

# INSPECTION REPORT

## **TEMPLE HILL COMMUNITY PRIMARY SCHOOL**

Dartford

Kent County Council

Unique reference number: 118571

Headteacher: Mr W Watson

Reporting inspector: Mrs E M D Mackie  
23482

Dates of inspection: 14 - 17 October 2002

Inspection number: 247921

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

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## INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Type of school:	Infant and junior
School category:	Community
Age range of pupils:	3 to 11 years
Gender of pupils:	Mixed
School address:	St Edmunds Road Temple Hill Dartford Kent
Postcode:	DA1 5ND
Telephone number:	01322 224600
Fax number:	01322 274144
Appropriate authority:	The governing body
Name of chair of governors:	Mr T Lanham
Date of previous inspection:	17 March 1997

## INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Team members			Subject responsibilities	Aspect responsibilities
23482	Diana Mackie	Registered inspector	Science Foundation stage	What sort of school is it? How high are standards? a) The school's results and achievements How well are pupils taught? How well is the school led and managed? What should the school do to improve further?
11104	Michael Fleming	Lay inspector		How high are standards? b) Pupil's attitudes, values and personal development How well does the school care for its pupils? How well does the school work in partnership with parents?
17808	Susan Orpin	Team inspector	Information and communication technology Geography	
25787	Edmond Morris	Team inspector	Design and technology Physical education	How good are the curricular and other opportunities offered to pupils?
20877	David Pink	Team inspector	Mathematics History Educational Inclusion Special educational needs	
8139	Barbara Johnstone	Team Inspector	Art and design Music	
22990	Christopher Furniss	Team Inspector	English Religious education English as an additional language	

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## **PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT**

### **INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL**

Temple Hill Community Primary School is situated on the north-east side of Dartford. It is a very large primary school for pupils aged from three to eleven and currently has 554 pupils on roll. Of these, 100 attend the Nursery part-time and 37 are in the Reception year. When they start the Nursery, the overall attainment of the children is well below that expected for their age. The pupils come from the surrounding area, where there is mostly rented housing. There is social deprivation in the area, and the school benefits from a number of initiatives, such as 'Sure Start', the Children's Fund and 'Healthy Living'. There are 13 pupils from minority ethnic groups, including Asian, Black British, Black African and Chinese heritages. Thirteen pupils speak English as an additional language - there is no principal language, and no pupils are in the early stages of learning English. The proportion of pupils eligible for free school meals (22.7 per cent) is broadly in line with the national average. The percentage of pupils with special educational needs for learning, behavioural or physical difficulties (42.5 per cent) is well above the national average. The percentage of pupils with Statements of Special Educational Needs (1.7 per cent) is broadly in line with the national average.

### **HOW GOOD THE SCHOOL IS**

This is an improving school, which provides a good standard of education for its pupils, who achieve well by the end of Year 6. The pupils enjoy coming to school, behave very well and have very good attitudes to learning. The quality of teaching has improved dramatically since the last inspection and is now good overall, with many examples of very good teaching. The headteacher provides very good leadership and educational direction and he is ably supported by two deputy headteachers and other senior staff. The governing body manages the school very well. The school gives good value for money.

#### **What the school does well**

- Standards in information and communication technology (ICT) are above national expectations by the end of Years 2 and 6.
- Standards in physical education are above national expectations by the end of Year 6.
- Pupils' behaviour and attitudes to learning are very good and this helps them to achieve well.
- The overall quality of teaching is good, with many examples of very good teaching.
- The school provides a rich variety of learning experiences and there is good provision for pupils with special educational needs.
- Overall provision for pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural education is very good.
- The school assesses the needs of pupils effectively and cares for them well.
- The headteacher gives very good educational direction for the school and the leadership and management are very good.

#### **What could be improved**

- \*Standards in English, and mathematics, though gradually improving, are still not high enough.
- \*Pupils' attendance is below the national average.

*\*The school has identified these issues and is already addressing them.*

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

### **HOW THE SCHOOL HAS IMPROVED SINCE ITS LAST INSPECTION**

The school has made good improvement since the last inspection in March 1997. All the key issues identified in the previous inspection have been dealt with successfully and the school has the excellent capacity for further improvement. There have been major improvements in the teaching of mathematics. Reading and writing are now incorporated more frequently during the teaching of other subjects. Schemes of work are now fully implemented for all subjects, teachers' expertise has been extended and there is more monitoring of teaching and learning. There have been big improvements in the school's procedures for the assessment and recording of pupils' progress and attainment. In addition, the overall quality of teaching has greatly improved.

## STANDARDS

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

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

**Key**

well above average    A

above average        B

average                C

below average        D

well below average   E

very low               E\*

In the 2002 National Curriculum tests for Year 6, there has been an improvement in the school's results in English and mathematics but not in science. Current inspection findings show that standards in English and mathematics are below national expectations for pupils in Year 6. They are now broadly in line with national expectations for most pupils in science because of the school's commitment to raising standards. Targets set with the local education authority were met in English but not in mathematics in 2002. However, the school is well set to reach targets set for 2003. Pupils are now benefiting from the improved teaching of literacy and numeracy over the past few years, and better end-of-year results are coming through as pupils move through the school.

In the 2002 national tests and assessments for pupils in Year 2, the school's results in reading, writing, mathematics and science were much better than the previous year's. The trend over the past five years has been upward in all four areas of learning. The successful introduction of the daily literacy and numeracy lessons is having a significant impact on standards. The systematic teaching of letter sounds provides pupils with secure skills on which they build step-by-step.

Standards in religious education throughout the school are in line with the expectations outlined in the locally agreed syllabus. In ICT, standards are above those expected for pupils in Years 2 and 6. The school makes effective and efficient use of computers, as ICT is used increasingly as a tool for learning in all subjects. Standards in art and design, design and technology, geography, history, and music are in line with national expectations by the end of Year 6. Standards are broadly in line with national expectations for most subjects by the end of Year 2. In physical education, standards are in line with national expectations by the end of Year 2 and above national expectations by the end of Year 6. The overall improvement in standards reflects the very good attitudes and behaviour of the pupils, the good quality of the teaching, the well-organised curricular provision and the greater involvement of key teachers in the monitoring of standards.

When children start school, their overall attainment is well below average. In the Nursery and Reception classes, children make good progress but still do not reach the Early Learning Goals in personal and social development; communication, language and literacy; mathematical development; knowledge and understanding of the world; physical development and creative development. Pupils' overall achievement from the beginning of the Nursery to the end of Year 6 is good.

## PUPILS' ATTITUDES AND VALUES

Aspect	Comment
Attitudes to the school	Very good. Pupils are attentive, hardworking and productive in lessons. This has a positive effect on their rate of learning and helps them to achieve well during their time in school.
Behaviour, in and out of	Very good. Most pupils behave very well in the classrooms and playgrounds, respect their own and other people's property and take



classrooms	good care of school equipment.
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Personal development and relationships	Very good. Pupils respond well to the firm but fair school rules and relate very well to other pupils and to staff.
Attendance	Unsatisfactory. A few pupils do not attend consistently or punctually and a significant number of parents take their children on holiday in school time.

Very good relationships are a strength of the school. These owe much to the very good example set by adults in the school community.

## TEACHING AND LEARNING

Teaching of pupils in:	Nursery and Reception	Years 1 – 2	Years 3 – 6
Quality of teaching	Very good	Good	Good

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

Overall, the quality of the teaching is good, and there were examples of very good teaching at all of the above three stages of education. There was no unsatisfactory teaching during the inspection. The overall quality of teachers' planning and preparation is good. The quality of teaching in English and mathematics is good and teachers promote the use of literacy and numeracy effectively in most other subjects. Teachers' secure subject knowledge helps them to set challenging tasks for all pupils, including those with special educational needs. As a result, pupils achieve well and acquire skills, knowledge and understanding at a good rate. They respond very well to the teachers' high expectations. Teachers make effective use of time and relate very well to the pupils. They listen well to them and help them to sort out problems and make good progress. Teachers ensure that pupils with special education needs are well supported with carefully organised work based on their Individual Education Plans. Teachers work well as a team with the teaching assistants and Nursery nurses, who play a significant role in the teaching programme as they work with groups of pupils.

## OTHER ASPECTS OF THE SCHOOL

Aspect	Comment
The quality and range of the curriculum	Good overall, and very good for children in the Nursery and Reception classes. The school provides an interesting and broad range of activities which help pupils to make good progress in the National Curriculum. The provision of extra-curricular activities is excellent.
Provision for pupils with special educational needs	Good. Pupils are taught and supported well with their individual needs. The Reading Recovery scheme for pupils in Year 1 is very well organised.
Provision for pupils with English as an additional language	Good. Pupils integrate well and achieve as well as their peers because of the very good relationships in the school, the very good planning of appropriate work and the good levels of support in the classrooms.
Provision for pupils' personal, including spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	Very good overall. The very good programme for personal and social and health education is very well planned. There is very positive encouragement of good behaviour and good promotion of pupils' moral and social development in lessons. The provision for pupils' spiritual and cultural development is good.
How well the school cares	Good. The school is a caring community and staff know the pupils well.

for its pupils	There are good procedures for keeping track of pupils' personal development and their academic progress.
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The school has good links with parents and provides them with a satisfactory range of information so that they know about their children's progress and what is going on in the school, including curricular and social events.

## HOW WELL THE SCHOOL IS LED AND MANAGED

Aspect	Comment
Leadership and management by the headteacher and other key staff	Very good. The headteacher provides very good leadership and, because of his clear sense of vision and very good management, promotes high levels of staff morale. He is very well supported by the two deputy headteachers and senior teachers. Co-ordinators fulfil their roles very well.
How well the governors fulfil their responsibilities	Very good. The governing body is involved in all areas of school life. Governors with specific roles fulfil them well, and all statutory requirements are met.
The school's evaluation of its performance	Very good. Teaching and learning are monitored very effectively. Test results are analysed rigorously and the school's development plan is based on detailed evaluation of the school's strengths and areas for development.
The strategic use of resources	Good. Finances are used effectively to ensure good provision for the pupils. Governors apply the principles of 'best value', considering the benefit to the pupils of all spending decisions, whether on staffing, learning resources or accommodation.

There is a good number of suitably qualified and experienced teachers and support staff. Lunchtime, caretaking and administrative staff contribute well to the work and ethos of the school. Accommodation and outdoor provision are good. Most learning resources are good and they are well organised and stored, but there are not enough resources for geography. Resources for ICT are very good. Resources are obtained at the most competitive prices and the school uses them in the best possible way to achieve its aims.

