve very well. Overall, pupils' achievement is good. However, in those subjects such as mathematics where teaching and learning are satisfactory, achievement is also satisfactory.

PUPILS' ATTITUDES AND VALUES

Aspect	Comment
Attitudes to the school	Good. Pupils are eager to join in school activities. They are well motivated and approach their work with confidence and interest.
Behaviour, in and out of classrooms	Good. Behaviour is always good, around the school, in lessons, on the playground and in the dining hall. This contributes significantly to the calm, orderly environment.
Personal development and relationships	Good. Pupils and all staff get on well and this creates a strong partnership in learning. Pupils respond well to the chances that they are given to accept responsibility but these are mainly confined to classroom routines.
Attendance	Very good. Attendance is well above the national average. Unauthorised absence is below that average.

Pupils have positive attitudes to their school and this is shown in their willingness to practise and improve their skills.

TEACHING AND LEARNING

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

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

The quality of teaching and learning is consistently good. Strong features in teaching include teachers' good subject knowledge so that new learning is introduced in a clear and systematic way. Their good expectations of pupils mean that they ask demanding questions which encourage pupils to work things out for themselves. Teachers' calm and sensitive management encourages pupils to be relaxed, confident and eager to try out new experiences. Some weaknesses in Years 1 and 2 are that teaching assistants are not always used as well as possible. Also, in some lessons, the pace of teaching slackens so that pupils' initial interest and enthusiasm begin to wane. The teaching of English, including literacy, is good. The teaching of mathematics, including numeracy, is satisfactory. Strengths of pupils' learning are the way in which they apply themselves, sustain concentration and delight in their successes. A comparative weakness is pupils' knowledge of their learning as the school makes limited use of individual targets.

Overall, the good quality of teaching and learning meets the needs of all groups of pupils well. In mathematics, numeracy, design and technology, information and communication technology, physical education and history where teaching and learning are satisfactory, their needs are met satisfactorily.

OTHER ASPECTS OF THE SCHOOL

Aspect	Comment
The quality and range of the curriculum	Satisfactory. Curricular provision in the Nursery and Year R is very good indoors and satisfactory outside. The National Literacy Strategy has been well implemented. The National Numeracy Strategy has been satisfactorily established. Pupils receive satisfactory equality of opportunity. Relationships with the community make a good contribution to the pupils' learning.
Provision for pupils with special educational needs	Good. Provision is well managed and pupils make good progress both in their grasp of basic skills and in their confidence and positive attitudes to learning. They are fully included in all aspects of the school's life. Targets on pupils' individual education plans are clear and concise and help pupils to achieve their learning goals.
Provision for pupils in the Swale Speech and Language Unit.	Very good with some excellent features. Staff pay very close attention to the very specific needs of the pupils. Leadership and management of the Unit are excellent. Assessment procedures and the use of assessment information are also excellent.
Provision for pupils' personal, including spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	Good. Times of stillness and reflection and opportunities to marvel at the natural world heighten pupils' spiritual responses. Good provision for moral and social development helps them to find their own identity while being part of the school and wider community. Although cultural development is satisfactory, the school does not prepare pupils fully to understand the multicultural nature of British society.
How well the school cares for its pupils	Good. The staff know the pupils well and take good care of them. In Years 1 and 2, assessment procedures are good in English, mathematics and science and satisfactory in other subjects. In all subjects except English and science, assessment information is not used well enough to ensure that all pupils progress as fast as they can. Assessment procedures and the use of assessment information in the Nursery and Year R are very good. An

	appropriate policy for racial equality and arrangements for access for the disabled are in place.
--	---

The school works satisfactorily in partnership with parents but there are weaknesses in aspects of the information it provides for them including information about the curriculum. Parents have a good impact on the work of the school by helping in lessons and on trips.

HOW WELL THE SCHOOL IS LED AND MANAGED

Aspect	Comment
Leadership and management by the headteacher and other key staff	Good. The headteacher provides thoughtful leadership and a clear sense of direction and purpose for the school's continuing development. She is well supported by other key staff who are also committed to improvement. All staff work as a committed and co-operative team who believe in their ability to succeed and to do the best for their pupils. The monitoring of teaching and learning by co-ordinators is under developed.
How well the governors fulfil their responsibilities	Satisfactory. Governors are committed and conscientious and support the headteacher and staff well. They discuss all issues openly and are prepared and challenge the headteacher and staff in a constructive way. The school benefits from the governors' wide range of skills and expertise. However, they do not make a sufficient contribution to the strategic thinking and planning of the school in drawing up the school improvement plan.
The school's evaluation of its performance	Satisfactory. The school has a reflective approach to its work. Through careful analysis of performance data and assessment information the school has built up a realistic picture of pupils' performance. This has enabled the school to build upon its strengths, pinpoint weaknesses and draw up clear programmes of action. These actions are implemented satisfactorily.
The strategic use of resources	Good. The priorities in the school improvement plan are supported effectively due to careful financial management although the governors do not monitor spending as frequently as in most other schools. Careful planning has enabled the school to bring about a number of major improvements to enhance the learning environment for pupils. The school makes full use of competitive prices. However, consultation, for example, with parents, is more limited.

The school's staffing, accommodation and learning resources support the pupils' achievement well although free access to the outdoor area is limited for some children in Reception.

PARENTS' AND CARERS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

What pleases parents most	What parents would like to see improved
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The quality of the teaching. • Their children like school. • The school's expectations of their children. • The ease with which they can approach the school. • The quality of the leadership and management. • The way the school helps their children to become mature and responsible. • The quality of behaviour in the school • The progress their children make. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The range of activities provided outside of lessons. • The closeness with which the school works with them. • The information they receive about how the children are getting on. • The amount of homework.

The findings of the inspection support the positive views of the parents. In addition, they find that the amount of homework provided, and the closeness with which the school works with parents, are satisfactory. However, the inspection's findings also show some shortcomings in the information provided to parents about how their children are getting on. The range of extracurricular activities available is satisfactory overall but there are few out of school clubs.

PART B COMMENTARY

HOW HIGH ARE STANDARDS?

The school's results and pupils' achievements

1. Overall, children enter the school at average standards of attainment. The findings of this inspection show that children in Year R are on course to reach above average standards in their personal and social development, their knowledge and understanding of the world and their physical development. They are on course to reach similar standards to those found in most schools in communication, language and literacy, mathematical development and creative development. This represents good achievement. In the school's last inspection, children also achieved well. This represents satisfactory progress since the school was last inspected.
2. In the school's end of key stage national tests and assessments in 2002, standards compared with all schools were average in reading, writing and mathematics. Compared with similar schools based on the numbers of pupils known to be entitled to free school meals, standards were below average. Over time, standards in the tests in writing and mathematics have risen slowly. The trend in reading has been broadly level. In the assessments made by teachers in science in 2002, standards were average compared with all schools and well below average compared with similar schools. The school set and exceeded its own demanding targets for pupils to reach Level 2 and above in English and mathematics in 2002.
3. The findings of this inspection are that standards in Year 2 are above average in English, science, geography, art, music, and religious education. They are average in mathematics, design and technology, information and communication technology, history, and physical education. Standards are average in mathematics because too few pupils reach Level 3 to take the overall results above the national average. This affects the overall score and lowers it to average from above average. The findings of the inspection in English and science are higher than in the 2002 national tests and assessment because of the school's sharper analysis of data and of pupils' responses in the national tests, for example, the focus on reading comprehension which has led to improved results. The judgements of the current inspection are also confirmed by the school's provisional results in the 2003 national tests and assessments in Year 2. Compared with the findings of the last inspection report, standards have generally been maintained in English and science, but have dropped in mathematics. Less than one per cent was required in the 2002 tests to have brought the overall score to above average in mathematics and this is reflected in the findings of this inspection.
4. Since the last inspection, above average standards have been maintained in English, science, art, and geography. They are still average in design and technology, and physical education. Standards have improved in music and religious education where they were average at the time of the last report. They are lower in history and information and communication technology.
5. Pupils' achievement is directly related to the quality of teaching and learning. Overall, pupils achieve well because the quality of teaching and learning is generally good. In the Foundation Stage, children get a good start because of the good quality of the teaching and learning. Progress is also good in Year 1 where teaching and learning are also good. This good progress is maintained in Year 2 where the quality of teaching is also good in English, science, geography, art, music and religious education. Progress is satisfactory in mathematics, design and technology, information and communication technology, history and physical education, and this is matched by the quality of teaching in those subjects. Good achievement is related to the high expectations that teachers have of pupils, and the good relationships between staff and pupils. Pupils have good attitudes to learning and behave well.
6. This inspection found no significant differences in standards achieved by pupils of different gender or in the attainments of the few minority ethnic pupils. The school is aware of the needs of more able pupils, although their needs are not fully met in mathematics, and those who might be gifted

or talented have been identified. Training for the needs of the gifted and talented has been undertaken by the coordinator and is to be communicated to staff.

7. Pupils with special educational needs make good progress towards their targets. The targets are set by the class teachers and monitored by the co-ordinator for special educational needs. The school's tracking system is used to monitor these pupils as they move through the school. Assistants and teachers support them well in classes so that when pupils work in their groups, such as in English and mathematics, they are able to do the work and make good progress.

8. The school has a designated Unit, the Swale Speech and Language unit. This supports pupils who have speech and language difficulties, and who are likely to have social communication problems. Progress for these pupils towards their targets is very good, and they achieve very well in relation to their earlier assessments. They are assessed in three areas: speech and language progress; progress relating to their schoolwork and social progress, such as communication with others and integration into school life. This very good progress has been maintained very well since the last inspection report. Very clear targets are set for them in all areas of their assessment, and staff in the Unit take very great care to monitor pupils' progress closely. Socially, within the school, they also make very good progress because of the school's commitment to including them in all ways possible.

Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development

9. Pupils' attitudes to school are good. They are enthusiastic and interested in their activities. They are proud of their school and have learned to take care of their environment. In lessons, they settle quickly and get on with their work and sometimes show good levels of independence. Pupils are generally fully involved in their lessons. They sustain concentration and listen well, which supports their learning. However, in some lessons, where the pace of the lesson is not maintained, concentration also lapses. This is why the judgement of this inspection differs from that of the school's 1998 inspection.

10. Pupils' moral development is good. Staff are good role models for the pupils and pupils respond to the good behaviour management and expectations of the teachers. This means that behaviour throughout the school is good. Parents feel that behaviour is good and say that the children behave equally well when on school trips. Pupils have a good understanding of the difference between right and wrong, and also know what will happen if they misbehave.

11. Pupils' spiritual development is good. They have a good understanding of the beliefs of others, which is promoted well in assembly and in religious education. They are also taught to understand the impact of their actions on others. No oppressive behaviour, sexism or racism was seen during the inspection. Pupils appreciate, and take care of, their environment and there is little vandalism, graffiti or litter around the site.

12. Pupils' social development is good. Relationships throughout the school are good. In lessons, pupils work co-operatively alongside others, in small groups as well as individually or in pairs, discussing their work and concentrating on their tasks. All adults have good relationships with the pupils which helps them to feel secure and gain in confidence. However, although pupils are given some jobs to do around the school and in classes, these opportunities are limited.

13. Attendance is well above the national median and is, therefore, very good. The level of unauthorised absence is well below the national median. Lessons begin and end promptly and the majority of pupils arrive at school on time.

14. Children in the Foundation Stage settle into school well and enjoy coming to school. They have positive attitudes to their work and play and are well behaved. They are learning to interact well with their teachers, Nursery nurses and the teaching assistants. Children are given many good opportunities to develop their independent learning, even though it is difficult for some of them to have easy access to the spacious outside area.