## PARENTS' AND CARERS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

What pleases parents most	What parents would like to see improved
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• They feel comfortable about coming into school with questions or concerns.</li> <li>• Their children like school.</li> <li>• The school expects the children to work hard and do their best.</li> <li>• The children make good progress.</li> <li>• The school is well led and managed.</li> <li>• The teaching is good.</li> <li>• The school helps the children to become mature and responsible.</li> </ul>	<p>A small number of parents feel that:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• their children do not get the right amount of homework;</li> <li>• the school does not provide an interesting range of activities outside lessons;</li> <li>• they are not kept informed about how their children are getting on;</li> <li>• the school does not work closely with parents.</li> </ul>

The inspection team agrees with the parents' positive views of the school, but inspection evidence does not uphold their negative views. Only 67 of 504 pre-inspection questionnaires were returned. At the parents' meeting, which was attended by only nine parents, there was wholehearted support for the school and its work. Discussion with parents during the inspection indicated that they are well satisfied with the education provided by the school. Regular homework is set and recorded, sometimes in reading diaries, in all classes. The wide-ranging variety of clubs is open to all older pupils, as is usual in

primary schools. Parents are always welcome to come into school to ask about how their children are getting on, and most parents say they are comfortable about coming in. The school promotes close links with parents through the very well run family liaison service, open to all parents.

## **PART B: COMMENTARY**

### **HOW HIGH ARE STANDARDS?**

#### **The school's results and pupils' achievements**

1. Overall standards have improved since the last inspection, when they were well below national expectations in English, mathematics and science throughout the school. They were below national expectations in design and technology and ICT. The school has taken a rigorous approach to improving standards in English and mathematics. Since the last inspection, the percentage of pupils in Year 6 achieving the expected levels in national tests has risen:
  - from 43 per cent to 66 per cent in English;
  - from 39 per cent to 56 per cent in mathematics;
  - from 28 per cent to 63 per cent in science.
2. In English, there has been a slight rise in standards over the past three years, in line with the national trend. In the same period, there has been a decline in the school's trend in mathematics. In science, there has been an upward trend overall, but there was a decrease in the school's results from 2001 to 2002, partly due to the large number of pupils with special educational needs who had problems with understanding specific scientific language. The targets set with the local education authority in 2002 were met in English, but they were not met in mathematics. The targets for 2003 present a tough challenge for the school, but, from inspection evidence, they can be reached.
3. A brighter picture is emerging as new assessment procedures and closer monitoring of pupils' progress is feeding back into teachers' planning so that work is more closely matched to pupils' needs. Teachers in Year 6 are using information from assessments with increasing skill to provide work which is well matched for the groups of pupils taught by ability in mathematics, and more frequent assessments are gradually being fed into the process. Smaller classes, targeted groups and increased support from teaching assistants are impacting well on the pupils' performance throughout the school. Assessments from the Foundation Stage are not always picked up and used as well as they could be in Year 1. Evidence from the inspection indicates no significant difference in the achievement of boys and girls, nor is there any difference in achievement between white European, West African or Asian pupils. The progress of pupils from ethnic minorities is monitored well so that they achieve well, have high self-esteem and benefit from the wide range of activities in the school. The curriculum for science has been reviewed and schemes of work now include national guidance. Teaching of science is good overall and the provision of more investigative work is helping pupils to gain a clearer understanding of scientific ideas. Currently, pupils' attainment is below national expectations in English and mathematics and broadly in line with national expectations in science. This does, however, represent good achievement. Achievement refers to the progress which pupils make over time in relation to their starting point, and children's overall attainment is well below average when they start school in the Nursery. Standards are below national expectations by the time pupils leave the school because of the high number of pupils with special educational needs in each year and the above average absentee rate among pupils.
4. By the end of Year 2, there has been a significant improvement in the performance of pupils in national tests since the last inspection. Results have risen:
  - from 59 per cent to 88 per cent in reading;
  - from 67 per cent to 84 per cent in writing;
  - from 67 per cent to 88 per cent in mathematics.
5. This reflects the school's well organised introduction of the National Strategies for Literacy and Numeracy. Teaching strategies have improved and the basic skills are taught systematically. In addition, staff have analysed the school's results in national tests in order to build on strengths and overcome weaknesses.

6. Children enter the Nursery with levels of attainment which are well below those expected for their age. Despite good progress in the Nursery and Reception classes, the children do not achieve the nationally agreed Early Learning Goals in personal and social development; communication, language and literacy; mathematical development; knowledge and understanding of the world; and creative development. Their physical development is broadly average, but manipulative skills are underdeveloped. Children make good progress because of the very good teaching and support based on secure understanding of the needs of young children. The planning of the curriculum is very good and staff create an encouraging atmosphere in which children learn systematically and happily.
7. By the end of Year 2, most pupils develop their speaking and listening skills satisfactorily and widen their vocabulary consistently in all subjects. Specific subject vocabulary is taught well and pupils are encouraged to use it so that they are more able to make clear what they mean, ask questions and share their thoughts with other people. Pupils enjoy reading and experience a wide range of texts so that they practise their skills in all areas of the curriculum. The school emphasises the systematic teaching and learning of letter sounds and patterns so that pupils make good gains in reading, writing and spelling. Most pupils use capital letters and full stops confidently to demarcate sentences and develop satisfactory levels of writing. In mathematics, pupils develop an increasing awareness of the use of mathematics in everyday life; for example, in weighing, measuring and shopping. In science, practical investigations help pupils to gain a deeper understanding and knowledge of the world around them. Most pupils acquire appropriate vocabulary to explain simple scientific ideas, develop skills of observation and learn to record their findings in simple charts and graphs.
8. By the time they reach Year 6, pupils express themselves confidently and can formulate questions and explain their answers during discussion periods. Pupils benefit from reading together from enlarged texts during the Literacy Hour. They look for specific spelling patterns, explore the use of punctuation and consider how words are used to create a range of effects. Consistent teaching of spelling and regular practice in basic grammar give pupils a good grounding so that they achieve increasingly effective writing skills. They write for a good range of purposes and use their literacy skills effectively in other subjects. In mathematics, the first part of lessons is not used as effectively as it might be in all classes. However, through a range of interesting activities, pupils gain increasingly secure knowledge of the four rules of addition, subtraction, multiplication and division of numbers. Pupils have difficulty in using this knowledge to solve practical problems which are expressed in words rather than figures. In science, pupils are progressing faster and they gain knowledge and understanding at a good rate because of the school's practical approach and the enthusiasm of the teachers.
9. In Year 2 and Year 6, pupils achieve at levels above those expected for their age in ICT. The good standards and dramatic improvement since the last inspection reflect the very good organisation and teaching in the school's suite of computers. In the classrooms, teachers are gradually increasing the opportunities for pupils to use and enhance their skills in ICT, by using them in other subjects.
10. In religious education, pupils achieve standards in line with expectations in the locally agreed syllabus. Pupils throughout the school gain appropriate skills, knowledge and understanding which enable them to have a broad view of the range of faiths which are practised in modern Britain.
11. Good curricular provision and the systematic teaching of skills have ensured that standards in art and design, design and technology, history and music are broadly typical of those found nationally for pupils in Years 2 and 6. Pupils' weak communication skills hinder early progress in geography, but pupils become more confident and standards are in line with expectations by the end of Year 6. Because of the school's very good provision for physical education, pupils' attainment is above national expectations in Year 6.
12. Pupils with special educational needs achieve very well, across Years 1 to 6, against their level of attainment on entry to the school. They make good progress towards the targets in their Individual Education Plans. Realistic targets are set for these pupils to achieve regular success. Pupils who speak English as an additional language benefit from the school's increasingly practical and investigative approach to the teaching and learning of all subjects, and they achieve

in line with their peers. Teaching support is good and teaching assistants help pupils to achieve well in lessons. Higher-attaining pupils achieve well by the time they leave the school. Parents of these pupils praise the school's provision.

13. Evidence from the inspection indicates no significant difference in the achievement of boys and girls, nor is there any difference in achievement between white European, West African or Asian pupils. Lower-attaining pupils, some of whom have special educational needs, achieve well against their standards on entry to the school, as do pupils with disabilities. Pupils for whom English is an additional language make achievements comparable to other pupils. Pupils' attainment and achievement are carefully monitored.

### **Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development**

14. Pupils behave very well and have very good attitudes to school. They learn to be confident, trusting and trustworthy from their earliest days in the school. Lessons are generally calm and movement around the school is orderly. The behaviour observed in lessons during the inspection was never less than satisfactory. In the majority of lessons it was good or very good and on one occasion pupils' attitudes and behaviour were described as perfect. At break-times, lunch-times and during a visit to the swimming pool, pupils generally behaved very well. Conflicts are minor and easily resolved, so they are short-lived. Pupils have a clear understanding of what is and is not acceptable behaviour. No pupils have been excluded in recent years. There is no evidence of bullying, racism or other forms of oppressive behaviour. Boys and girls of all backgrounds mix and relate to each other very well. Pupils are polite and friendly to adults.
15. Pupils settle quickly in lessons and respond well when teachers introduce new subjects and ideas. The atmosphere in lessons is purposeful; pupils concentrate on their work because they find it interesting and are eager to learn. Even the youngest children enjoy their work and are keen to do well. Because pupils develop such good relationships with one another, they co-operate well and collaborate productively. They also work well alone and are capable of taking responsibility for their own learning when given the opportunity. They are always keen; for example, to explore the wide range of options, within the school's carefully controlled limits, while working on computers. Pupils are confident that their suggestions or performances will be treated with respect and appreciation. As a result, they are eager to contribute ideas for discussion and share their work with their classmates. They also participate keenly in activities outside lessons. Pupils understand the meaning of responsibility and willingly play a part in decisions about the school, through participation in the School Council. They are considerate and respectful of the feelings of others and support each other well both in lessons and in social situations. The attitudes of pupils with special educational needs are very good because of the positive, supportive yet challenging atmosphere generated by the school.
16. Although pupils are keen to come to school and enjoy their time there, attendance is unsatisfactory. In the year 2000-2001 the level of attendance was 93 per cent, which is well below the national average for similar schools, although the level of unauthorised absence was broadly in line with the national average. Some of the high level of absent is attributable to pupils' ill health and the school's scrupulous adherence to marking pupils absence when they have left Temple Hill but are not yet registered at a new school; but another major factor is the low priority which a few parents attach to consistent and punctual attendance at school. The long-term picture, which includes more recent data, shows that the trend of attendance is improving in response to the school's actions in this area, particularly its efforts to ensure that all parents understand the impact that absence (including holidays taken during term time) or lateness can have on their children's education. Pupils' attendance and punctuality have deteriorated since the last inspection because of the poor pattern of attendance of a few families.

### **HOW WELL ARE PUPILS TAUGHT?**

17. The overall quality of teaching and learning is good. During the inspection, two thirds of the teaching was good or better and a third was very good. There was one example of excellent teaching. There was no unsatisfactory teaching. This represents a great improvement since the last inspection, when a fifth of the teaching was unsatisfactory. Staff training, the recruitment of effective teachers and very good leadership have led to the improved quality of the teaching.

Teachers' knowledge and understanding of the subjects of the National Curriculum are good. As a result, pupils acquire skills, knowledge and understanding at a good rate and progress well in all year groups. The basic skills are taught well so that pupils build effectively on what they already know, can do and understand. Lessons are planned well so that pupils are productive and work at a good pace in most lessons. A significant feature of the teaching is the high expectations of pupils, including all groups, so that pupils stay 'on their toes' throughout most lessons. Teachers use a range of methods to maintain pupils' interest and promote good rates of learning.

18. The quality of teaching in the Nursery and the Reception classes is very good. The teachers provide a carefully planned programme of stimulating activities which extend and enhance children's learning. In the Reception year, the teachers introduce literacy and numeracy lessons effectively and add pace to the learning activities in order to prepare children for the brisker pace of lessons in Year 1. Expectations are high for all children, and all are challenged to extend their learning. The Nursery nurses and teaching assistants play a valuable role in teaching individuals and groups of children. All staff have a secure understanding of the needs of young children. Children with special educational needs are identified early and supported very well.
19. Literacy and numeracy lessons begin with whole-class sessions in which new ideas are introduced and basic skills are practised orally. Next, pupils are involved in activities suited to their varying abilities so that skills are enhanced and consolidated. In the last part of the lesson, teachers review what has been done and learnt. The first part of the lesson sometimes lacks sufficient briskness in numeracy lessons, when mental arithmetic is not always taught in a sharp and bright way. In science, when pupils are frequently encouraged to investigate, explore and pose questions, teaching is often very good, especially for pupils in Year 6.
20. Teachers manage pupils very well so that there is a sense of purpose in lessons. Pupils are interested and they concentrate well. Teachers ensure that the pupils are clear about what is to be learnt. What is to be taught in lessons is written clearly on charts or boards and discussed with pupils as lessons begin. These objectives are reviewed at the end of lessons and pupils enjoy telling their classmates about their work. Teachers also set short-term targets for pupils. These targets are written inside the front covers of pupils' exercise books. Because of these shared lesson objectives and individual targets, pupils know how they are getting on and can celebrate their achievement. All pupils, including those from ethnic minorities, enjoy the challenge and are determined to succeed. In most lessons, teachers deploy teaching assistants well, and pupils are well supported as they work individually or in groups. Teaching in the Reading Recovery programme for pupils in Year 1 is excellent. The teacher's high level of expertise ensures that pupils make very good progress during these sessions. Teaching in the school's computer suite is very good, and teachers are increasingly including ICT in all subjects.
21. The quality of teaching and learning of pupils with special educational needs is very good. Teachers understand their pupils well and the effective support given by teaching assistants ensures that pupils learn very well. In Year 2, pupils use well-chosen computer programs to support their learning. ICT is being used increasingly by pupils in all classes. They enjoy working in this way. Pupils are well supported in most lessons, when teachers ensure that work is set at an appropriately challenging level. Pupils who speak English as an additional language benefit from the positive ethos, very good relationships and good levels of support which teachers promote in the classrooms. All pupils benefit from being in small classes and having the support of well-trained teaching assistants, who are well deployed in most lessons and who contribute well to the pupils' good progress.
22. Teachers have worked well together to set up a system for assessment which enables the staff to keep track of how each pupil is getting on. Staff know the pupils well, so there is a great deal of ongoing assessment, which is used well to take pupils' learning forward during lessons. Teachers listen well to the pupils and answer their questions; this helps pupils to sort out their problems quickly and avoids any loss of interest.
23. Homework is set regularly. In one class, pupils asked for homework because they were so interested in what they were doing. Diaries for reading and for homework help teachers to keep in touch with parents and extend pupils' learning into the home.

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

24. The school provides a curriculum that is of good quality. It is enriched in many areas by the additional opportunities provided by the school to interest and inspire the pupils. These include the specially planned 'Arts Week', a superb range of clubs, the input of visitors invited to the school to talk to and work with pupils and the many out of school visits, which make the work in lessons more relevant and bring it to life. The school also looks for and makes good links between subjects so that skills acquired in one subject can be reinforced in another. For instance, pupils in Year 3 use their mathematical knowledge of shapes in design and technology lessons, when designing and making packaging for sweets. The school has appropriately identified the use of ICT in all subjects as an area for further development, now that pupils demonstrate above average skills during lessons in the school's suite of computers. All subjects of the National Curriculum and religious education are taught to pupils from Years 1 to 6. There is an appropriate allocation of time for the teaching of English, mathematics and science that enables all aspects of these to be taught throughout the school. In some subjects the provision exceeds the statutory minimum. For example, in physical education, there is a generous and well-used weekly time allocation. Pupils in Years 3 to 6 experience all six recommended aspects of the National Curriculum for the subject, when only five are compulsory. As a result, pupils attain standards which are above national expectations by the time they leave the school.
25. The curriculum for children in the Nursery and Reception classes is very good. It is planned so as to include the six nationally recommended areas of learning for children in interesting and exciting ways. High priority is given to the development of children's personal, social and emotional development and the development of communication, language and literacy. The curriculum is well planned to enable children to develop their creative and observational skills as they learn about the world around them and are involved in imaginative, very well chosen activities.
26. The strategies for teaching literacy and numeracy are firmly in place and have a positive impact on learning. The strategies for teaching literacy and other aspects of English have proved to be effective, as can be seen from the rising standards throughout the school. The strategy for teaching numeracy has not been as effective, but the curriculum and teaching have improved. The provision for personal, social and health education is very good. It is very well planned, timetabled regularly for all classes and covers all aspects thoroughly. There are appropriate policies, agreed by the governing body, for drugs and sex education and these aspects of health education are sensitively taught to pupils with the full support of parents and carers.
27. The quality of the opportunities offered for pupils with special educational needs, including those with physical disabilities, is good. This is because of the strong emphasis on matching teaching and support to the learning needs of individual pupils. Very good and consistent links are maintained with outside agencies to ensure pupils are assessed and have access to their entitlement. Temple Hill is a school in which all pupils are highly valued and fully included in every aspect of school life. Every possible care is taken to ensure that all pupils receive their full entitlement to a good quality education and are treated with respect and consideration at all times. All who work in the school are totally committed to this aim and this is much appreciated by the pupils and their carers.
28. The curriculum committee of the governing body meets regularly to approve policies and discuss future strategies and initiatives. Subject co-ordinators report to governors to keep them informed of developments and to help them assess the impact of their spending on standards. There are designated governors for literacy, numeracy, ICT, special educational needs and the Foundation Stage. They visit the school regularly to observe the provision first hand; they assess its effectiveness and then report back their findings to the governing body.
29. The curriculum is greatly enriched by the large number and scope of relevant visits arranged for pupils, and the great variety of visitors to the school who talk to, and work with, the pupils. Recent interesting, educational trips include a visit for pupils in Year 5 to Hever Castle as part of their history studies, a visit for pupils in Year 1 to the Dartford Museum to look at toys, and a visit for pupils in Year 3 to the National Portrait Gallery. Pupils in Year 6 go on a residential trip to Wales, where they have a range of experiences, including outdoor activities, and valuable opportunities to develop socially and learn to live harmoniously in an environment away from



home. Specialist visitors to the school add interest to pupils' learning in a range of subjects. Coaches from a local football club work with pupils to improve their soccer skills, and visitors representing different churches help pupils learn more about Christianity. The number and range of school clubs are exceptional and a strength of the school. They include clubs for recorders, football, netball, hockey, art, chess, performing arts, cookery, maths, homework and the appreciation of the environment. They are run by teachers, teaching assistants, parents and outside agencies and make a superb contribution to the school's provision. They help to raise standards in many subjects, particularly in physical education where standards are above those found in most schools.

30. The school's links with the community are very good. There are strong links with local churches and with homes for the elderly. Pupils sing to the elderly folk each term and this is very well received. Links with local businesses are also very good. A local company worked with Year 6 pupils on a project to make them more aware of the dangers of drugs. Links to other local schools are very good. Curricular improvement is promoted as subject co-ordinators from the different schools meet regularly to share their ideas and expertise. The district sports association is very active in providing opportunities for pupils to compete against other primary schools in a variety of sports. There are strong and useful connections with a nearby secondary school and pupils visit there to take part in lessons in design and technology and ICT. The school hosts the 'Children's University' on four Saturdays each term, as well as running its own family learning days.
31. Since the last inspection, the curriculum has been improved in many ways. The provision for children in the Nursery and Reception classes was satisfactory and is now very good. Time allocations are now appropriate and worthwhile links between subjects are being set up. The curriculum, judged to be satisfactory overall at the time of the last inspection, is now of good quality and extra-curricular provision remains a strength of the school.