15. Regardless of any differences that there might be between them, pupils have good attitudes toward one another. When and where it is appropriate, pupils in the speech and language Unit are integrated into mainstream classes.

HOW WELL ARE PUPILS OR STUDENTS TAUGHT?

16. Overall, the quality of teaching and learning is good. This is the same judgement as that made by the school's 1998 inspection. As in 1998, no unsatisfactory teaching was seen. However, during the current inspection ten per cent of the teaching was at least very good rather than the 34 per cent observed in 1998. The only significant variation in the quality of teaching and learning observed by this inspection was that, in the Unit, teaching and learning are consistently very good.

17. Strengths in teaching identified by this inspection and in 1998 include high expectations of the pupils, the knowledge that teachers have of the subjects that they teach and the strong use made of links with other subjects. Relative weakness in Years 1 and 2 noted by this inspection but not in 1998 is that teaching assistants are not always used as well as possible and some lessons are slow paced. In addition, the use of assessment information is not always used well enough to give pupils work which is challenging but attainable in subjects other than English and science.

18. The way in which the pupils apply themselves, sustain concentration and show interest and enthusiasm in their work are amongst the strengths in their learning. A comparative weakness is the pupils' knowledge of their learning as the school makes little use of individual targets. Additionally, in Years 1 and 2, some pupils lack independence and sometimes work slowly when the pace of lessons is too leisurely.

19. The quality of teaching and learning for children in the Nursery and Year R is good with some very good aspects as it was when the school was inspected in 1998. During the inspection, 18 lessons or parts of lessons were seen. One was very good, 15 were good and two were satisfactory. Teachers match their teaching to children's needs very well. Teaching of this quality means that children learn at a rate appropriate to their abilities and they make good progress. The teachers, nursery nurses and teaching assistants know the children very well as individuals and are skilled at developing warm relationships. The teachers' planning is good and is carefully matched to the recommended Early Learning Goals, which link appropriately to the subjects of the National Curriculum. All adults in the four Foundation Stage classes listen with interest to what the children have to say and, when working with them, demonstrate good skills in helping the children to develop their language for communication. The well-organised daily routines enable the children to become used to the pattern of the day and to respond quickly to the high expectations for behaviour, attentiveness and following instructions. The Nursery shares the outside areas with the three Reception classes.

20. The Nursery and one of the Reception classes have easy access to a small outside area, but access is limited for all the Foundation Stage classes to the spacious, secure outside area, as it is out of sight. Two of the Reception classes do not have direct access to an outside play area. The school has plans to redress this, as far as it is possible. Although the teachers attempt to overcome these

shortcomings by planning for the children to spend a set amount of time for outside play each day, this limits the children's independent learning. The very good teamwork between the teachers, Nursery nurses and the teaching assistants is a strong point of the teaching in the Foundation Stage.

21. In Years 1 and 2, the quality of teaching and learning is good. During the inspection, 36 lessons were seen in these year groups. One was very good, 24 were good and 11 were satisfactory. Teaching and learning were judged to be good in English, including literacy, science, geography, art, music and religious education. They were satisfactory in all other subjects. Compared with the judgements of the school's 1998 inspection, teaching and learning were the same in English, science, design and technology, geography, music and religious education. In all other subjects teaching was not as good overall as it was in 1998. This is because significantly less teaching that was at least very good was seen.

22. The school has implemented the National Literacy Strategy well. A good Year 2 lesson in which pupils learned to spell words with a common suffix exemplified the overall good quality of

teaching and learning in Years 1 and 2 and the effective way in which the school has implemented the National Literacy Strategy. The lesson was already well under way when the observation began and pupils were starting work writing sentences containing words ending with “ly”. Most pupils settled to the task quickly although a few took longer. More able pupils particularly produced a good amount of well presented and interesting work. The work was suitably matched to the different needs of the pupils in the class and the teaching assistant provided good support for pupils with special educational needs when this was necessary. The teacher had a good level of interaction with the pupils and clarified or extended their use of the skills they had been taught well through discussion and further explanation. However, some pupils were working in a very relaxed manner and this was not noticed. In the discussion at the end of the lesson, some pupils read their work to the class and the other pupils listened carefully to them. The teacher’s comments and questions consolidated the pupils’ learning well. All pupils were fully involved in the lesson including one with a hearing impairment and another with a severe language disorder. Their good behaviour and the high quality of the relationships in the class made a good contribution to the pupils’ social development.

23. The teaching of the National Numeracy Strategy satisfactorily supports the pupils’ learning in mathematics. Teachers have a sound understanding of the format and purpose of the strategy and use it appropriately. Mental mathematics starter sessions are used well. Teachers plan satisfactorily and this results in all pupils being included well in the lessons, including those who have special educational needs. Numeracy is used well across the curriculum. However, planning for above average Level 3 work is not always good enough and opportunities to extend more pupils are missed. Pupils’ understanding of word problems is not fully developed. The range of organisational strategies used to form groups for the teaching of the National Numeracy Strategy is narrow.

24. Teaching for pupils who have special educational needs is good. Their needs are well met and they make good progress. Most of their time is spent in their own classrooms, although they are occasionally taken out for some extra help if it is necessary. Teachers plan well and provide work that is suitable for pupils’ previous attainment. Most assistants are active during all of the lesson, including the times when the class works as a whole. They support well in group work, and, in general, they are successful in keeping pupils involved in the learning process.

25. Teaching within the Unit is very good. The teacher and teaching assistants work very closely together, sharing the teaching when appropriate, and giving very good support to the pupils. They plan very well so that the teacher and the assistants each have their own individual planning sheets with their own focus for each lesson. The activities are very well planned to meet the needs of the pupils. For example, a very good lesson using role-play was seen. All pupils had the chance to say lines, provide sound effects and join in the story. They thoroughly enjoyed this and entered into it with great enthusiasm. They learned very well and their social skills, such as taking turns, were addressed, as well as giving plenty of opportunities for speech and language development. Earlier, they had spent time learning to follow instructions for making sandwiches. Each pupil has special skills. One reads well, so reads the instructions. Another has many opportunities for cooking at home so was able to take a lead there. Excellent follow up was provided about where the food comes from and how it is grown. Raspberry jam was brought from a member of staff’s home and raspberries to show pupils how the fruit is grown and then jam made. These personal touches make teaching and learning very good.

26. Overall, the good quality of teaching and learning meets the pupils’ needs well. Lessons have clear objectives that pupils understand which helps them to progress. Teachers manage pupils well so that their learning is not disrupted. The good teaching and learning in English, literacy, science, geography, art, music and religious education meets the needs of the pupils well in these subjects. However, in mathematics, numeracy, design and technology, information and communication technology, physical education and history where teaching and learning are satisfactory, the pupils’

needs are met satisfactorily. The use of assessment information is satisfactory in subjects other than English and science where it is good and, as a result, pupils' needs are met satisfactorily.

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

27. The school's last inspection judged that curricular provision was broad and balanced and met statutory requirements. The judgement of this inspection is similar as curricular provision for the Nursery and Year R is judged to be good and that for Years 1 and 2 is satisfactory. Overall provision is, therefore, satisfactory and provides an adequate range of opportunities for the pupils. All statutory requirements for National Curriculum subjects, religious education, sex education and collective worship are fully met. French is no longer taught.

28. A key issue for action when the school was last inspected was to complete schemes of work for all subjects. This has been done well. Schemes of work, often based on national guidelines, which have been modified to suit the school, provide well for progression in the pupils' learning. As in 1998 when the school was last inspected, subjects are taught both within a topic and in their own right to ensure in depth teaching.

29. Total teaching time is virtually that recommended at 15 minutes a week below the recommendation. Good amounts of time are allocated to English. The amount of time allocated to other subjects is generally very similar to that found in most schools except for physical education which is marginally less. The school has a good range of visitors and a substantial programme of educational visits. However, there are few out of school time extracurricular activities. This was also noted when the school was inspected in 1998.

30. The National Literacy Strategy has been implemented well and its use has had a positive effect on the standards of both reading and writing. It has been modified in the way in which it is organised in lessons to meet the needs of pupils. The National Numeracy Strategy is satisfactorily established in the school. Teachers plan the pupils' work to the format of the strategy and the introductory mental session are lively and productive. More able pupils are not always fully challenged in group work.

31. Equality of access to the curriculum and opportunities for pupils is satisfactory. Some pupils are withdrawn from lessons for extra help, in literacy, but this sometimes means that they miss work in other subjects such as mathematics. With the consent of parents, a few pupils are withdrawn from collective worship for literacy support. Pupils who might be gifted or talented are known to staff and training has been undertaken by the coordinator to meet their needs and to communicate this knowledge to staff. Strategies to improve pupils' awareness of cultural diversity in Britain are underdeveloped because provision is not systematically planned into the whole curriculum.

32. The quality and range of the learning opportunities for children in the Foundation Stage are good. The curriculum provided takes full account of the recommended areas of learning. A strong emphasis is placed on good, first-hand experiences of quality combining focused teaching and child-initiated activities very well. Appropriate focused teaching, linked to literacy and numeracy, is carefully planned for and introduced effectively to the children. However, the spacious outside area is not easily accessible, especially for two of the Reception classes, which does not allow the children to move 'spontaneously between indoor and outdoor environments' as stated in the recommended curriculum for children in the Foundation Stage. Resources are good, including a very wide range of good quality, large, wheeled toys and appropriate climbing apparatus for outdoor play.

33. There is good provision for pupils who have special educational needs. Individual education plans provide good and well-focused targets for them, and offer appropriate teaching and support strategies that can be used. There is good early identification of pupils who may have special educational needs and the co-ordinator works well with class teachers to provide the appropriate help and support.

34. Pupils in the Unit receive their full entitlement to the National Curriculum, modified to suit their needs. In addition, they receive specialist help in speech and language development as well as a programme of social communication. This allows them to integrate into mainstream classes wherever possible. They have physical education and assemblies altogether and any extra activities such as a special art lesson. English and mathematics lessons are taken in the Unit classroom, and pupils have a programme tailored to fit their own needs and abilities. They are fully involved in out of class times and have playtimes and lunch times with the main school.

35. The school has appropriate provision for pupils' personal, social and health education. Lower down the school, the provision is more informal through lessons and discussion with children at break and snack times as well as through topics used in assembly. In Year 2 there is more formal provision, which is timetabled each week where subjects such as choices, classroom rules, friendships, drugs education and citizenship are all covered.

36. Links with the local community continue to be satisfactory. The Fire Brigade and the local police are all invited into school to talk to the children about their work. Members of the local council have talked to the children about ways in which they can look after the environment. Arrangements are made for visiting speakers to come in and talk to the children in assembly. To support the curriculum, classes have also visited the local church and local shops and parks. A visiting author and a visiting artist have come to the school as well as theatre groups and a puppeteer group.

37. There continue to be good links with other schools in the locality. Students from a local secondary school have worked with pupils on an information and communication technology project and an art project. There are also close links with the local junior school, which is where most pupils transfer at the end of Year 2. Staff make reciprocal visits in order to meet pupils before transfer and staff also get together for training and other curricular links.

38. The provision for pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good. Pupils' spiritual development is good. They marvel at the natural world as they watch caterpillars turning into butterflies. In music, pupils compose, read and play and they listen to a wide selection of music. They are encouraged to appreciate the environment through outside play and, in geography, they are encouraged to take care of their environment, which is fostered through an appreciation of the outside world. Pupils' creativity is effectively developed through poetry writing like Year 1's work based on *Rumble in the Jungle* and Year 2's colourful weaving projects.

39. Pupils' moral development is good. All staff provide good role models for the pupils and have high expectations of the pupils in term of their attitudes and behaviour in class. They have set up systems of rewards and sanctions, which the pupils all understand and follow. Pupils are encouraged to talk about their feelings and of the effect of their actions on others. In a religious education lesson, pupils were encouraged to review and reflect upon their feelings and those of their friends. The rest of the class listened well while their peers tried to explain their feelings.