### **The school's provision for pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development**

32. The overall provision for pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is very good. There has been a good improvement in provision since the last inspection, when it was found to be satisfactory. The provision for pupils' moral and social development is a strength of the school.
33. Good provision is made for pupils' spiritual development. Assemblies are used well and they enable pupils to develop an understanding of the world around them. In a Year 6 class assembly, pupils learnt about Martin Luther King and the Civil Rights Movement, as part of their work for Black History Month. They were encouraged to think about important issues and to consider how it might feel to be a black person at that time. Excellent provision is made for musical activities in the Reception classes. Children respond to music sensitively; for example, in one lesson, children moved their arms and feet in time to the music and used their singing voices to repeat short patterns of notes. They gained enormous enjoyment by responding to music in an expressive and creative way. The provision for pupils' spiritual development is planned well in religious education. In other lessons planning is not always so evident.
34. There is very good provision for pupils' moral and social development. Pupils are taught right from wrong. The school has secure procedures to ensure that pupils behave in an acceptable way. Moral provision is delivered in many aspects of the curriculum and permeates the life of the school. It is particularly evident in religious education, personal, social and health education and in assemblies. Social provision is made through a wide range of activities. There is a school council, which enables pupils to express their own ideas about the issues that are important to them. Pupils are given responsibility around the school. They have specific jobs to do in their own classrooms and help at assembly times and in the library. Pupils are given the opportunity to take care of their environment and to understand the community in which they live. They visit the local senior citizens' home at Christmas to sing carols. The excellent extra-curricular provision provides further opportunities for pupils to work together in a wide range of appropriate activities.
35. Good provision is made for pupils' cultural development. Pupils visit the pantomime at the Orchard Theatre, Dartford. Pupils in Year 4 learnt about some of the Anglo-Saxon discoveries in the area when they visited the local museum. The provision for developing pupils' multicultural awareness has improved since the last inspection. The detailed school documentation ensures that good provision is made. In geography pupils in Year 5 looked at different aspects of life in India. Assemblies include a celebration of Divali. Pupils throughout the school listen to stories and sing songs from around the world. Visitors provide pupils with further understanding of different religions. At present, the school is celebrating Black History Month. Racial harmony is promoted well within the school.

## **HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL CARE FOR ITS PUPILS?**

36. The school takes good care of its pupils and provides them with an environment in which they justifiably feel physically and emotionally secure. Teachers establish very good relationships with pupils and are effective in boosting their self-esteem, which the school has accurately identified as fundamental if pupils are to make progress. Many initiatives are used including personal, social and health education lessons, groups such as the 'friendship' club and other extra-curricular activities. Lunch-time assistants are well trained. They play a major role in the management of pupils during an important part of the day, when some pupils need assurance to cope with managing their time fruitfully. The school's appointment of a family liaison officer has proved to be of great benefit in supporting pupils' self-esteem, and when dealing with other concerns such as excessive absence.
37. In the Nursery and Reception classes, staff have a very good relationship with parents so that the children soon settle into school. Good relationships begin with visits to children's homes before they start school. Throughout the school, teachers know their pupils very well as individuals. This results partly from the assessment and tracking of pupils' academic performance and also from teachers' close interest in pupils' personal development. Teachers and teaching assistants note details of pupils' intellectual and personal accomplishments as they develop and use this information well to ensure that appropriate work or guidance is provided for pupils who are working at different standards or are from different backgrounds. The youngest children in the school recognise that teachers have their best interests at heart, and by the time they reach Year 6, pupils enthuse about the care, friendliness and helpfulness of their teachers and teaching assistants. Because pupils have such faith in their teachers, they are confident to ask for help with any academic or personal problems. Pupils' progress is helped by their termly targets, and their clear understanding that they move between teaching groups according to their standard of work.
38. The school's extensive and well-focused systems for recording, monitoring and promoting attendance are having some success. Its strategies for promoting good behaviour, based on developing pupils' self-esteem, are very effective, as demonstrated by the level of socialisation that pupils achieve. Health and safety matters are handled well. The school's experience and understanding of child protection issues lead to their being dealt with diligently and effectively. Pupils are given good instruction about healthy living, so some pupils in Year 3 needed very little prompting to produce some heartfelt and imaginative anti-smoking posters. Pupils are prepared well for the next stage in their education and for life after they leave the school.

### **Procedures for the assessment of pupils' academic progress**

39. The school has good procedures for assessing pupils' attainment and progress. Early assessments are made and used well in the Nursery and Reception classes. They are not always used effectively to prepare work for pupils entering Year 1. Many of these pupils have not reached the Early Learning Goals, and they need support in all subjects, particularly with literacy, during the introduction of the National Curriculum. There are comprehensive half termly assessments for all subjects, which are used to monitor pupils' academic progress, as individuals, and in various groups. This information is then used well to identify areas in need of development, or groups of pupils who should be targeted for additional support. Teachers also keep a collection of annotated pieces of individual pupils' work as a record of their previous attainment, and as a record of pupils' personal development. The folders of assessment and pupils' work are passed to the next teacher at the end of the year so that they can be used as the pupils progress through the school. Assessment information is also used to judge the effectiveness of new approaches to pupils' learning.
40. Teachers' assessments of their pupils are careful and accurate. They usually use their assessments to help them plan lessons well, and consequently their knowledge of pupils' abilities, progress and needs is very good. Teachers of sets in Year 6 are using assessments increasingly to ensure that work is properly matched to pupils' needs, and they recognise that more frequent assessments are needed. The monitoring and provision for pupils with special educational needs and those with physical disabilities are good. Pupils with these needs are identified early in their school lives. They are monitored carefully and effectively. Regular contact is maintained between the school's co-ordinator for special educational needs and the teachers to

ensure the effectiveness of specific learning programmes. These are used effectively to guide the provision and learning for specific pupils.

41. Negotiated targets, both academic and personal, are set regularly for pupils and these are used and known by the pupils. Teachers' marking of pupils' work is regular and detailed. Teachers provide constructive and positive comment and ask questions that stimulate pupils' thinking. Pupils are encouraged to respond to the questions, thus making the marking of their work an interactive process. A system for pupil self-assessment is being introduced. It has already begun in ICT. Teachers guide pupils on how to carry this out. The school has also reviewed assessment and has set up various mini-projects in the light of its findings. The whole staff is involved in determining the targets for the school. These targets are then translated into year and class targets, which are in turn translated into targets for individual pupils. Teachers predict pupils' grades for the end of the year, considering both a realistic grade and one which offers challenge.
42. There has been good improvement in assessment arrangements and in the use of assessments since the last inspection.

### **HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL WORK IN PARTNERSHIP WITH PARENTS?**

43. The school has benefited from its hard work to involve parents in their children's education. Parents generally hold the school in high regard. They report that their children like school. They recognise that sufficiently demanding work is provided for them and that this results in pupils making good progress. Parents are particularly confident that the school is welcoming and approachable. Some parents would like more information about their children's progress, some question whether the amount of homework provided is appropriate, and another substantial minority do not agree that the school provides an interesting range of extra-curricular activities. The inspection team's findings support parents' positive views of the school. However, the information provided about pupils' progress was found to be satisfactory, the amount and use of homework was found to be suitable for these pupils, and the school's provision of activities outside lessons was judged to be excellent.
44. The links maintained with parents of pupils with special educational needs, within the limitations of the school, are very good. Parents are regularly invited and attend annual reviews of statements of provision. The co-ordinator for special educational needs maintains regular and effective contact with parents; this is enhanced through the effective work of the family liaison officer.
45. Parents are closely involved in the work of the school. Some participate in the parent/teacher organisation which runs fairs at Christmas and in the summer. Attendance at these events is good and they raise substantial funds, which are currently devoted to improving the outside play areas. Parents appreciate how easy it is to discuss with staff their children's progress or problems at times other than the more formal occasions. Those whose children have special educational needs are invited to termly discussions of their children's progress. All parents are provided with ideas of how they can help their children. A group of devoted parents are creating a library of 'story sacks' which contain lively, attractive books and items, such as toy characters, which will help parents bring the stories to life for their children at home. For example, in one sack there is a small wooden bridge and a troll to help illustrate the story of 'The Three Billy Goats Gruff'. Most parents support their children's education at home, at least by hearing them read, and some support their children very well indeed.
46. The family liaison officer has been very useful. She has dealt with matters raised by parents and supported them; for example, she has encouraged them to come into school with initiatives such as 'Chat and Chill'. In these sessions, parents can meet socially and discuss how they can help their children, in both managing their behaviour and supporting their school work. A number of parents fulfil an important role as members of the governing body. Some parents come into school regularly and give valuable help in lessons. Some accompany classes on residential trips and other visits, and to the swimming pool - these would be less successful without the help of the parents. At the time of the last inspection the school's partnership with parents and the community was strong. It remains strong today.



## HOW WELL IS THE SCHOOL LED AND MANAGED?

47. The headteacher provides clear educational direction, which inspires all who work in the school. The deputy headteachers and senior staff work with him to ensure that the school's aims are followed through into actions which help the pupils to achieve well. Very good management has been maintained since the last inspection, and key issues have been dealt with effectively. Carefully focused monitoring of teaching and learning has ensured that all teachers, many of whom are new to the school, teach in the way which is promoted in well organised professional training, outlined in school policies and agreed in staff meetings. Targets set with the local education authority were met in English in 2002, but not in mathematics. The school is on course to do better in 2003.
48. The leadership and management of special educational needs are very good. The co-ordinator leads by example and has very good knowledge of the procedures required by the Code of Practice. Teaching assistants are managed effectively to provide well-targeted support. Good support is given to help teachers plan the learning for pupils with special educational needs and those with disabilities. The school is considering ways to lighten the heavy workload of the deputy headteacher who currently manages provision for special educational needs. She is also the co-ordinator for English and the manager of assessment procedures.
49. The governing body fulfils its role very well and ensures that all statutory requirements are met. Governors with specific responsibilities maintain very good links with the staff in order to keep abreast of developments in the school. They report back to the full governing body so that all governors have a very good picture of what is going on in the school. Some governors spend a lot of time helping in lessons and working with groups of pupils. The school has a range of ways to review its work and an increasingly cohesive process of school self-evaluation. This information feeds back into planning for whole-school improvement and longer-term, strategic development. Governors' committees consider aspects such as finance, personnel, the curriculum and health and safety. The senior management's rigorous analysis of the school's performance in national tests is used well to identify ways in which to improve teaching and curricular provision and raise pupils' attainment. Governors play a significant part in setting priorities for development in the school improvement plan. There is a whole-school approach to setting up the plan. All staff are involved in initial discussions, co-ordinators create plans for their subjects and the senior management team tease out the main areas for development. The finance committee considers the budgetary implications and the governing body then ratifies the final document.
50. Governors set the school budget with a clear focus on assuring best value for the pupils, in terms of their attainment, attitudes and welfare. Financial matters are managed very effectively by the school's finance officer, who works closely with the headteacher. Day-to-day issues are dealt with very well by the administrative assistants, who ensure that teachers are not disturbed with minor interruptions during the day.
51. There is a good match of the expertise of teaching and support staff to the demands of the curriculum. Teaching assistants are deployed effectively and make a major contribution to pupils' learning. Procedures for monitoring, evaluating and developing teaching are very good. Teaching is monitored regularly and teachers' work is evaluated through a number of procedures, including pupil assessment, sampling of pupils' work and classroom observation. Subject co-ordinators are involved in the process and areas for development are identified through the procedure. Consequently, a number of professional development projects, linked to school improvement priorities, have arisen, such as equal opportunities, classroom practice and the use of support services. There has also been intensive training for literacy, numeracy, ICT and the Foundation Stage. The school is implementing appraisal and performance management very effectively and there is a very good induction programme for supporting new and newly qualified teachers. An active member of a local consortium provides training and the opportunity for staff to visit other schools. The school staff have an exceptional commitment to the school. They work together outstandingly and have an excellent capacity to succeed.
52. The quality and number of learning resources are good overall, with very good provision for ICT. However, resources for geography are unsatisfactory and this hampers pupils' progress in some aspects of the subject. The school has sufficient classrooms for the planned teaching and makes good use of its two halls. Displays on walls are used well to celebrate pupils' work and to provide further information or stimulation. The buildings show signs of their age and are in need of

decorative maintenance, especially on the outside. The school caretaker and the cleaning staff work hard to provide a pleasant learning environment for the pupils. There are extensive outside areas to accommodate play and physical education activities, but some could be developed further. Some work has taken place to improve indoor floors and outside surfaces and the school recognizes that further work is still required.