40. The school makes good provision for pupils' social development. The school is a caring community where all adults and children get on well together and look after each other. Good social development was seen in a music lesson where pupils were expected to play hand bells. Although some were not keen on performing, they all did so, which helped to build their confidence. Pupils are encouraged to think of the poor and disadvantaged through the raising of funds for a range of charities, such as Oliver Fisher Special Care Baby Trust, Marie Curie, Daffodil Trust, Samaritan's Purse and Red Nose Day.

41. There is satisfactory provision for pupils' cultural development. There are opportunities for pupils to get to know their own culture through visiting artists and authors. There are opportunities for them to listen to Caribbean music, but the provision is not integrated across the school and multicultural provision is not generally given a high profile in the school.

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL CARE FOR ITS PUPILS?

42. The school provides a good level of care for all its pupils. All staff work hard to ensure that the environment is kept safe and detailed information kept on all of the pupils ensures that staff know their pupils and their medical and personal needs well and enables them to care for them well.
43. Staff and governors deal effectively with all health and safety matters around the school. Regular health and safety checks are carried out and any issues addressed straight away and reported to the governing body. In addition, thorough checks are made of grounds, buildings and equipment and there are set procedures for staff if they identify any issues. There are good arrangements for the administration of first aid, and many staff have been trained. At lunch and play times, two classes are designated first aid posts with a qualified first aid member of staff on duty at each point.
44. The school's procedures for the protection of children continue to be good. The deputy headteacher is the named member of staff with responsibility for child protection matters and she works closely with the headteacher. The deputy headteacher is appropriately trained and ensures that staff are all kept up-to-date with the procedures, which are based on the guidelines issued by the local authority. All staff are aware of the importance of ensuring that the nominated officer is immediately informed should they have any concerns. There is a nominated governor for child protection matters.
45. The school continues to have effective procedures in place for the promotion of positive behaviour and discipline and for the monitoring of behaviour throughout the school. Staff use stickers as positive reinforcement and achievement assemblies are held each term for each year group when achievements are recognised formally. Parents are pleased that good behaviour is recognised and praised.
46. There are good procedures in place for the monitoring of attendance and punctuality. Parents confirm that they know what to do if their child is absent. The headteacher monitors attendance closely, she is well aware of children whose attendance or punctuality gives cause for concern and has regular meetings with the education welfare officer, who will visit parents, when necessary.
47. Children in the Foundation Stage are cared for well and are very happy to come to school. They share good relationships with their teachers, nursery nurses, teaching assistants and other adults in the school. Soon after children enter the Nursery, they are informally assessed and, in the Reception classes, they are assessed using a procedure designed specifically for this age range. The evidence from this provides a precise insight into the stage of development of each child, which enables the teachers to plan suitable activities to meet their needs.
48. The school has good procedures for the identification of anti-social behaviour including racism. All staff monitor behaviour closely and parents are involved when appropriate. Staff are good at monitoring and eliminating oppressive behaviour, none of which was seen during the inspection. At the pre-inspection parents' meeting, parents confirmed that bullying did not cause a problem.
49. There are good procedures for identifying pupils who have special educational needs. Reports and observations are taken from the Nursery and from Year R classes, as well as parental contributions and any other agencies involved. The individual plans are monitored and reviewed regularly and any areas for concern are noted. Pupils' progress is monitored well through the school's system of tracking. Outside agencies are used appropriately when necessary and their reports are included in files and annual reviews.
50. The care given to the pupils in the Unit is excellent. The teacher and assistants know their pupils very well and are very sensitive to their needs. Pupils receive individual care and attention whenever needed and the programme of activities is imaginative and well thought out. For example, the staff realised that several pupils did not understand that potatoes are grown in the ground as their experience had been buying them at a supermarket. Potatoes were grown in a container and there are very good photographs of pupils seeing them dug up for the first time. The procedures for assessment are excellent and staff are meticulous in writing the outcomes of each activity. Much of this is conveyed to parents through the home-school diaries. Records and reports are very full and outside

agencies are used fully. Targets are reviewed frequently and at annual reviews they are summarised. Annual reviews are excellent and provide very clear assessment of what has happened in the past year, as well as providing a very good focus for the coming year.

51. The procedures for the assessment of pupils' attainment and progress are good overall. The school has considerable assessment data, gathered regularly in the core subjects of English, mathematics and science. This is used to predict pupils' attainment at the end of Year 2 and to set targets for them in order to ensure that they achieve as well as they should. Staff work together to make sure that assessment is accurate in the core subjects and consistent in and between classes. The assessment of pupils' attainment in other subjects is less well developed although there are some procedures that have been established. The school uses assessment data to analyse the performance of pupils with respect to their gender. This guarantees that any differences in the attainment of boys and girls that might occur can be rectified.

52. The use of assessment information to guide curricular planning is good in science and English. Where the use of assessment is good, this has a direct effect upon the standards of pupils' work and their overall attainment. This is because information gathered is carefully used to plan the curriculum to meet the differing learning needs of pupils. However, this does not significantly and consistently affect planning and provision in subjects other than English and science.

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL WORK IN PARTNERSHIP WITH PARENTS?

53. Parents continue to have positive views of the school. They are given the opportunity to help out in school and many do so, as well as help out on school trips. At the pre-inspection meeting, parents said that they are made to feel welcome and valued in the school whenever they come in and help.

54. Parents have a good impact on the work of the school and many contribute to their children's learning at home by helping with homework and ensuring that it is completed and handed in on time. There is a supportive Parent Teacher Association that works hard to raise significant funds for the school.

55. The schools links with parents are satisfactory. At the pre-inspection parents' meeting and in their responses to the questionnaire, a significant number of parents had concerns over the way in which the school dealt with parents. In particular, they did not feel the school worked closely with them, or that the school gave them sufficient information about their children's progress. The school has the view that parents are given many opportunities to come into school and discuss any issues. However, some parents do not feel they are consulted about what happens in school and there are at present inadequate opportunities for them to express their views about the school.

56. The information provided for parents by the school is unsatisfactory overall. There is a good range of newsletters sent out by the school which provide information about what is happening and give dates for future events and activities. The school prospectus and governors' Annual Report to parents now meet statutory requirements. However, insufficient curriculum information is sent out to parents, and parents have indicated they would like more information of this nature.

57. Many parents do not like the written annual reports for parents as they feel they are too impersonal and some parents feel overwhelmed by them. Overall, the reports are satisfactory. They say what pupils know, understand and can do, some give areas for development, but this is not consistent across the school. Although open days are held for parents during the autumn and summer terms, there is only one formal consultation evening when parents can speak to staff confidentially about their children's progress. There are opportunities for parents to meet with staff at the beginning and end of the school day, but some parents clearly find this difficult and are unhappy about the level of liaison and contact with staff.

58. Induction procedures for children starting school are good. The Nursery teacher regularly meets the children in their pre-school environments and meets them once in their own home. Before starting in the Nursery and in the Reception classes, the children and their parents are invited to come into the school for a session within their new class and to meet their teacher. Parents are also invited to meet with staff to receive the school documentation.

59. Parents of those pupils who have special educational needs are well informed about pupils' progress and targets. They are able to come to school for consultation with staff and to discuss pupils' progress and care. In addition, staff are available in school for more informal contacts. For those involved in annual reviews, parents' views are sought and recorded.

60. Parents of the pupils in the Unit are kept very well informed about progress and day-to-day happenings. The files and home-school diaries contain many expressions of gratitude and support for the staff in the Unit. The home-school book is a very good way of keeping communications open and the entries are excellent. Parents attend the annual reviews and other consultation times. Individual education plans are shared with them and there are tasks for parents to help with at home.

HOW WELL IS THE SCHOOL LED AND MANAGED?

61. As in the previous inspection, the leadership and management of the school are good. The headteacher's thoughtful leadership gives a clear and purposeful direction to the work and development of the school. As a result, pupils achieve well and the quality of teaching and learning is good. This is essentially the position found when the school was last inspected in 1998. Improvement since that inspection has, therefore, been satisfactory.

62. The headteacher is well supported by members of the senior management team whose strengths complement each other and where roles and responsibilities are clearly defined. All staff work as a committed and cooperative team who are reflective about their teaching because pupils' needs come first. It results in a happy, well-ordered school where pupils are eager to learn. This unity of purpose and commitment also ensure that the school has a good capacity to improve in the future.

63. In the last inspection, it was reported that joint coordination of some subjects did not make the best possible use of teachers' time and expertise. Subject leaders are now responsible for individual subjects and have a good understanding of what their role entails. During the past year, there has been a strong focus on developing the role of subject leaders other than in the core subjects of English, mathematics and science through, for example, examining aspects of monitoring, running staff meetings and organising subject portfolios. As a result, they have a sound overview of their subjects. However, there are insufficient opportunities for rigorous monitoring of classroom teaching to enable them to play a pivotal role in evaluating and developing their areas of responsibility.

64. Governors work closely with the headteacher and senior management team and bring a wide range of interests and expertise to their role. They have gained their sound understanding of the strengths and weaknesses of the school through visits to the classroom, analysis of assessment data, reports from the headteacher, meetings of the full governing body and its various subcommittees and attendance at school events. Governors are constructively critical while valuing the efforts of the headteacher and staff. They are fully involved in debating issues around the school improvement plan and in monitoring its progress but are not as closely involved in the earliest stages to give them a finer grasp of strategic planning for school improvement. Nevertheless, school improvement planning is now satisfactory, whereas in 1998 it was a key issue for action.

65. The teacher responsible for the Foundation Stage has a very clear overview of the provision for the children and manages the department very well. The quality of relationships within the Foundation Stage department is very good and together all the adults form a very effective team. The indoor accommodation is bright and well organised. There is a small outdoors area immediately outside the Nursery and one of the Reception classes, but it lacks a covered area for inclement weather. However, access to the spacious outdoor area is limited for all the children and they cannot go out to

this without an adult being with them. Learning resources are good to support the children's learning with a very good range of large wheeled toys and appropriate climbing equipment for outdoors play.

66. The co-ordination of special educational needs is good and is carried out effectively and efficiently. The requirements of the Code of Practice are being met well. The co-ordinator meets with the team of special educational needs assistants weekly and, together, they monitor progress, support, and the needs of the pupils concerned. Annual reviews are carried out efficiently and provide suitable steps for the forthcoming year.

67. The quality of the leadership in the Unit is excellent, and the teacher leads a very strong team. The files contain all necessary details and reports and give a full picture of each pupil's life in the school. The procedures for target setting are very good and very well thought out. Everything is very well monitored and checked so that targets and practice are always relevant. Statutory requirements are fully met in all respects. The team of adults know the pupils very well and help them to make very good progress in the many and complex difficulties that they have. There is a strong sense of teamwork in the Unit and they put pupils' needs as the top priority.

68. The funds allocated to the school are used well as the pupils, including those with special educational needs, make good progress. The educational priorities in the school improvement plan are now supported effectively by financial planning. The school's budget and spending are rigorously and accurately monitored although the governors do not monitor spending as frequently as in most other schools. The school has a sound understanding of how to ensure that it gets value for money. It compares its standards with those of other schools and gets three quotations for major items of expenditure. However, consultation, for example, with parents, is more limited and there is little evaluation of the comparative costs of other schools. These factors reduce the school's ability to challenge itself effectively. The school's financial reserves are above recommended levels. However, the school has well costed appropriate plans for the immediate use of these funds.