## **WHAT SHOULD THE SCHOOL DO TO IMPROVE FURTHER?**

53. The school governors, in conjunction with the headteacher and staff, should take the following actions to further raise standards in the school:

(1) \*Raise standards in English by:

- consistently making the best use of time within the Literacy Hour, especially in the first part of the lesson.

*(Paragraphs 2, 68-73, 79)*

(2) \*Raise standards in mathematics by:

- improving the use of the National Numeracy Strategy;
- making better use of day-to-day assessments;
- improving lesson planning in Years 3 to 6;
- improving the teaching of mental arithmetic;
- improving the pupils' use of language in solving problems;
- improving the opportunities for using numeracy in other subjects.

*(Paragraphs 2, 8, 26, 81, 82, 86, 88, 90)*

(3) Follow through the school's well-planned strategies to encourage parents to send their children to school regularly and on time.

*(Paragraphs 3, 16, 81)*

Other areas which governors should consider for inclusion in the action plan:

(1) The enhancement of resources for the teaching and learning of geography.

*(Paragraphs 113 and 117)*

(2) The match of work for pupils entering Year 1.

*(Paragraph 39)*

(3) The refurbishment of some areas of flooring in the school and of pathways in the grounds.

*(Paragraph 52)*

## PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS

### Summary of the sources of evidence for the inspection

Number of lessons observed	102
Number of discussions with staff, governors, other adults and pupils	54

### Summary of teaching observed during the inspection

	Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
Number	1	27	40	34	0	0	0
Percentage	1	26	40	33	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.

### Information about the school's pupils

Pupils on the school's roll	Nursery	YR – Y7
Number of pupils on the school's roll (FTE for part-time pupils)	50	454
Number of full-time pupils known to be eligible for free school meals	0	112

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Special educational needs	Nursery	YR – Y7
Number of pupils with statements of special educational needs	0	9
Number of pupils on the school's special educational needs register	11	103

English as an additional language	No of pupils
Number of pupils with English as an additional language	13

Pupil mobility in the last school year	No of pupils
Pupils who joined the school other than at the usual time of first admission	11
Pupils who left the school other than at the usual time of leaving	13

### Attendance

#### Authorised absence

	%
School data	6.8
National comparative data	5.6

#### Unauthorised absence

	%
School data	0.2
National comparative data	0.5

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



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

Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 1 for the latest reporting year	Year	Boys	Girls	Total
	2002	29	39	68

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		Reading	Writing	Mathematics
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	23	24	26
	Girls	33	33	37
	Total	56	57	63
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	82 (67)	84 (73)	93 (83)
	National	84 (84)	86 (86)	90(91)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	25	25	24
	Girls	34	36	34
	Total	59	61	58
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	87 (70)	90 (87)	85 (79)
	National	85 (85)	89 (89)	89 (89)

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

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

Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 2 for the latest reporting year	Year	Boys	Girls	Total
	2002	22	39	61

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys	12	11	13
	Girls	28	23	25
	Total	40	34	38
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	66 (53)	56 (47)	62 (77)
	National	75 (75)	73 (71)	86 (87)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys	9	13	13
	Girls	24	25	27
	Total	33	38	40
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	54 (55)	62 (50)	66 (63)
	National	73 (72)	74 (74)	82 (82)

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

### ***Ethnic background of pupils***

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

### ***Exclusions in the last school year***

No of pupils on roll	Number of fixed period exclusions	Number of permanent exclusions
173	0	0
1	0	0
2	0	0
1	0	0
0	0	0
0	0	0
0	0	0
0	0	0
2	0	0
0	0	0
0	0	0
0	0	0
9	0	0
0	0	0
2	0	0
0	0	0
281	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 – Y7**

Total number of qualified teachers (FTE)	21
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	18.8
Average class size	21.6

#### **Education support staff: YR – Y7**

Total number of education support staff	24
Total aggregate hours worked per week	566

#### **Qualified teachers and support staff: Nursery**

Total number of qualified teachers (FTE)	2
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	25
Total number of education support staff	3
Total aggregate hours worked per week	71
Number of pupils per FTE adult	9.4

### ***Financial information***

Financial year	2001-2002
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	£
Total income	1,255,350
Total expenditure	1,257,560
Expenditure per pupil	2,354
Balance brought forward from previous year	67,477
Balance carried forward to next year	66,267

*FTE means full-time equivalent.*

**Recruitment of teachers**

Number of teachers who left the school during the last two years	5
Number of teachers appointed to the school during the last two years	9

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

*FTE means full-time equivalent.*

## Results of the survey of parents and carers

### Questionnaire return rate

Number of questionnaires sent out	504
Number of questionnaires returned	67

### Percentage of responses in each category

	Strongly agree	Tend to agree	Tend to disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know
My child likes school.	66	30	4	0	0
My child is making good progress in school.	48	45	3	1	3
Behaviour in the school is good.	34	49	4	1	10
My child gets the right amount of work to do at home.	34	43	13	1	7
The teaching is good.	46	43	6	0	4
I am kept well informed about how my child is getting on.	39	43	10	1	6
I would feel comfortable about approaching the school with questions or a problem.	61	37	1	0	0
The school expects my child to work hard and achieve his or her best.	55	40	3	0	1
The school works closely with parents.	36	48	10	1	4
The school is well led and managed.	46	45	4	0	4
The school is helping my child become mature and responsible.	37	51	4	0	7
The school provides an interesting range of activities outside lessons.	37	36	12	1	13

## **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**

54. Children in the Foundation Stage are taught in two Nursery and three Reception classes. The curriculum is based on the nationally agreed curriculum for the Foundation Stage, which leads to the Early Learning Goals for children at the end of the Reception year. Children achieve well from a well below average start when they join the Nursery. Those who have special educational needs or who are from minority ethnic groups achieve well, based on their earlier learning. Most children are unlikely to meet the goals for the end of the Reception year in personal, social and emotional development, communication, language and literacy, mathematical development, knowledge and understanding of the world and creative development. Most children are on course to meet the goals for some aspects of physical development. The quality of teaching in all the areas of learning is very good. The teachers, Nursery nurses and teaching assistants work very well together. Staff follow the 'stepping stones' of the curriculum to ensure that children learn in a systematic way.

#### **Personal, social and emotional development**

55. Children make good progress and achieve well in this area of learning. They enjoy coming to school and soon follow routines and join in activities with enthusiasm. Standards of behaviour are very good, and the children become increasingly aware of what is right and what is wrong, so that they keep the simple but clear classroom rules. In role-play activities, children gradually learn to share, take turns and play co-operatively so that everyone is happy. Children's concentration and self-control strengthen because staff provide consistent help to maintain their interest in activities. Staff manage less mature children skilfully so that they gradually learn to complete short tasks successfully. Children with special education needs make good progress because of this. All children know they will be listened to. They relate very well to the staff and go confidently to them for help. They learn from these very good relationships and become increasingly able to relate to other children. As they work and play, children move confidently about the classroom and the outside play area. In the Reception year, most children adapt well to the brisker pace of teaching in literacy and numeracy lessons. They concentrate for longer periods and they are keen to offer answers and join in discussions.
56. Teaching is of very good quality and staff have high expectations of what children can do unaided. Through stories, during activities and by example, staff develop an ethos of care and consideration. They ensure that children tidy things away before moving to a new activity. The consistent approach ensures that routines are firmly established and children develop independence, initiative and respect for the school environment. This helps to develop their confidence and create good working habits.

#### **Communication, language and literacy**

58. When they start the Nursery, most children are keen to communicate with one another and with adults but they need help to express their ideas. They gradually learn to settle down quietly, listen attentively to stories and join in discussions. A significant number of children, though interested, fidget and find it hard to sit still at first, but the staff deal with this skilfully by encouraging the children to look at the pictures and follow the story. Children's concentration improves significantly in the Reception year, when they listen with increasing care and follow enlarged texts with the teachers. Although most cannot read simple texts independently in the Reception year, a few higher-attaining children do so confidently. Writing skills are weak. Most children's control of pencils is poor when they first come to the Nursery. Throughout the day, children have opportunities to make marks in a variety of situations. They put their names on drawings and paintings and record a variety of experiences with 'scribble writing'. Despite the school's very good provision of tasks to develop skills for finer control of paintbrushes, scissors and pencils, most children do not reach satisfactory levels in writing by the end of the Reception year. Most children write their names recognisably but few write simple sentences independently.

59. The quality of teaching is very good. Staff listen to the children considerably and this promotes children's confidence and helps them to express their ideas more clearly. Consistent teaching of letter sounds and shapes begins as soon as children start the Nursery. Staff label displays well and take every opportunity to develop children's language. They write children's names on the birthday display. To develop children's attainment in reading, they engage their interest with well-written and beautifully illustrated stories. They involve children in the text so that they become familiar with the structure of books and the idea that print has meaning. The excellent 'story sacks' bring relevance to children's reading. They hold objects and pictures which relate to the stories and capture children's imagination. In the Reception year, staff organise simple games and table activities to familiarise and reinforce letter sounds and key words. As a result, children learn at a good rate and achieve very well from a low start. They gain the confidence to speak up in discussions. Daily literacy lessons are introduced gradually and very effectively so that children are well prepared for more demanding work in Year 1.