69. The school's self evaluation is satisfactory. It has a reflective approach to its work. Careful analysis of performance data and assessment information has built up a realistic picture of pupils' performance. This has enabled the school to build upon its strengths, pinpoint weaknesses and draw up clear programmes of action. However, these programmes are not always carried out well enough to promote sufficient improvement. For example, weaknesses in monitoring teaching and learning mean that although the quality of teaching remains good, there has been no significant improvement since the school was last inspected. Furthermore, the amount of teaching that is better than good is low, especially outside of the Unit. This exemplifies the way in which the school's implementation of its priorities for improvement is satisfactory.

70. The pupils receive satisfactory equality of opportunity. The school has a clear commitment to equal opportunities for all its pupils. The headteacher and other senior staff work together to formulate policies that promote equality of opportunity, but these are not formally monitored for their effectiveness. Subject co-ordinators have insufficient opportunities to monitor pupils' learning or teaching. This means that they cannot know how effective, in practice, are the policies for equality of opportunity. Pupils in the Unit are integrated, when and where appropriate, into mainstream class activities.

71. The school's staffing, accommodation and learning resources support the implementation of the curriculum well. The school has a good number of teachers and a very good number of support staff. All staff are suitably qualified as they were at the time of the school's last inspection. At that time, the allocation of responsibilities to co-ordinators was under review. This has now been suitably completed. Induction procedures for newly qualified teachers and for experienced members of staff are good. Staff settle in well and are helped to perform their duties efficiently. The school provides good support for trainee teachers. Performance management has been implemented well and outcomes are linked to the school improvement plan where appropriate. Training is also successfully correlated to its outcomes and to the priorities in the school improvement plan so that the school's and

the individual's needs are well provided for. The funds allocated for the training of staff are well used. This is an improvement on the findings of the school's last inspection which judged that outcomes from appraisal were not sufficiently linked to the school development plan. Administrative and support staff make an important contribution to the efficient functioning of the school.

72. The school's good accommodation supports the teaching of the curriculum well. There are an appropriate number of suitably sized classrooms for the number of pupils. Careful planning has enabled the school to bring about a number of major improvements to enhance the learning environment for pupils. For example, a new library has been built and is about to be stocked. This is an improvement since the school was last inspected. The school also has, for example, a television room and accommodation for pupils with special educational needs. It has a good sized hall but this has to be used as a throughway and for storage which places limitations on its effectiveness. The school is set in pleasant and attractive grounds which have ample hard surfaced areas and an adventure playground. However, it does not have a field and, although the grounds are used for geographical field work, they are under used for the study of the environment. Access for the disabled is generally good. However, plans to improve this further are being discussed in consultation with the governors and the local education authority.

73. Overall, the quality and range of learning resources are good. There have been significant improvements since the school was last inspected. Limitations in the reading scheme and shortages of non-fiction books and resources relating to famous artists no longer exist. In addition, the school's ratio of computers to pupils is at the level of the national average rather than low. There are still, however, some shortages of software for information and communication technology, for example, in mathematics, which the school is addressing. Nevertheless, good use is made of information and communication technology in many areas of the curriculum and in the management of the school.

WHAT SHOULD THE SCHOOL DO TO IMPROVE FURTHER?

74. In order to improve the quality of education offered to the pupils, the headteacher, governors and staff should:

1. Raise achievement in those subjects such as mathematics where standards are average by:

(Paragraphs 3,4,5,17,21,23,26,30,51,52, 63,69,102-113,128,132,136,141,151,152,153, 156)

- involving co-ordinators in monitoring the quality of teaching more rigorously to increase the amount of very good teaching and learning;
- improving assessment procedures in those subjects where this report indicates that this is necessary;
- using assessment information more effectively in all subjects to provide pupils with work that challenges and extends them, and,
- improving pupils' skills at solving problems in mathematics and their understanding of shapes and measures;
- making sure teaching assistants are employed to the best advantage at all times;
- using a wider range of organisational strategies particularly for teaching mathematics.

2. Improve the quality of information given to parents through:

(Paragraphs 56, 57)

- providing more detailed information about the curriculum to be covered each term, and,
- improving opportunities for parents to consult with teachers.

3. Enhance aspects of strategic and budget management by:

(Paragraphs 64, 68)

- increasing the governors' involvement in the earliest stages of school development planning;
- improving arrangements to ensure that the school gets good value for the money it spends;
- strengthening the governors' monitoring of the school's spending and their involvement in the budget setting process and,
- the governors evaluating their practice and including proposals for the development of their work on the school development plan.

OTHER ISSUES WHICH SHOULD BE CONSIDERED BY THE SCHOOL

- Ensuring the pupils understand the multicultural nature of British society more fully.*
(Paragraphs 31, 41, 100)
- Improving arrangements for the Reception and Nursery pupils to use the outside area.*
(Paragraphs 14, 19, 20, 32, 65, 78, 89)
- Reviewing arrangements for withdrawing pupils from lessons for regular additional support.*
(Paragraphs 31, 70, 99)
- Improving the range of out of school club activities offered to pupils.*
(Paragraphs 29,151)

*Already recognised by the school as an area for development.

PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS

Summary of the sources of evidence for the inspection

Number of lessons observed	60
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	0	6	41	13	0	0	0
Percentage	0	10	68	22	0	0	0

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

Information about the school's pupils

Pupils on the school's roll	Nursery	YR – Y3
Number of pupils on the school's roll (FTE for part-time pupils)	26	277
Number of full-time pupils known to be eligible for free school meals	0	31

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Special educational needs	Nursery	YR – Y3
Number of pupils with statements of special educational needs	0	8
Number of pupils on the school's special educational needs register	3	51

English as an additional language	No of pupils
Number of pupils with English as an additional language	0

Pupil mobility in the last school year	No of pupils
Pupils who joined the school other than at the usual time of first admission	13
Pupils who left the school other than at the usual time of leaving	5

Attendance

Authorised absence

	%
School data	4.2

Unauthorised absence

	%
School data	0

National comparative data	5.4
---------------------------	-----

National comparative data	0.5
---------------------------	-----

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

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

	Year	Boys	Girls	Total
Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 1 for the latest reporting year	2002	54	39	93

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		Reading	Writing	Mathematics
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	42	45	48
	Girls	39	39	37
	Total	81	84	85
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	87 (87)	90 (89)	91 (96)
	National	84 (84)	86 (86)	90 (91)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	43	47	46
	Girls	39	38	39
	Total	82	85	85
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	88 (85)	91 (91)	91 (95)
	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	229	0	0
White – Irish	0	0	0
White – any other White background	0	0	0
Mixed – White and Black Caribbean	0	0	0
Mixed – White and Black African	1	0	0
Mixed – White and Asian	0	0	0
Mixed – any other mixed background	2	0	0
Asian or Asian British - Indian	1	0	0
Asian or Asian British - Pakistani	0	0	0
Asian or Asian British – Bangladeshi	0	0	0
Asian or Asian British – any other Asian background	0	0	0
Black or Black British – Caribbean	0	0	0
Black or Black British – African	0	0	0
Black or Black British – any other Black background	0	0	0
Chinese	1	0	0
Any other ethnic group	1	0	0
No ethnic group recorded	5	0	0

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

Teachers and classes

Qualified teachers and classes: YR – Y3

Total number of qualified teachers (FTE)	11.2
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	24.7
Average class size	27.7

Education support staff: YR – Y3

Total number of education support staff	18
Total aggregate hours worked per week	346

Qualified teachers and support staff: Nursery

Total number of qualified teachers (FTE)	1
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	26
Total number of education support staff	2
Total aggregate hours worked per week	65

Financial information

Financial year	2001/02
----------------	---------

	£
Total income	714308
Total expenditure	710240
Expenditure per pupil	2441
Balance brought forward from previous year	88207
Balance carried forward to next year	92275

Number of pupils per FTE adult	8.7
--------------------------------	-----

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Recruitment of teachers

Number of teachers who left the school during the last two years	1
Number of teachers appointed to the school during the last two years	2

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	326
Number of questionnaires returned	157

Percentage of responses in each category

	Strongly agree	Tend to agree	Tend to disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know
My child likes school.	64	33	2	1	0
My child is making good progress in school.	52	39	7	1	2
Behaviour in the school is good.	46	46	4	0	3
My child gets the right amount of work to do at home.	36	49	9	1	5
The teaching is good.	49	48	1	0	3
I am kept well informed about how my child is getting on.	32	48	13	4	1
I would feel comfortable about approaching the school with questions or a problem.	57	39	3	1	0
The school expects my child to work hard and achieve his or her best.	52	44	3	0	2
The school works closely with parents.	31	48	15	4	1
The school is well led and managed.	49	45	0	2	4
The school is helping my child become mature and responsible.	41	52	3	1	3

The school provides an interesting range of activities outside lessons.

15	34	24	6	21
----	----	----	---	----

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

75. The school has maintained the good provision for children in the Foundation Stage since the previous inspection. The well-organised day-to-day routines established by the teachers enable all children to feel secure and safe and to grow in confidence throughout the Foundation Stage classes. Teaching and learning in all areas of development are good.

76. Children are admitted to the Nursery at the start of the autumn term or the spring term during the year in which they become four years old. They attend on a part-time basis, either for a morning or an afternoon session. Children are admitted to a Reception class at the start of the autumn or spring term during the year they are five years old. The warm, caring, supportive relationships started in the Nursery create a secure emotional climate for learning, which is maintained throughout the Foundation Stage. Most of the children have attended the school Nursery before starting in a Reception class. Most children enter the school with levels of attainment that are expected for children of this age. Most of them make good progress from their average starting point and are on course to meet the Early Learning Goals in communication, language and literacy, mathematical development and creative development. Many are on course to exceed the expected levels of attainment in their personal and social development, knowledge and understanding of the world and their physical development.

Personal, social and emotional development

77. Teaching is good and most children achieve above average attainment in this area of learning. The children are constantly encouraged to feel confident about what they can achieve through praise, smiles and gestures. Their behaviour in and around the school is good with only a few disagreements, which is typical for this age. They work and play beside each other well. They have a good understanding of classroom procedures and most respond well to them. They are aware of the teachers' high expectations of them and respond well. When given the opportunity to choose activities for themselves, they do so in a sensible way and most sustain concentration well for their age. Most settle well to the more structured activities, such as literacy and numeracy, and are able to concentrate for an appropriate length of time. The children attend to their personal hygiene appropriately and most are able to undress and dress themselves independently before and after physical development lessons.

78. Personal, social and emotional development is taught well in all areas of learning and the planning is thorough. A strength of the teaching is the warm, caring relationships that adults develop with the children, which helps them to feel secure and to grow in confidence. The adults provide very good role models for the children, always treating each of them with courtesy and respect to which they respond positively. Although teachers provide many very good opportunities to develop the children's independent learning, the restricted access to the outside area limits the full range of opportunities for independent learning. The children enjoy the many moments of fun and time for reflection, which helps to strengthen the bond between them.

Communication, language and literacy

79. Children make good progress in this area of learning, including those who have special educational needs. All adults make very good attempts to communicate with the children in the Foundation Stage. They talk to them individually, in groups and as a class to help all children extend their vocabulary and start to use their language and communication skills for a range of purposes. All

adults show the children that they value their efforts at communicating. A few children are eager to talk about the things that interest them, such as celebrating their birthday.

80. The children enjoy listening to stories. However, many have weak listening skills and many often call out. Children in the Reception classes are introduced to Big Book sessions and phonic work in preparation for the literacy hour when they transfer to the Year 1 classes. The children enjoy stories, such as *The Water Fight* and *On the sand*. They know that the names of the author and illustrator are on the front cover. Most children understand the concept that pictures carry meaning and they use the illustrations well to extend their understanding of the story. Some children are learning that spoken words and print have the same meaning and that, in the English culture, text is read from left to right. In the good phonic sessions, they are correctly learning initial phonic sounds, and some can use this skill to attempt to read simple words. Linking the phonic work with correct letter formation is good, as this helps to reinforce the children's understanding of both concepts. Most children have satisfactory pencil control, and are provided with many good opportunities to improve this. Most children make a good attempt at writing their own name. The acceptance of developmental writing is good as this enables the children to be confident and to feel they are writers. Children are encouraged to take books home to practise their early reading skills.

81. Children are provided with a good range of purposeful activities to develop their use of language for reading, writing, speaking and listening, whatever their stage of development. Teachers match their teaching to children's needs very well. Many children have weak listening skills and teachers work very hard to help the children to improve this skill. The children are provided with good role-play areas, such as the *Ice cream Van*, *Hedgehog Cottage* and *Squirrels' Farm Shop*. These are used well, often with an adult involved to extend the children's vocabulary. The teaching and learning of initial phonic sounds are very good, especially when teachers work with a focus group. This was observed when a teacher worked with a small group using their letter sticks to make three letter words. She enabled the children to use their previous learning of initial letter sounds to make different words by changing the initial letter and keeping the last two letters constant. This very good teaching enabled the children to make very good progress in their learning of early spelling skills.

82. The children are provided with paper and pencils for a wide range of activities, such as creating their own booklets. Teachers use puppets well to help extend the children's learning. A teacher used a colourful alien puppet well to extend the children's speaking and listening skills before asking them 'How can we help the alien to remember what the weather is like on earth?' This provided the children with a real impetus to write. Nursery nurses and teaching assistants are used very effectively with small groups, when direct teaching is involved. They are well briefed and assist the teachers in maintaining ongoing assessments of individual children's progress. The programme of work is well structured and linked to the National Literacy Strategy for young children. Classroom displays are rich in language clues intended to reinforce learning and a good emphasis on language development is evident throughout the whole programme of work.

Mathematical development

83. This area is taught well, and by the end of the Reception year, most children are on course to meet the Early Learning Goals for mathematics. Teachers are helping the children to develop their mathematical understanding well by providing a good programme of practical experiences, which enables them to make good progress. The children are learning to recognise and most can name common shapes such as square, triangle and circle. Most can count numbers by rote and are learning to recognise and write numbers to ten. These skills are practised regularly when singing Nursery rhymes, number jingles and playing sorting and ordering games. Teachers and teaching assistants provide good support by playing number games with the children, which enable them to experience practical counting, and early addition and subtraction in a practical way.

84. In the Nursery, the children gain well in their understanding of early numbers by many practical experiences. They chose their favourite flavour of ice cream from a selection of three

different ice creams, then walked to an adult, each holding a different colour ice cream in order to count how many like each flavour. They experience working with sand and water, filling and emptying different size containers. When working alongside a group of children in the sand tray, a nursery nurse extended the children's vocabulary and mathematical learning well of biggest, smallest, full or empty. In a Reception class, the teacher used a glove puppet to count coins into a piggy bank. The children enjoyed counting along with the puppet and most were able to say how many were left, when one or more pennies were taken away from the five pennies in the piggy bank. The number of days in the week is used well to reinforce the children's learning of numbers to seven. Most children can work practically and orally with numbers to ten, but need to use practical resources when attempting to record early addition. Some have made three-dimensional ladybirds and arranged the spots to show different combinations of numbers to make ten, which enhanced their learning of early addition well.

85. Teachers extend the children's learning and reinforce basic skills through good practical experiences. They ensure that all adults in the Foundation Stage classes use correct mathematical vocabulary and provide many activities, which build upon the children's understanding at that time. Questions are used skilfully to encourage children to organise their thoughts and build on their understanding. The work is planned well and tasks are appropriate and in line with the recommendations in the National Numeracy Strategy for young children.

Knowledge and understanding of the world

86. On entry to the school, the children's knowledge and understanding of the world are average for their age. During the Foundation Stage, the teachers effectively build on the children's knowledge, helping them to learn more about the world around them. The teaching and learning are good with some very good features. Most children are on course to exceed the expected standard by the end of the Reception year, due to experiencing many very good practical activities. In the Nursery and Reception classes, good practical activities with the interaction of an adult enable the children to learn at first hand about mini beasts. The children gained very good first-hand knowledge about the life cycle of butterflies, when caterpillars were kept in appropriate environments in the classes and eventually changed into painted lady butterflies.

87. Children learn that plants need food, light and water in order to grow by planting seeds in compost, sand or cotton wool and watering them, to see which seeds grow best. The making of ice cream sundaes helps them to gain in their understanding of the changes in ice cream when it is taken from the refrigerator into the warm class. They scooped it out and decorated their chosen flavour with strawberry or chocolate sauce and colourful sprinkles before enjoying eating it. A wide range of construction toys and materials are provided for the children to explore and use their skills to make models. In the Nursery, good teaching of early computer skills enables the children to use the roller-ball computer mouse confidently to move the clown to buy ice creams on the screen. Children in the Reception classes use their computer skills well to create colourful mini beasts. Two children used their computer skills very well when they created and printed their own versions of the planets and a picture of space and the sun as a means of helping the alien explain about the earth when it flew back to its own planet.

88. The teaching and learning of skills to use a computer competently are good. Children acquire new learning when the teacher involves them very well by effective questioning and clear explanations. The use of correct vocabulary and practical demonstration extends the children's learning well of this form of communication and information technology. Teachers provide a wide range of planned activities, most of which start with what the children already know, and this enables them to extend their understanding and knowledge of the world well. There are good ranges of role-play resources in each class that help to extend the children's learning. Exploring the school grounds and visits to places of interest, such as Gore Court Farm, increase the children's understanding very well about their local environment.

Physical development

89. Most children are achieving above average attainment in their physical control. The children make good progress in their physical control, mobility and awareness of space. There is a very good range of large wheeled play equipment and large apparatus to balance and climb on. Although the children cannot have free access to them, teachers make good provision to try to overcome this, as they timetable outside activities each day. The children enjoy their physical development lessons in the hall, where they are able to use a good range of appropriately sized apparatus to move on.

90. Teachers provide the children with many opportunities to develop their hand control through the use of a wide range of mark-making tools, and cutting and gluing activities. They enjoy using construction kits and manipulate the pieces well. Most are able to dress and undress themselves, but some need help with buttons and zips. Teachers give clear instructions during physical education lessons and allow children to demonstrate good examples of their work.

Creative development

91. The children make good progress in developing their creative skills and most are on course to meet the nationally recommended levels of attainment by the end of the Reception year. The quality of teaching and learning is good and activities are well resourced and organised. Children enjoy a good range of practical activities, which enable them to experiment, and to explore creatively and imaginatively. They paint colourful pictures of their activities and animals seen during their visit to Gore Court farm. Role-play activities are carefully planned and enable the children to play out imaginary situations well. They enjoy using appropriate resources and dressing up in the good range of clothes, such as mini beast costumes, which extends their imaginative play well. They enjoy listening to stories and often re-enact these during their role-play. The children enjoy their music lessons and tunefully sing well-known Nursery rhymes and songs. They get much pleasure being the orchestra when they play percussion musical instruments while the teacher is the conductor. Although most make a good attempt to follow the conductor, many find this quite difficult. Through much praise and encouragement, the teacher creates a warm, supportive learning environment, which enables the children to play their instruments confidently. They enjoy taking part in action songs, such as *If you're happy and you know it* and *The wheels on the bus*.

ENGLISH

92. Overall, standards in Year 2 are above average. They are average in speaking and listening, but above average in reading and in writing. This overall judgement is broadly similar to that of the previous inspection when attainment was said to exceed national expectations. The findings of this inspection indicate a higher level of attainment by pupils in both reading and writing than in the 2002 national tests with more reaching higher levels than last year. Over the past four years, there has been some fluctuation in the standard of both reading and writing. When compared with similar schools, pupils' results in the national tests in 2002 were below average in both reading and writing. This, however, reflects the variation in trends over time. There have been no significant differences in the attainment of boys and girls in tests. The school has agreed an appropriate number of targets and strategies in its improvement plan to develop all aspects of the English curriculum in order to raise standards.

93. Pupils achieve well in English as they move through the school. Those with special educational needs achieve good standards compared with their previous attainment. This is because both teachers and teaching assistants set them tasks appropriate to their needs and support them closely. Where appropriate, pupils in Year 1 have had the benefit of Early Literacy Support to accelerate their learning. No significant differences between the achievement of boys and girls were observed during the inspection

94. In Year 2, standards in speaking and listening are average. Most pupils listen carefully to teachers and to one another and speak with suitable confidence when this is required. They use a vocabulary suited to the context. For example, in one lesson, pupils listened closely as the teacher

explained how to make notes on a non-fiction text. They responded appropriately to her questions. Later most showed a good understanding of how to make notes. When they were asked about what they were doing, their explanations were clearly conveyed, although a few were more reticent and used a narrow range of vocabulary.

95. Standards in reading are above average in Year 2. Pupils have a well-developed range of skills that make possible accurate reading of texts. Discussion with them indicates an appropriate level of understanding and they express opinions about what they read. Their ability to talk about their preferences is an improvement since the previous inspection. More able pupils often read with a good level of fluency and expression and those who are average are making good progress in the acquisition of these skills. Where pupils are less confident, it is because they have an insufficiently developed sight vocabulary of common basic words or they lack the full range of skills to make out those that are unknown. More able pupils are beginning to understand how to locate information in books.

96. Standards in writing are above average in Year 2. Most pupils have acquired the skills necessary to communicate clearly by writing grammatically correct sentences and extending their ideas logically. They apply the skills that they learn in lessons well and make good progress over time. They have begun to learn the more difficult skills of note making. More able pupils show an increasing competence in the use of words for particular effect, for example, when they wrote imaginative and varied sentences using words with -ly suffixes. The analysis of work previously done by pupils indicates that they cover a suitable range of writing activities although this varies to some extent between classes. There is a good focus on the learning of specific skills for writing and this has had a positive effect upon standards. The presentation of their work varies in quality between classes but, overall, pupils make good progress over time.

97. Throughout the school, standards in literacy are generally above average. Pupils increase in their understanding of the uses of writing by working on different types of narrative. They write for a satisfactory range of purposes in subjects such as religious education and science, but their range of story writing is more limited.

98. The quality of teaching and learning in English is good overall. The previous inspection reported that the quality of teaching was good overall with all lessons being good or better. This is essentially a similar judgement, although no very good lessons were seen during this inspection. In a good Year 2 lesson where pupils learned how to make notes to isolate essential information about dinosaurs, questions were used well to help them think about the main ideas in the text. They made good efforts to do this and concentrated closely but, for some, this became more difficult because of the lengthy time that they had to sit and listen. However, most had developed a good understanding of what to do and responded well to the task of reading for a specific purpose such as making notes. During the writing task, pupils worked independently, their concentration was maintained because they were interested and the earlier teaching of skills had suitably equipped them for the activity.

99. In another good Year 2 lesson, the teacher and pupils examined a text together so that they could learn the skill of writing information under headings. They settled quickly to the writing tasks that were well matched to their differing needs. Although all clearly knew what to do, a few worked too slowly and made insufficient progress during the lesson. The teaching assistant provided a good level of support to a small group with special educational needs. Pupils watched and listened with close attention in a good Year 1 lesson when they learned to compare and contrast stories in various settings. They enjoyed reading *The Gruffalo* with their teacher from a large illustrated text. She stopped from time to time to clarify points or ask them to predict what might happen next. A discussion on characterisation followed. This was particularly valuable because they were encouraged to develop a precise vocabulary for description. The teaching was lively with a good range of questions used to help them develop their thinking, although at times some tended to be noisy by calling out their ideas. In Year 1, there has been a good improvement in the range and purposes of writing undertaken by pupils since the previous inspection.