### **Mathematical development**

60. In the Nursery, children join in number rhymes and songs and experience a wide range of counting, ordering and sorting activities. Most children count to ten by the end of the year, but a significant proportion do not count objects reliably up to five. Brighter children count forwards and backwards confidently. In the Reception year, children build well on what they already know. They are less reliable in counting backwards. They listen to one another and learn at a good rate during work in groups. Most children recognise numbers up to ten. Children develop mathematical knowledge and understanding in a variety of activities which take place throughout the day. For example, children played in the sand and filled moulds, which they then turned out. They described some of the objects they had made as 'bigger' and others as 'smaller'. Children's good achievement in personal and social skills helps them to join in activities which enhance their mathematical development. As their levels of concentration increase, they work more productively as individuals and in groups.
61. The quality of teaching is very good. Teachers plan a very good range of activities to extend children's understanding of number, shape and measurement. The staff set out a stimulating variety of puzzles and games to develop children's mathematical thinking. They engage very well with children and encourage them to use mathematical vocabulary; for example, when the teacher talked to a child who was drawing and encouraged her to talk about the 'longer' and 'shorter' lines. In story times, staff emphasise mathematical ideas; for example, when they read about the size of different characters in stories. In the Reception class, the daily numeracy lessons help children to gain early mathematical ideas and skills at a good rate. As they sit patiently and play counting and matching games with the children, staff engage well with the children and help them to extend their mathematical understanding. Everyday routines are used very well to teach mathematical ideas of number, sequence and shape. Staff count with the children when the register is being called. When the classes walk through the school, staff encourage them to walk behind one another in a line. Children often sit in a circle for stories and games.

### **Knowledge and understanding of the world**

62. Children develop their knowledge and understanding of the world effectively through well-organised activities. Although children find it difficult to express their understanding orally, they clearly understand aspects of the many opportunities provided to help them learn. They are curious and want to explore the world around them. They consider their own growth as they look at photographs of themselves as babies and talk about how their parents cared for them. In role-play activities, they demonstrate their knowledge and understanding of what happens in the home and in the doctor's surgery. They know about appointments, caring for patients and the importance of health. In the Reception year, children become more aware of the importance of what they eat. They discuss their favourite fruit and make a graph to show their choices. As they care for the school pets, children gain a deeper understanding of how living things grow and how they need food and shelter in order to thrive. On nature walks in the school grounds, children learn about plant growth and become increasingly observant as they identify features of the school environment. Children make models of vehicles from construction kits and know about different kinds of vehicles used for different purposes. Children use the computers with confidence. The school's very good use of photographs to reinforce children's learning ensures that they are reminded of things they have done.

63. The quality of teaching is very good. The teachers' planning is detailed and helpful, so that all staff are clear about what is being taught and how activities are to be prepared to reinforce and extend children's learning. Staff encourage children to use their senses to learn about the world around them. Teaching is based firmly on first-hand experience and children achieve well because of this. Children with special educational needs benefit from this practical approach. Staff encourage children to record their experiences and, although their drawings and writing are often weak, children get better at recording what they have seen and done. Staff prepare valuable experiences of other cultures so that children understand and value them. As planning has improved throughout the school, teachers are increasingly aware of what children will be learning in Year 1, when subjects such as science, geography and history are introduced.

### **Physical development**

64. In most aspects of physical development, children are on course to achieve the goals for the end of the Reception year. Children enjoy physical activity as they run, ride, jump, climb and play happily together. They ride tricycles with confidence and effective control. However, most children do not have the control necessary for writing at the level expected for their age by the end of the Reception year. Children use tools satisfactorily to dig and pour as they play in the sand and water trays, and they use brushes and scissors with increasing confidence. Activities, such as the threading of beads and the construction of simple models from construction kits, are well organised to assist children's hand-eye co-ordination and the manipulation of tools. The high level of staff support in practical activities helps children to achieve well and experience success. In the Reception classes, children benefit from physical education lessons, and they respond well to the teacher's instructions. In a good lesson, they played co-operatively with a large parachute and had a game of chase and catch. Children are keen to get out in the fresh air, where they benefit from the well-equipped play area.
65. The quality of teaching is very good. Because staff plan and work well as a team, they share information about children's progress and watch out for children who need support and encouragement with physical activities. Skills are taught in a supportive and encouraging atmosphere; for example, when children learn to roll hoops. Staff plan activities well and children are encouraged to use equipment safely. The good range of outdoor equipment is organised attractively to motivate children and encourage them to have plenty of exercise. The wooden role-play house is set up in a range of different ways, for example, as a house or a shop, so that children can use their imagination and play at being adults. Staff provide many opportunities for children to develop finer physical skills; for example, in activities such as threading beads, making simple models, dressing dolls and a wide range of writing and mark-making experiences. Linking with their social development, children are expected to try to fasten buttons and zips on their own coats.

### **Creative development**

66. Children's weak control of pencils, brushes and scissors adversely affects their attainment in creative development, but they are very imaginative. They create pictures with pencils, crayons, paint, fabric and natural materials and make three-dimensional shapes from boxes and malleable materials. Their observational drawings and paintings, though often immature, reflect first-hand experiences; for example, when children paint portraits of themselves. Children in the Reception year begin to illustrate their written work with lively drawings. Again, these are often immature, but they are lively and represent the children's feelings about things they have done and seen. Children gradually develop their skills in ICT as they explore a drawing package. Children develop a growing repertoire of number and action songs and become more aware of the sounds they can make on a range of percussion instruments. Staff ensure that children are given time to explore sound and sound patterns so that listening skills develop well. In the role-play area, children create situations and imagine themselves as parents, patients, doctors and nurses. Boys and girls play well together and take turns in the roles.
67. The teaching is very good. Staff are enthusiastic and they value children's creative ideas. When children are painting, a member of staff is always nearby to encourage them and help them to sort out their ideas and talk about what they are doing. Children's vocabulary is extended as staff talk about colours and shapes, as well as discussing the content of pictures. Children with special



educational needs gain from this approach. Staff also set up carefully chosen computer programs so that children can experiment with drawing lines and filling in patches of colour. When children dress up and pretend to be grown-ups, staff use the experience to extend children's imagination and develop their speaking skills. In music, children in the Reception classes benefit from specialist teaching. They made very good progress as they sang, marched and played musical games. Higher-attaining children repeated simple two-note phrases accurately. The range of activities to develop children's creative development is enhanced by the staff's imaginative approach, enthusiasm and very good planning.

## **ENGLISH**

68. In the last inspection report in 1997, standards by the end of Years 2 and 6 were judged to be well below average and progress was found to be generally steady. Evidence gathered during this inspection shows that standards are now only a little below expected levels, especially by the end of Year 6, and progress is good. There is no significant difference in the achievement of boys and girls, nor is there any difference in achievement of pupils from ethnic minorities. Improvement since the last inspection has been good.
69. In the 2002 national tests for pupils in Year 6, standards in English were well below average compared with all schools nationally and below average when compared with similar schools. During this inspection standards were found to be broadly in line with expected levels in speaking and listening and in reading. In writing the overall standard is below that expected but there is evidence of continuing improvement and examples of good work were seen.
70. In the 2002 national tests for pupils in Year 2, the school's performance was below that of all schools nationally and in line with that of similar schools. The school's results were much better than in 2001, especially in reading, where almost a quarter of pupils gained the higher level (Level 3). During this inspection, pupils' speaking and listening and reading were found to be close to the expected levels in Year 2. Writing skills are not so well developed.
71. Pupils come into Year 1 with underdeveloped speaking and listening. As they talk about the features of a book, teachers encourage them to express themselves by asking questions such as 'Where do you think the story is set?' and 'What time of day is it?' Most pupils listen well but tend to answer and speak in just one or two words; for example, 'a zoo', 'night'. Teachers consistently challenge them and try to extend them by further questions; for example, when a teacher asked 'How do you know it is.....?' Because of this encouragement, pupils were able to explain 'There are animals there' and 'It could be a farm'. Patient questioning elicited 'You can tell it's night 'cos it's black' and 'I can see stars'. A higher-attaining pupil remarked 'That's an owl and owls hunt at night!' In Year 2, pupils develop the skills of formulating, asking and answering questions; for example, by discussing the book 'Handa's Surprise'. One girl sat in the 'hot seat', pretending to be Handa's friend Akeya, while pupils asked questions. They were encouraged to use words such as, 'how', 'why', 'when'. Later, in discussing what Akeya might write to Handa to thank her, many pupils expressed themselves much more confidently. 'Thank you for those lovely, juicy, ripe tangerines,' said one boy. Another suggested, 'I like playing with you, and thank you for sharing your fruit.' Good progress was made. Because of imaginative teaching like this, most pupils are now close to expected levels by the end of Year 2 and all pupils achieve well.
72. Pupils also make good progress in reading. They enjoy reading, and all the pupils spoken to during reading sessions said that they take reading books home and read to parents or other members of the family each day. Well-kept reading records support this, and many diaries contain comments from parents and pupils, as well as from teachers and other adults who support readers in school. The Reading Recovery scheme is having a very positive impact on standards in Year 1. In one lesson the teacher was able, apparently effortlessly, to maintain the concentration of the pupils for the full half hour so that excellent progress was made. By the end of Year 2, pupils of all attainment levels talk confidently about how to use a contents page and what an index is for, and know that an author is 'the one who writes the book but an illustrator does the pictures' and that some books 'have a blurb on the back' that 'tells you what it's about'. Most pupils use picture cues to help them read and higher-attaining pupils are beginning to use the context to help them work out the meaning of words. Although standards are still below the expected level, they are improving and pupils achieve well.