100. The quality of the English curriculum is satisfactory overall. The National Literacy Strategy has become well established and appropriately modified to meet the needs of pupils. Good use is being made of initiatives such as Early Learning Support to improve standards. However, withdrawal from classes for this sometimes results in some loss of access to other subjects. Guided reading has been implemented by teachers and has made a significant contribution to the above average standards pupils have attained in reading. It has also helped to improve opportunities for them to read to adults from a wide range of books. This is an improvement since the previous inspection. Information and communication technology is limited in use to support teaching and learning. There is regular homework to improve literacy skills, particularly reading. Pupils' education for a multicultural society is not sufficiently supported by the curriculum for English because it is not planned into their programmes of work.

101. The school makes good use of data from tests and from the regular assessment of pupils' work to set targets for learning and attainment. Good use is made of this information to plan the English curriculum. The marking of work is helpful and encouraging, but shows that teachers' expectations are too variable in what they regard as work of good quality. The co-ordinator for the subject is enthusiastic and provides good leadership. However, this is limited because she does not systematically analyse pupils' work to ensure that it is of high quality neither does she have opportunities to monitor teaching. New library provision has just been completed with accommodation that provides an attractive central area in the school. Resources for learning are good.

MATHEMATICS

102. In Year 2, pupils' attainment is average. This matches the results of the National Curriculum tests for 2002. There has been a fall in standards since the last inspection report when they were reported to be above average. This is because teaching was judged to be very good in 1998 when the school was last inspected when it is now judged to be satisfactory. Pupils generally make satisfactory progress, including those who have special educational needs. Many make good progress. The provisional results for 2003 are very similar to those for 2002, with a very slight drop in the number of pupils gaining the above average Level 3.

103. The quality of teaching and learning is satisfactory overall, with some that is good. There were no unsatisfactory lessons. Teachers are confident with the National Numeracy Strategy and apply it satisfactorily. The lessons always begin with a mental mathematics session, and several teachers use a kind of "rap" for this. Pupils clap in time and chant the 'getting ready' words until they go into counting in two's or five's or whatever is planned. They all know this routine and it starts the lessons with gusto. Teachers plan soundly and include work that is pitched at appropriate levels for different attainers. This results in all pupils being included well in the lessons, including those who have special educational needs. However, there is sometimes a lack of rigour in providing extension work for more able pupils to do. Planning is sometimes not sharp enough for Level 3 work, and opportunities to extend more pupils are missed. For example, giving them higher numbers to work with, in thousands, or providing more complex word problems than simply converting an addition sum into words. Another weakness is work on simple inverse operations such as subtraction being the inverse of addition.

104. The management of pupils is good and results in pupils' good behaviour and attitudes. They enjoy mathematics. The pace of lessons sometimes decreases because teachers ask one pupil at a time to do work on the board, for example, in one lesson, pupils were subtracting single digits from double digits. One pupil at a time came to the whiteboard, and with thinking time included, this slowed down the pace for the whole class and they became restless. This slackening of pace was also seen in another class where pupils were coming, one at a time, to the front to devise a problem for the whole class to think about. Again, with individual thinking time, the pace slowed down and not many could be fitted in to do this.

105. Teachers encourage pupils to use mathematical vocabulary well. In a Year 2 lesson, pupils

were talking about 'sharing' or 'dividing equally'. They understand the term 'multiples'. Year 1 talked about 'differences', 'take away', and 'subtract'.

106. In the lessons seen, Year 1 pupils in all three classes were seen subtracting a single digit from a double digit, counting back, sometimes saving numbers in their heads. They all used ten frames to help them in this work, and teachers explained what to do well. In the Year 2 lessons, one was an oral mathematics session with division work and finding multiples. Another lesson was concerned with place values, addition and subtraction in hundreds, tens and units, while the third was about understanding multiplication and division, including halves and doubles.

107. Analysis of pupils' work shows that the required topics for mathematics are covered. However, the school's analysis of the National Curriculum tests shows insufficient work on word problems, and shape.

108. Pupils in Year 1 sometimes use pictures to record findings, and they use appropriate mathematical signs such as plus and minus. They order numbers and understand that addition is 'more than', and subtraction is 'less than'. They work on odd and even numbers, and recognise the value of various coins in their addition of money. They can recognise three-dimensional shapes, use non-standard units such as hand spans, feet and fingers. Some are able to estimate length in the number of cubes it might be, or which container holds more or less in their work on capacity.

109. Year 2 pupils can understand simple Venn diagrams and some draw bar charts. They understand the names for a rectangle, cuboid and hexagon, but some do not list properties such as the number of sides or corners. They can add up money to 20 pence, and they work in simple fractions by using cut out diagrams pasted into a circle. Later in the year, pupils are using standard units such as centimetres, adding and subtracting to 100, and some are collecting data and recording it on simple graphs. They learn to tell the time.

110. Teachers in the same year groups plan together to make sure that all pupils are covering the same topics. Sets of commercial workbooks are used for several aspects of mathematics, and these generally enhance the curriculum required by the National Numeracy Strategy. They do not provide much to help develop pupils' understanding of word problems.

111. Numeracy is used well across the curriculum. Year 2 in science measured in centimetres when they were seeing how far a toy car travelled down a ramp. They also recorded how long it took for ice cubes to melt, measuring in minutes. Both Year 1 and Year 2 pupils noted the symmetry when working in science about butterflies, and they extended this into art and information technology later. Year 2 have drawn block graphs showing how many pupils re-cycle materials after their survey.

112. The subject is well led by a teacher who is in her second year of teaching. She understands what needs to be done to take the subject forward, and one of the suggestions is for a lesson once each week where pupils in Year 2 are possibly put into four sets. The co-ordinator has checked through the resources for mathematics, which are good, and analysis is carried out to discover the strengths and areas for development in the results of the national tests. Resources for information and communication technology and, therefore, the use of information and communication technology are inadequate, but the co-ordinator is aware of this and more are ordered. As a result of this analysis, teachers plan more effectively for improvement in order to push more of the able pupils ahead to secure Level 3 work. Monitoring of teaching is done by the headteacher but there are plans for the co-ordinator to do this next year. Assessment is good and there is good feedback to pupils about their work. Use of assessment is less secure, and does not fully tie in with developments to raise standards overall.

113. Standards since the last inspection have fallen statistically from above average to average. The monitoring of teaching through observation in classrooms is less than before, but this is due to a

fairly new co-ordinator. Overall, there has been satisfactory improvement and pupils make satisfactory progress. Figures overall show that pupils join the school at about an average level of attainment, and leave having attained an average level.

SCIENCE

114. Pupils in Year 2 achieve above average standards in science. This is similar to the standards for pupils reported in the school's previous OFSTED inspection. The findings of the inspection differ from the results of the 2002 national tests, which showed that standards were average. The differences between the judgement of this inspection and the results of the tests in 2002 are due to the school's good analysis of the school's test results and the consequent improvements made to the curriculum for the past year. This has resulted in almost every pupil achieving at least the average Level 2 and a higher proportion of pupils achieving the higher Level 3. Throughout the school, pupils with special educational needs make good progress and achieve well compared with their previous attainment. This is due to the good in-class support, which they receive. This inspection finds no significant difference in the performance of boys and girls.

115. The quality of teaching and learning is good and promotes good progress, which is similar to the judgements of the previous inspection. Most teachers are confident in their knowledge of the subject and this results in good learning. Throughout the school, a strong emphasis is given to the teaching of experimental and investigative science. Teachers' planning shows a good balance between investigations, factual learning and recording. They use correct scientific vocabulary, which extends pupils' knowledge and understanding well. The management of pupils is good and, as a result, pupils settle well to their work and make good progress. An analysis of pupils' work indicates that pupils present their work in appropriate ways for their age, such as drawings, often with labels, writing and tables. Information and communication technology is used well to enhance pupils' learning. Pupils enjoy their science lessons and are inspired by the enthusiasm of their teachers.

116. A good lesson in Year 2 illustrates well the strength of the good teaching and learning in the school. The teacher used her very good subject knowledge to extend pupils' learning well on the life cycle of plants through investigative science activities, effective questioning and clear explanations. She captured and maintained the pupils' interest by making good use of resources to make learning both relevant and enjoyable. Pupils replied to questions such as 'How do we know that they are living?' with answers such as, 'they grow', 'they reproduce', and 'they sometimes grow from bulbs and not just seeds'. Good use of a pupil holding a flower and two others pretending to be bees going to the flower enabled pupils to suggest that they were collecting pollen and were collecting nectar. The teacher developed the pupils' skills of prediction by asking a series of questions of 'What will happen next?' This enabled pupils to develop their knowledge of the life cycle of plants very well. Practical work using magnifying glasses to look at seeds in a variety of fruits enabled pupils to observe closely the differences in the sizes and amounts of seeds in the various fruits. All pupils were given the opportunity to observe and discuss the differences within their group, which enabled them to learn from first-hand experience before recording their findings. Recording tasks were matched to the needs of individual pupils, which ensured that each pupil was appropriately challenged, enabling them to achieve high standards. A group of more able pupils devised their own tables to represent their findings, which they accomplished well. All pupils, including those with special educational needs, learned well from this lesson. Pupils were well supported by the teacher and teaching assistants and were encouraged to talk about and share their ideas.

117. Pupils' understanding of how living things change as they grow was reinforced very well, when they had first-hand experience within their classrooms of observing the various stages of how caterpillars change into painted lady butterflies. Pupils use information and communication technology well to download information about insects from the Internet to extend their learning about mini beasts. They gain well in their learning of how plants grow by planting seeds in a variety of different media, such as seed compost, on sand or cotton wool and ensuring that they provide sufficient water and light

for the seeds to grow. They can name the main parts of flowering plants, appropriately label their drawings and understand that there are similarities and differences between themselves and others. Pupils have a good understanding of the effect of forces on objects. They understand how pushing or pulling an object enables it to move at different speeds. They also have a good understanding of the safety aspects and how stopping a moving object can be dangerous.

118. Older pupils explore how different surfaces can affect the movement of objects, such as how a slippery or rough surface on a ramp affects the distance travelled by a toy car. They can measure in centimetres the distance travelled by toy cars when the cars are placed on slopes at different angles. They experiment to find ways of making an object move without touching it, such as by blowing. Pupils test the absorbency of different materials by placing them in a dye solution and observing the differences as the dye travels up the material. They learn that they can change the shape of some materials by pushing, pulling and squeezing malleable materials into many different shapes. Pupils have a good understanding of how to make a simple electric circuit using a battery. Older pupils can make an electric circuit to light a bulb and turn off the light by breaking the circuit with a switch. They learn about the safety aspects when dealing with electricity. They explore the forces of gravity and use different objects, such as a feather, a ball and a stone, to see which object will reach the ground first. Pupils understand the importance of making a fair test by ensuring that the same criteria are applied for each aspect of an experiment.

119. Science is well supported by a useful policy and scheme of work that provide good coverage of all aspects of the subject and clear guidance for teachers. The subject is led very well by an enthusiastic and knowledgeable co-ordinator. She monitors the quality of teaching, learning and pupils' work. She provides very good support for the staff. Appropriate links with numeracy, literacy and information and communication technology were evident during the inspection. Assessment procedures and the use of assessment for future planning are good and are related to the requirements of the National Curriculum. Learning resources for science are good. The school grounds contain many features to support environmental science and provide good first-hand science experiences for the pupils. Out of school visits to Tyland Barn and visits to the school by the Astrodome and the Quantum Science theatre extend pupils' understanding of science very well.

ART AND DESIGN

120. Pupils' work in art and design, including that of pupils with special educational needs, is above average throughout the school. This is similar to the standards reported in the school's previous OFSTED inspection.

121. The quality of teaching and learning is good and promotes good progress. Teachers are confident in their knowledge of art and design and this ensures that pupils learn the basic skills of drawing, designing and painting well. Teachers' high expectations mean that pupils move on quickly from basic art techniques. They provide stimulating materials, with which pupils enjoy experimenting, such as in the Year 2 lessons where pupils used a new form of clay, wire and other materials for their mini beast sculptures. Pupils refine their skills well as they progress through the school and show increasing confidence in using various media and techniques. Year 1 pupils use pastels and paints well for their sunflowers after studying the artwork of Van Gogh and use pastels for their impressions of Monet's artwork. They use collage materials well to create self-portraits. After visiting Leeds Castle, pupils enjoy using clay to make their imaginative castles, which link well with their work in history.

122. Pupils develop their skills well in observational drawing and many produce high quality sketches with suitable attention to line, detail and proportion. Year 2 pupils use pencils very well for shading areas of their drawings of still life objects to create a three dimensional effect, such as in their drawings of glass vases, jugs and bottles. They create very effective pictures of flowers in their observational drawings using pencils, pens and a wash of paint. The study of the styles of various artists helps pupils to improve their own work. After studying prints of Barbara Hepworth sculptures, Year 2 pupils created very imaginative abstract three-dimensional sculptures using varying widths of

white card. Working with a visiting artist and students from a local secondary school earlier in the year has increased pupils' learning very well of different art techniques. Pupils use information and communication technology well to create colourful prints of flowers and mini-beasts, and to gain information on the Internet about various artists.

123. A Year 2 lesson illustrates well the strengths of the teaching and learning in the school. The teacher aroused pupils' interest by explaining that they were going to work with a new material, which was on their tables and had already stimulated their curiosity. She shared the aim of the lesson with her pupils, so they were aware of what they were going to learn during their art lesson, linking this well with their science work on mini beasts. The teacher's effective questioning helped pupils to explain their ideas about their designs and to realise the differences between making a model from actual observation and the creativity of a model from their own design. Pupils were keen to draw their designs before eagerly exploring the feeling of the new white material. Their positive attitudes made them receptive to this new learning experience and they pushed, pulled, twisted and stretched the new clay into interesting shapes. The teacher's good subject knowledge and lively teaching engaged pupils' interest at all times. She helped to extend their learning well and to achieve a high level of attainment in their artwork.

124. The co-ordinator for art is enthusiastic and provides good support for staff. She monitors teaching, pupils' work and displays and gives informal advice to colleagues. She has revised the scheme of work and adapted the national guidelines for art to the needs of the school. Teachers create relevant links with other subjects, such as illustrations for books by Quentin Blake in English and wax-resist with paints for pictures of butterflies in science. Assessment procedures and the use of assessment are satisfactory to ensure progression of skills as pupils move through the school. There is a good range of resources for art. Throughout the school, colourful displays are used effectively to enliven classrooms and communal areas.

DESIGN AND TECHNOLOGY

125. Pupils attain average standards in design and technology in Year 2. Pupils who have special educational needs reach average standards when compared with their earlier attainment, due to good, in-class support. Across the school, all pupils achieve satisfactorily. This judgement is similar to the standards reported in the school's previous OFSTED inspection although weaknesses in the design element and over direction by teachers noted at the last inspection were not evident.

126. Overall, the quality of teaching and learning is satisfactory, with some very good aspects. Pupils in Year 1 have made simple musical instruments. They draw their designs, and pictures for the materials they require, before making their product. Teachers provide good support for pupils and encourage them to talk about their work while they are building their design. In a very good Year 1 lesson, the teacher reinforced pupils' earlier learning effectively through questioning, before moving them on to the next part of their task. They had previously designed a vehicle with moving wheels, and were about to make their vehicle. Pupils eagerly selected the main components from a good range of resources, but many found it very difficult to attach the wheels. They knew that the wheels needed to turn to allow their vehicle to move, but most lacked the manual skills to achieve what proved to be a difficult process of assembly. Pupils required a great deal of support from the teacher and teaching assistant in order to complete their models. They were encouraged to evaluate their model by saying whether they were pleased with it and whether they would change any part.

127. In Year 2, pupils draw and label sketches and list the components needed to make their product. They use their literacy skills well to write a list of instructions before making their design. Some pupils change aspects of their design as the work progresses and evaluate the end product, suggesting if, or where, they would change any aspect to enhance the finished product. Teachers make effective links with other subjects, such as, pupils in Year 2 used their knowledge of electrical circuits when they designed and made a lamp with a switch. They are aware of the health and safety aspects when using electrical circuits and when handling food. Pupils have designed and made magic

sandals from a wide range of materials joining the soles to the tops with string, and other joining materials. Good links are made with other subjects, such as science, when pupils in Year 2 join colourful materials in a construction kit to make insects. They write clear instructions to make other insects from a wide range of materials, such as junk materials, wire and various papers. They adapt their designs as the work progresses, such as when a pupil decided to change the fixing on a butterfly's wings from sticking them on to using a split pin so that the wings would be moveable.

128. The co-ordinator provides good leadership in the subject and is aware of how it needs to be developed. She has produced a scheme of work, which incorporates the some aspects of the national guidelines, but realises the need to review it, in order to have a comprehensive scheme adapted to the needs of the school. The co-ordinator monitors the subject informally through discussions with colleagues. Although resources are satisfactory overall, the co-ordinator considers that Year 1 classes lack sufficient and appropriate construction kits. Assessment procedures are satisfactory, but the use of assessment information is unsatisfactory. The co-ordinator has reviewed this and has plans in place to develop this further to bring them up to the standard seen in some other subjects.

GEOGRAPHY

129. In Year 2, standards are above average. All pupils achieve well because of the consistently good quality of teaching they receive. Pupils with special educational needs benefit from good support from teaching assistants. These judgments are the same as those made by the school's 1998 inspection. Judgements are based on the two lessons observed, discussions with pupils and teachers, and an analysis of pupils' work and teachers' planning. No differences in the attainment of boys and girls were seen.

130. In Year 2, pupils show good knowledge of all aspects of the National Curriculum in geography. They are particularly strong in their awareness of taking care of the environment. This begins in a very practical way through taking care of their school. It is extended through fieldwork in the school grounds and further developed through discussion. Literacy skills are well used in geography. For example, when explaining the need to dispose of waste properly, one pupil wrote, "If we did not, the earth would be a big ball of rubbish!" Good use is made of audio visual aids when the pupils compare and contrast Sittingbourne with a town in Cumbria. Pupils also use the Internet successfully to find information to support their work in geography. Links with numeracy are made, for example, through conducting and recording a traffic survey. A comparative weakness is the pupils' mapping skills. Not all Year 2 pupils represent a map as a bird's eye view and there was no evidence that they could devise or understand simple symbols or keys.

131. The quality of teaching and learning is good as it was in 1998. A good Year 2 lesson in which the pupils identified the most important factors in recycling which had good links with science, mathematics and design and technology, illustrated this judgement. The lesson began with a review of ways in which waste could be recycled in which the pupils' contributions showed a good level of understanding. A strong link was made with a class survey which had resulted in a block graph showing how many of those surveyed recycled items such as paper. The teacher's good input resulted in the pupils making very articulate responses and there was good development of their geographical vocabulary. There was a good discussion of the purpose of filling in a Kent Wildlife Trust's survey. The pupils suggested that it might help to take care of wild animals. The teacher skilfully extended their understanding so that they realised that the completed survey would be analysed and follow up actions would be based on the results of that analysis. The pupils were set the task of designing a poster to encourage others to undertake recycling. They set to work with a will although the task did not really extend the more able. The pupils were given good support by the teacher and the teaching assistant while they designed their posters although the teaching assistant had, essentially, been given a watching brief during the introduction to the lesson. The lesson made a significant contribution to the development of the pupils' social and moral understanding.

132. Above average standards based on good quality teaching and learning have been maintained in this subject since the school was last inspected. The scheme of work is now fully in place rather than in draft. This represents good management and good improvement since 1998. The co-ordinator has a good action plan for the further development of the subject including additional use of information and communication technology. The subject is well resourced and its teaching is enhanced by a educational visits, for example, to Leeds Castle and visitors to the school. The recently introduced assessment procedures are satisfactory but are not always used well enough to plan work for the needs of individual pupils of varied levels of attainment. The co-ordinator has not formally monitored teaching and learning but it is planned that this will take place in the near future.

HISTORY

133. Standards in history are average in Year 2. This judgement is different from the last inspection when standards were reported to be above national expectations and teaching was good. This is because, teaching and learning are now judged to be satisfactory overall as the range and depth of pupils' written work are too limited for this age range so that not all historical skills are sufficiently developed. The achievement of all groups of pupils in Years 1 and 2 is satisfactory. No lessons were observed in Year 2 during the inspection because of timetabling. Judgements are based on observations of classes in Year 1, analysis of pupils' work, scrutiny of teachers' planning and displays and discussions with teachers and pupils.

134. Pupils enjoy history and teachers try hard to bring their learning to life. There is a careful balance between giving pupils information and encouraging them to become active enquirers through observing and examining artefacts. Pupils use words which show an awareness of the passing of time, ask simple questions about the past and identify similarities and differences between old and new objects. Pupils in Year 1 have developed a satisfactory understanding of past and present through looking at what homes were like a long time ago, investigating old and modern sources of light and noting how their own clothes have changed as they have grown older. Their sense of chronology, use of historical vocabulary and knowledge of the importance of artefacts were developed well in a Year 1 lesson when pupils examined old and new toys and described their characteristics. This was because the teacher quickly built up an air of expectancy as the toys were produced and stressed the importance of clues that artefacts gave pupils about the past. Her probing questions encouraged them to justify their points of view from the available evidence. As a result, there was a real buzz of excitement in the room as pupils looked carefully at objects like the 'Overlord Express', a whip and top and a well-worn cuddly toy, and enjoyed being time detectives.

135. Pupils in Year 2 also satisfactorily develop their sense of time and change by comparison with the past in their study of famous people such as Florence Nightingale and Queen Elizabeth and in their study of seaside holidays. Their ability to sequence bathing costumes from different eras and pictures of Meaching shows a sound grasp of chronology. However, in general, pupils in Year 2 are not working independently enough to find answers to key questions and develop early research skills.

136. The subject is satisfactorily led although the co-ordinator's role in classroom monitoring is insufficiently developed. Resources are good. Targets for the development of the subject are appropriate. Improvement since the last inspection is unsatisfactory because standards have fallen. Assessment is satisfactory but procedures are not sharply focused enough. Information and communication technology is used satisfactorily to support teaching and learning. History makes a sound contribution to pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development when they look at toys together from another generation, realise that some artefacts are special and must be treated with care and link their work on the seaside with looking at the environment. The subject was brought to life for all pupils when they visited Leeds Castle and described aspects of their new knowledge in booklets, and displays as well as creating clay castles. Other experiences like a visitor from Maidstone Museum, Golden Jubilee celebrations and the nearby Tunstall Place also effectively enliven pupils' learning.

INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY

137. Standards in information and communication technology are average and the achievement of pupils of all abilities and groups is satisfactory. This judgement differs from the findings of the school's last inspection when standards were found to be above average. No differences in the achievement of boys and girls were observed. The achievement of pupils with special educational needs is satisfactory in information and communication technology. However, no specific use of information and communication technology to support their special educational needs was observed.