73. Pupils' attainment in writing is below national expectations by the end of Year 2. Teachers encourage pupils to form their letters correctly and joined-up writing is now introduced at an early stage. Most pupils write reasonably accurately, forming recognisable sentences with capital letters and full stops. Lower-attaining pupils need support to write simple sentences, but most pupils write independently; for example, 'The giraffe sade (said) can I hav (have) the pineapple'. More able pupils write a sequence of sentences to tell a story, using words such as 'first', 'then' and 'next' to give a sense of time to the narrative. They use question marks, exclamation marks and commas with reasonable accuracy. Pupils regularly learn lists of rhyming words and spelling is satisfactory overall. Progress is good and pupils achieve well, bearing in mind their below average attainment when they start school.
74. This good progress and achievement continues consistently through Years 3 to 6. In Year 5, pupils were seen discussing play scripts which they were planning and writing. They sensitively and confidently discussed examples of work done by their classmates pointing out the good parts first; for example, one pupil said 'I like the way she uses humour', before going on to suggest areas of improvement. They are developing both a much broader and a more specific vocabulary to support their learning in a range of subjects; for example, when they talk about the need for 'stage directions'. Most pupils in Year 6 are confident speakers. In discussing the book 'Goodnight Mr Tom' their confidence and self-esteem were evident as they suggested words about Tom's character, such as 'recluse' and 'introvert'. One explained that 'grieving' refers to the fact that 'He found it hard to get over his wife's death', another suggested with great empathy 'He'd been on his own so long that he found it difficult to meet people'.
75. Positive attitudes to reading and a love of books are encouraged throughout the school. In a junior assembly, the headteacher's enthusiastic approach to a book, linked to the school's current theme of Black History, resulted in a 'sea' of hands going up from pupils who wanted to borrow the book to read for themselves. One pupil in Year 6, who had already read it, demonstrated her clear understanding in a sensitive and well-presented summary. Pupils know how to use non-fiction for research and have good book and library retrieval skills. They talk with understanding about indices, glossaries and coding systems. Many are members of the local public library, as well as regularly using the well-stocked school library. In a short but effective library investigation, pupils in Year 6 demonstrated their skills in finding books by different authors and identifying the specific numbers for different categories of non-fiction books. The three pupils who act as librarians in the very popular infant and junior libraries are extremely committed and enthusiastic about their responsibilities. They meet to plan ways of improving the library, and are responsible for displays in the library following training from the teacher in charge.
76. Although writing standards remain below expected levels for a significant number of Year 6 pupils, progress is good and most of the present Year 6 should achieve the expected Level 4, with a higher proportion than before attaining a higher level (Level 5). Attention is paid to handwriting and most pupils use well-formed cursive script. Pupils are encouraged to draft and edit their work; for example, when pupils in Year 5 were learning the techniques of editing and improving. Pupils write for a variety of different purposes. In Year 3, pupils looked at rhyming and non-rhyming poetry, wrote their own poems and changed poems into calligrams. Pupils in Year 4 wrote instructions. They use imperatives and organisational devices such as bullet points, bold type and different fonts to make their meaning clear and concise.
77. Progress is consistently good throughout the school and all pupils achieve well. Pupils who have special needs are well supported to achieve their targets, and pupils who speak English as an additional language progress well because of the thoughtful planning to meet their needs. The National Literacy Strategy has been implemented well, and teachers are using each part of the daily Literacy Hour with increasing effect. Literacy is developed well in most subjects, including religious education, history and science. Pupils use ICT well to write and edit their work. They also use it to access information which has to be read and interpreted.
78. Pupils' attitudes are very good in English lessons. Pupils are keen to learn and respond well to the teachers. They work together purposefully in pairs or groups and support each other well. They generally settle well to activities and keep on task. In the majority of lessons observed, pupils' attitudes and behaviour were good or better, and this contributed well to the rate of learning and pupils' achievement.

79. During the inspection, teaching was never less than satisfactory. It was good overall, with half the lessons being very good, or, in one case, excellent. Planning is good, with clear lesson objectives, which are shared with pupils. They are referred back to during the lesson so that pupils and teacher remain clear about what the aims of the lesson are and whether they have been achieved. Occasionally, the first part of the lesson tends to drag, and pupils' concentration lapses. However, teachers usually motivate pupils well, asking questions to challenge and extend them so that they learn at a good rate. There is a strong sense of teamwork and staff, including teaching assistants, have a clear sense of purpose and give effective support to individuals and groups. Teamwork is part of the good provision for pupils with special educational needs, who make good progress towards their targets. Teachers manage pupils very well and have an appropriate range of effective teaching methods, with high expectations of behaviour and work. Relationships are good and pupils know what is expected of them. Most

teachers ensure that rules, such as 'not calling out in lessons' and 'listening while others are talking', are kept. In a very small number of lessons, teachers were not so vigilant and this led to a few pupils losing concentration.

80. Leadership and management of the subject are very strong, with teaching and standards well monitored. Assessment of pupils' achievement is very well organised. Progress of pupils is very well tracked and appropriate targets are set. Test results are very well analysed and strengths and weaknesses identified so that strategies for improving standards can be developed. A wide range of strategies have already been put into place and are proving effective; for example, story sacks, the Reading Recovery scheme, literacy support groups and booster classes. These are having an appreciable effect on raising standards in the school. The staff have a very strong sense of shared purpose and commitment and are determined to raise standards further. Resources, including infant and junior libraries, are good and are used well. The subject makes a good contribution to pupils' moral, spiritual and cultural development and contributes very well to their personal and social development.

## **MATHEMATICS**

81. The school's results in national tests have risen since the last inspection, but pupils in Year 6 still attain standards below those expected for their age. The large proportion of pupils with special educational needs, who achieve well based on their earlier learning, causes significant variations in standards between year groups. This also affects the school's results at the end of Year 2, where current standards are below national expectations. However, the school's performance in the 2002 national tests for pupils in Year 2 was average in comparison with all schools nationally and good when compared with similar schools.
82. Improvements have been most marked for pupils with special educational needs and lower-attaining pupils. Standards have risen in space, shape and measures and data handling, but remain below expectations in number work and problem solving. Standards have improved because of the very good leadership of the subject. There has been systematic analysis of pupils' past performance and the quality of support given to lower-attaining pupils has been improved.
83. Overall, pupils achieve well from a well below average start. The effective provision for raising the self-esteem of pupils contributes well to this success. Evidence from the inspection indicates no significant difference in the achievement of boys and girls, nor is there any difference in achievement between white European, West African or Asian pupils. Pupils for whom English is an additional language achieve in line with their peers. Pupils' attainment and achievement are carefully monitored.
84. In Year 2, pupils' knowledge of number and shape, space and measures is below national expectations. Most pupils recognise two digit numbers as tens and units but find it difficult to add numbers to 100. Higher-attaining pupils can identify three digit numbers and they use this knowledge effectively to calculate sums of money up to one pound. The other pupils have difficulty when dealing with money because they are unfamiliar with the coins. Pupils can measure lengths in metres and time in hours and parts of hours. Most pupils rely on 'counting on' to carry out addition, and are not familiar with alternative methods of calculation. In Year 6, pupils can use their 6x, 7x, 8x, and 10x tables to make mental calculations. Although a few higher-

attaining pupils are quick and accurate with mental arithmetic, many pupils are slow and insecure at this activity. Higher-attaining pupils use decimal points to two places. Pupils have some understanding of probability and use appropriate language to describe it. In Year 5, pupils identify the position of points given two co-ordinates. Higher-attaining pupils can do a similar exercise in all four quadrants. Pupils can investigate problems involving two mathematical operations, but their limited language skills mean that they find it difficult to solve written mathematical problems. Pupils name two- and three-dimensional objects and calculate the perimeter and area of those with two-dimensions. By the end of Year 6, pupils' attainment in shape, space, measures and in data handling is close to the national expectations.

85. The quality of teaching and learning is good overall. The improvement in teaching since the last inspection has been very good. Over half the teaching seen during the inspection was good or better, and there was no unsatisfactory teaching. Pupils learn effectively because of the high expectations teachers have for all pupils and because of the very effective support given to lower-attaining pupils and those with special educational needs. Pupils are interested and engaged in their learning because teachers match learning closely to the needs of all pupils. In Year 1, pupils are encouraged to use alternative strategies; for example, when they count with sticks, cubes or fingers or do mental calculations to work out subtraction problems. They discuss the relative advantages of using particular methods. Teachers manage pupils very well. As a result, pupils are very well behaved and learn in quiet, purposeful classrooms. The high quality teaching assistants, who work closely with teachers, ensure that lower-attaining pupils and those with special educational needs are fully involved in the learning and take a full part in the life of the classroom. For example, in Year 5, the teaching assistant encouraged pupils to explain how they arrived at an answer when counting triangles within a hexagon.
86. During mental arithmetic activities in the first part of numeracy lessons, teachers do not always ensure that pupils work at a brisk and challenging pace. This may require extra attention being given to the teaching and the use of specific mathematical language. The last part of lessons is sometimes used well. For example, in Year 5 pupils were challenged to build on their exploration of the number of triangles which could be found in a hexagon. Pupils were amazed and challenged by the target numbers set by the teacher. However, the final part of mathematics lessons could be used more consistently and effectively to allow pupils to assess what they have learnt and to recognise what they need to know.
87. Teachers are familiar with the structure of the National Numeracy Strategy and use this to guide their planning. This has contributed well to the improvement in teaching since the last inspection. The use of the three-part lesson structure could be improved by reviewing the timing of lessons and the use of time within lessons, especially in the initial sessions. As is already the case in science, more opportunities could be identified for pupils to use their mathematical skills in other subjects. ICT is used well to support learning in the classroom, where pupils often practise their skills using interesting and challenging computer programs.
88. Information from regular assessment is used effectively to target pupils for extra support. It is also used well in Year 6, where pupils are taught in groups by ability. Senior managers and the co-ordinator monitor the performance of groups and of individual pupils effectively. This is particularly useful in targeting provision for lower-attaining pupils, those with special educational needs and higher-attaining pupils. However, teachers do not always make the best use of information from assessments to direct the planning for lessons. This could help learning and expectations to be matched more closely to the needs of all pupils.
89. The leadership and management of the subject are very good. The co-ordinator is knowledgeable and enthusiastic and leads by example. Regular review of standards and effective monitoring of teaching help to ensure that standards improve. Periodic analyses of test data indicate those areas in which the school needs to improve its teaching and learning; these are shown effectively in the school improvement plan.
90. There have been substantial improvements in the teaching of mathematics and in assessment procedures. However, scope for improvement remains. The school needs to raise standards further by reviewing the use and timing of the National Numeracy Strategy to match the learning needs of pupils; to make better use of day-to-day assessment so that lessons are planned more closely to meet the needs of all pupils in Years 3 to 6; to improve the teaching of mental

arithmetic; and to develop pupils' mathematical language to help them with problem solving. In addition, mathematical activities could be included more effectively in other subjects.

## SCIENCE

91. The percentage of pupils achieving levels in line with national expectations has improved considerably since the last inspection. From a well below average start in the Nursery, most pupils achieve well by the end of Year 6. Boys and girls achieve similarly, and pupils of white European, West African or Asian heritage perform as well as their peers.