138. In Year 2, most pupils enjoy using computers and work well both individually and with partners which aids their social development well. They are well aware of a range of basic functions such as saving and printing their work when word-processing. Pupils show good control of the mouse, for example, when drawing symmetrical butterflies using an art program. They successfully program a robotic toy so that it follows a pre-determined route. Pupils make good use of the Internet, for which the school has a suitable access policy, to find information and they also use CD ROMs for this purpose. Their information and communication technology skills are appropriately used in a range of subject including geography, history and art. Use is made of these skills in English and mathematics but some shortages in software, which the school is addressing, place limitations on the effective use of information and communication technology in these areas. Pupils understand that information and communication technology includes much more than computers. For example, they use audio and visual recorders and players and are aware of the function of a digital camera. They know how important information and communication technology is in everyday life.

139. Weaker areas of the subject are the pupils' access to adventure programs and their use of E mail which is an area the school has identified for imminent development. A website for the school is also planned. Pupils' keyboard skills are variable. Whilst some are very adept at locating and using keys, others are slower and more awkward. No evidence was seen of pupils reviewing and modifying their work in information and communication technology during the inspection.

140. The quality of teaching and learning is satisfactory although it was judged to be good when the school was last inspected. This was exemplified in a Year 1 lesson in which the pupils programmed a mobile robotic toy. The teacher's quiet and effective management of the class resulted in the pupils paying attention and working well. They fully understood what they had to do in a suitable practical activity at the start of the lesson when they pretended to be robotic toys and reacted appropriately to instructions about how to move. During this activity, the teaching assistant was largely allocated a passive role. As space was limited in the class, the teacher moved the pupils to another area to work on programming the robotic toy. The pupils were asked to write instructions on their individual whiteboards so that the robot would move to a given place. The varied instructions given were used well by the teacher as a teaching and instructional point to improve the pupils' understanding. Pupils were generally interested in their work, particularly when the robot moved to its target destination as programmed, and this caused them to gasp with surprise. However, the pace of the lesson faltered in places and some pupils became restless. Few pupils were actually able to program the robot for themselves because of the numbers involved. However, in the later group work, one group was using the robot as their activity. The other members of the class were engaged in a written task demonstrating their understanding of how to program the robot. This was undemanding for the more able.

141. Although standards are not as high as they were when the school was inspected in 1998, they are average. The difference is explained by the increasing complexity of curricular provision in the subject and the associated difference in the quality of teaching and learning. This means that there has been a satisfactory improvement since the school was last inspected and that the management of information and communication technology is also satisfactory. The co-ordinator has a good action plan for the further development of the subject including working with a local secondary school which is helping it to raise standards. Since the school was last inspected, the ratio of pupils to computers has

risen from below the national average to average. Recently introduced assessment procedures are satisfactory but are not well enough used or sufficiently established to promote the progress of individual pupils fully. The co-ordinator has monitored aspects of the teaching of information and communication technology such as its links to literacy. However, this monitoring has not been widespread enough or sufficiently rigorous to maintain the good quality of teaching found in 1998.

MUSIC

142. It was only possible to see two lessons of music during the inspection. One in Year 1, and one in Year 2. The findings of this report are based on those two lessons, singing in assembly and weekly singing practices, as well as pupils' work, discussions, and planning documents. The indications are that standards by Year 2 in music are above average. This represents good improvement since the last inspection report when standards were average and progress was satisfactory. This is because there is now an appropriate scheme of work in place to ensure continuity in learning and progression of skills. All pupils, including those who have special educational needs, make good progress now. The expected skills are addressed and pupils sing, play instruments, compose short pieces and perform them, as well as listening to music from a variety of sources.

143. The quality of teaching and learning is good. Teachers share the learning intentions of the lessons with pupils well. For example, in the Year 1 lesson, teacher and pupils discussed what they were going to do and the teacher wrote this out on posters for all to see. In the lesson, pupils were to make a short composition including high and low sounds. The lesson began with pupils demonstrating high and low sounds and everyone enjoyed this a great deal. The atmosphere of the lesson was, therefore, good from the start. Pupils followed the level of the teacher's hands as she indicated high or low. There were good resources and enough percussion instruments for everyone to have one each. Pupils experimented with several, making decisions over whether it was a high or low sound when played. They used a good mix of instruments such as claves, shakers, triangles, bells, drums and cymbals. They worked in pairs preparing a short sequence that is to be performed during the next lesson. As part of the preparation, the teacher showed them how to represent musical notes using a series of rectangles indicating when to play. Pupils learned this quickly and would be able to draw their own in the concluding session. They learned well because everyone had an instrument and it allowed them to make their own experiments.

144. Year 2 were seen in a good lesson working on an Afro-Caribbean song. Pupils knew the words already and could sing well. They clapped in time and kept the beat well. The pace of the lesson was good and was brought to life with the teacher playing the guitar and leading the singing. Pupils caught her enthusiasm and responded well. As the lesson went on, so the teacher added more to the rhythm. Pupils added an extra beat while the rest kept the steady rhythm going, and then a double beat. Eventually, a whole section of percussion instruments was added. The lesson was well planned and enabled good learning, and progression in putting together a more complicated rhythm. Pupils were delighted to be asked to repeat their performance and the progress that they made from the start of the lesson through to the finished performance was marked. Their attainment was above average. As a result of the good pace and challenge presented by the teacher, pupils behaved well, concentrated and worked hard.

145. Pupils all have a weekly singing session and both Years 1 and 2 were seen during the inspection practising for a concert. Year 1 all said the words together and then sang them. They have learnt several songs by heart and this enabled them to concentrate on improving the singing rather than focus on getting the words right. They sang a song about caterpillars and butterflies with a good chorus in which everyone sang with enthusiasm.

146. Year 2 sang very well in their practice putting the emphasis on the right words as directed. Percussion instruments were added for *This little light of mine* and everyone joined in well and enjoyed the performance.

147. Pupils have the chance to listen to recorded music and sometimes visiting musicians come to play for them. They have heard a brass ensemble and a string group as well as listening to recorded music. Both year groups are learning to use graphic notation and represent musical notes by symbols or pictures. There are some particularly good examples of this in a Year 2 classroom where everyone has produced a musical 'score' and can play from it. Others have drawn 'mountain walks' illustrating the pitch of music they heard as it went up and down.

148. The subject is well led and organised by the co-ordinator. Good planning of the schemes of work means that all pupils have the chance to experience a variety of musical styles, play instruments, sing, and add performances where they are possible. The end of term concert provided good opportunities for pupils to perform for visitors. Resources are good and provide the means for all pupils to learn to play an instrument and add to their skills. Some pupils have individual instrumental lessons in addition to the school's music curriculum.

PHYSICAL EDUCATION

149. In Year 2, standards in physical education are average. This is the same judgement as that made by the school's 1998 inspection. In addition, as in 1998, standards in aspects of dance and games are above average. All groups of pupils achieve satisfactorily and there are no differences in the attainment of boys and girls. The subject makes a good contribution to the pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. For example, the pupils have taken part in a sponsored skip to support the British Heart Foundation. Additionally, they have taken part in a dance festival and have experienced dance from cultures other than their own.

150. In games, pupils in Year 2 show average skills when moving with and sending a ball using a hockey stick or a tennis racquet. The skills they show when receiving and controlling a ball are good. In gymnastics, the pupils show average levels of co-ordination and control when devising and linking sequences on the floor and apparatus. However, many lack confidence and poise in their performances particularly when demonstrating or finishing their sequences. Dance was only seen in Year 1. Many of the pupils built well on their earlier work of moving as animals and showed good levels of imagination as well as the ability to vary factors such as height, speed and direction well when moving as bears.

151. The quality of teaching and learning is satisfactory. Some good teaching and learning was seen but no teaching of the overall very good quality seen at the previous inspection was observed. This is because the subject has not been monitored sufficiently frequently to maintain and improve this quality of teaching and learning. A satisfactory but well structured games lesson in Year 2 illustrated the strengths and weaknesses of teaching and learning in physical education. The lesson began in a prompt and orderly manner with a suitable warm up activity which the pupils enjoyed. There was, however, no discussion of the purpose of warming up or of the effects of exercise on the body. The pace of the lesson slowed down as the hall was prepared for the well-resourced games session of the lesson and full use was not made of the teaching assistant at this point. The teacher's explanations of the tasks to be undertaken were very thorough and the need for working safely was suitably emphasised. Pupils were asked to demonstrate their control of the ball using hockey sticks or tennis racquets and their methods of controlling the ball were discussed. Pupils worked well with partners practising skills and devising a game which gave good support to their social development. They received good assistance from the teacher and the teaching assistant during this part of the lesson. There was some demonstration and discussion of the games some pupils had devised but too little evaluation of the work by the pupils. The lesson ended with a suitable calming activity.

152. Standards have been maintained since the school was inspected in 1998. Since that inspection, schemes of work for the subject have been implemented. However, the quality of teaching and learning is now satisfactory when it was very good in 1998. This means that improvement in the subject since then, and its management, are satisfactory. The experienced and enthusiastic co-

ordinator has a good plan for the further development of the subject but has not had release time to monitor and support teaching and learning recently. The subject is well resourced. The school has a good sized hall although this has to be used as a throughway and for storage. There is ample hard surface area but no field. Use can be made of the nearby junior school's field by agreement, for example, for sports day.

153. At six per cent, the amount of time given to the subject is relatively low compared with many schools. Additionally, the 30 minutes devoted to lessons is not always long enough to allow the planned lesson to be completed. Extracurricular provision provides little support for physical education although a local professional football club will be providing coaching next term. Assessment procedures are satisfactory but are not detailed enough to provide information about individual pupils for teachers' planning. Use is made of information and communication technology, for example, to support the pupils' work in dance but this aspect of the subject is relatively under developed. No use has been made of the school's digital camera to support physical education.

RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

154. In Year 2, pupils' attainment exceeds the expectations of the locally agreed syllabus. The previous inspection reported that, attainment was in line with the expectations of the agreed syllabus. Standards have, therefore, improved. The progress in learning made by pupils, including those with special educational needs is good overall. No differences in achievement were observed between boys and girls.

155. The quality of teaching and learning is good overall. The previous inspection reported that, the quality of teaching was invariably good and occasionally very good. In Year 1, pupils had opportunities to explore why friends are important. In this good lesson, the teacher gave them many opportunities to talk about their feelings with respect to friendship. This was valuable because it enabled them to explore issues related to their everyday lives. They worked hard at the practical activity with good support from the teacher and assistant and produced clear drawings of their friends. Later, in a whole class discussion, pupils reflected about what they had learned and about their relationships with one another. The teacher handled this sensitively. A visit to a local church and subsequent examination of photographs taken, resulted in a very good lesson in the Unit. It was presented very clearly, questioning was used with very good effect and pupils were challenged to recall and explain what they understood. They were given sufficient time to do this and made concentrated efforts to explain their understanding. They were very well managed and, therefore, were kept focused on the task for the whole of the session. They were able to consolidate or extend their knowledge of features such as the font or stained glass windows and began to understand what people do in churches. Some contributed their own experiences of seeing weddings or baptisms.

156. The school makes good use of the locally agreed syllabus for religious education and has an appropriate scheme of work supported with material drawn from the national guidelines. This is a relatively recent improvement which accounts for the rise in standards. Some use is made of information and communication technology in the subject, but this limited in scope and is, therefore, underdeveloped. Some links are established with the local religious communities, but these are limited. There is a good focus in the curriculum on 'Learning about Religion,' but less emphasis on 'Learning from Religion.' A governor has a particular interest in the subject and has provided some useful input on some aspects of Hinduism. A basic assessment system is in place, but does not provide enough information to develop the curriculum and teaching. The subject makes a good overall contribution to the spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of pupils because teachers value its relevance. The co-ordinator is enthusiastic, has an action plan with identified priorities and provides satisfactory leadership and management. However, there are insufficient opportunities to monitor teaching and pupils' work. This means that the professional needs of teachers and what is needed to develop the subject cannot be fully known. Resources are adequate and are gradually being expanded.