92. The school's results in the 2002 national tests for pupils in Year 6 were very low when compared with those of all schools nationally and in comparison with similar schools. A significant number of pupils in the school have special educational needs. This has a marked influence on the overall points gained by the school, which are used to calculate comparisons with all schools and similar schools nationally. In the 2002 Teachers' Assessments of pupils' attainment, the

school's performance was broadly in line with all schools nationally and with similar schools. On the evidence of the current inspection, the majority of pupils are on course to reach the expected levels by the end of Years 2 and 6. This good improvement since is due to:

- the overall improvement in the quality of teaching;
- the school's increasingly practical approach to the teaching and learning of science;
- the consistent procedures for assessing pupils' progress and attainment, which have influenced the way teachers plan their lessons.

93. In Years 1 and 2, pupils acquire increasing skills of observation. In Year 1, pupils extend their earlier learning from the Reception class by studying how animals change as they grow. They become increasingly aware of the life cycle and know that animals reproduce their own kind. Pupils' recording skills are weak, and their drawings are immature, but pupils demonstrated a clear understanding of the main teaching points in discussions. In a good lesson in Year 2, pupils noted how noodles became more flexible when they were soaked in water, how bread changed when it was toasted and how cake mixture changed its consistency during cooking. They predicted, investigated and tested their hypotheses. Higher-attaining pupils were accurate in their predictions. Pupils make good progress. In Year 2, they begin to organise and record their findings more systematically. With good teaching, pupils successfully build on their knowledge of materials, forces and life processes.

94. In Years 3 to 6, pupils make good progress and build systematically on the skills of observation and recording which they acquired in Years 1 and 2. In Year 3 they relate their earlier learning about their bodies and extend their knowledge of human teeth. In a good lesson which drew well on their curiosity and interest, pupils looked at false teeth to observe how there were different shapes for different purposes. They observe their own teeth in mirrors and recognise that some are better for chewing and some for tearing or biting. The pupils were full of interest and curiosity and they asked pertinent questions. In a very good lesson in Year 6, pupils explored the idea of food chains. They discussed the balanced nature of feeding relationships – how there is a chain from plants to herbivores to carnivores. Every pupil was attentive, and all wanted to contribute to the 'chains' which were created on the blackboard from pictures of plants, insects and animals. Throughout the school, pupils are encouraged to think of themselves as young scientists. In Year 6, pupils record 'What do I know already?', 'What do I want to find out?' and 'What have I learnt?'. Pupils record their work with increasing independence as they grow older. The improvement in recording, from the earliest efforts in Year 1 to the lengthy pieces of work in the current Year 6, is very good.

95. Throughout the school, pupils enjoy scientific activities. They are keen to explain what they are doing and what they think might happen in their experiments. Teachers bring relevance to the subject by using everyday occurrences to demonstrate scientific ideas, and this stirs pupils' imagination and makes them realise that science is all around them. In a very good lesson in Year 4, pupils investigated how changes occurred when some solids were added to water. They saw how some solids dissolved in water and some did not. The teacher stressed the idea of fair

testing, and the pupils worked together very well in groups because they were so interested and involved in what they were doing. Pupils try hard to present their work well. Teachers provide support for pupils with special educational needs, but others are expected to set their work out independently. The oldest pupils show particular pride in their work and present it beautifully.

96. The overall quality of teaching is good, and there were examples of very good teaching. Teachers provide interesting opportunities for pupils to be actively involved in scientific enquiry. They have high expectations of the pupils, and encourage all of them to meet new challenges. As a result, pupils are confident learners who are excited by science. Teachers plan their lessons carefully to interest and motivate the pupils and use the available support wisely for special educational needs and for pupils who speak English as an additional language. Work in pupils' books is marked regularly, with helpful comments to reinforce pupils' learning. Lessons are taught at a good pace; for example, when pupils in Year 4 were encouraged to complete their work. The pupils shared out the jobs – one took the lead, another wrote the predictions and a third recorded the progress of the investigation. This helped them to be productive and finish the task. Teachers manage the pupils well, often through their own enthusiasm and always through well-chosen activities. Teachers regularly assess their pupils' performance and collect samples of pupils' work for reference and for target-setting purposes. Their daily and termly evaluations of lessons and learning are discussed purposefully with colleagues so that adjustments can be made for subsequent lessons and later planning.
97. Teachers in all classes promote the use of specific scientific vocabulary, and literacy and numeracy are promoted well in science. ICT is used and practised increasingly during lessons. Pupils label diagrams, write up experiments, search for information in books, CD ROMs and on the Internet. They make comparisons, take measurements and record their findings in a variety of charts, tables and graphs. Health education is developed well in science lessons. Younger pupils learn about healthy eating and the importance of regular exercise. Older pupils visit a local pharmaceutical factory and learn about the positive effects of drugs in combating disease and illness – and the negative effects of irresponsible drug-taking. The wonder of nature is captured as pupils observe flowers and plants, which they sketch in art and design lessons.
98. The subject is well led. The co-ordinator has made a considerable commitment to improving provision for science and to raising pupils' attainment. The scheme of work is based on national guidelines and is supplemented with the school's own ideas which bring life to the subject. It has contributed significantly to the raising of standards. School resources have been carefully audited and are of good quality. Good use is made of the school site and also of industrial links to enrich provision and bring relevance to pupils' learning.

## **ART AND DESIGN**

99. The standard of pupils' work and the quality of teaching have remained the same since the last inspection. There has been a satisfactory improvement in the provision for three-dimensional work. In Year 2 and Year 6, pupils are on course to meet national expectations by the end of the school year, and pupils achieve satisfactorily throughout the school. They make satisfactory progress in using a range of media, and have a broad range of experiences, including drawing, painting, printing and modelling. Pupils with special educational needs make satisfactory progress in lessons due to the good support they receive from teaching assistants. Higher-attaining pupils make satisfactory progress; however, a few of these are capable of producing more exciting work.
100. Throughout the school, pupils use different colours well and show a growing understanding of shape, texture, pattern and tone. They make good progress in acquiring sketching and drawing skills. Pupils make interesting three-dimensional objects. They use plasticine, clay and other materials satisfactorily in their work. Work in art and design is linked effectively to other subjects; for example, when younger pupils made a puppet theatre, and when older pupils used their skills from design and technology to create bright, attractive and imaginative designs for the decoration of chairs. In Year 2, pupils looked at different patterns that can be found around the school. They copied the patterns found on drain covers, brick walls and stripy patterns on a bin. They made attractive Rangoli patterns and used the different colours well. Following an autumn theme, they

made collages from leaves and feathers and painted interesting pictures of fruit. Pupils talk about their work and say how it might be improved.

101. By Year 6, many pupils are confident in drawing. They have explored different facial expressions and made portraits of pupils in the class to show a range of emotions. They added shading and detail to make the faces more life-like. Pupils recognise some of the works of well-known artists. For example, pupils in Year 6 studied the painting of the 'Weeping Woman' by Picasso. They identified the way that the artist had portrayed the effect of weeping and then produced their own version of the painting. They used strong colours effectively to create their own well-observed pictures. Pupils throughout the school have good attitudes towards the subject. They share resources sensibly and enjoy their lessons.
102. Teaching and learning in Years 1 to 6 is satisfactory overall, and some good and very good teaching was seen. Teachers organise lessons well and make good use of resources. Satisfactory provision is made for pupils to learn about the work of other artists. In a lesson in Year 3, the teacher showed pupils the way that Lowry and other painters had drawn people in a crowd scene. This had a positive impact on pupils' learning. As a result, many of the pupils were able to capture movement in the people they then drew. Very occasionally, however, insufficient attention is given to improving the quality of pupils' work and to developing specific artistic skills. Teaching assistants offer valuable support to pupils during lessons. The provision for developing pupils' literacy and numeric skills in lessons is satisfactory. Good use is made of ICT to enable pupils to develop a wider range of skills, using the school's well-chosen range of drawing packages.
103. The co-ordinator provides effective leadership. She has a good overview of the subject and regularly monitors the provision. The resources are good and readily available to pupils. Displays around the school are used well to celebrate pupils' achievement. Satisfactory assessment procedures and schemes of work are in place, and these are used well by teachers. The subject makes a good contribution to pupils' cultural development, with a strong focus given to art from around the world. There is good extra-curricular provision, including two art clubs.

## **DESIGN AND TECHNOLOGY**

104. Improvements in design and technology have been good since the last inspection. Standards throughout the school have risen due to improved teaching and better planning of suitable work. In Years 2 and 6, pupils are on course to attain standards which are in line with national expectations. This represents a good improvement, as standards were found to be below national expectations during the last inspection.
105. In Year 2, pupils make well-designed vehicles with axles and wheels to transport their teddy bears. In the making process they measure, cut and join a range of materials successfully, such as wood, card and fabrics, and their finished products are painted to make them more attractive. Pupils evaluate their vehicles and make comments about how they could have improved the design. They use construction kits to investigate winding mechanisms showing an understanding of the principles involved. This shows good progress from Year 1 when they make moving pictures from card to give them a basic understanding of how one movement can lead to another. From Year 3 to the end of Year 6 good progress continues as pupils' work shows that they are successfully building on the skills they learned earlier. For example, in Year 3 the pupils make model monsters move by using pneumatics, in Year 5 they use cams to move a toy, and in Year 6 they construct controllable vehicles with steering mechanisms. All these demonstrate the cutting, joining and making skills they have learned over the years. Throughout the school, pupils follow the correct procedures when designing and making their products. Before developing their own designs they often look at commercial products and decide which features they would like to include. They then use a design sheet well to plan their work. The plan includes a drawing of their design, lists of materials required and tools to be used. On completion they successfully evaluate their product, say what they like about it and suggest improvements they could have made. Pupils use a variety of tools safely and choose the most appropriate tool for the job. For instance, when making vehicles they use a saw correctly to cut the wooden axles.

106. All pupils make good progress in their learning, including those with special educational needs and those with English as an additional language. Indeed, the school recognises that design and technology is a subject in which pupils who might experience difficulties with reading and writing can sometimes excel, raising their self-esteem. By linking the work to aspects of literacy and numeracy, the pupils reinforce and improve relevant skills in those subject areas such as instructional writing, measuring and shape. This was clearly seen in Year 3 work on packaging where the pupils made nets to construct their own boxes for sweets. The use of ICT to enhance and extend the work in design and technology, particularly for pupils in Year 6, is an area appropriately identified by the school for improvement in the near future. Some resources have already been purchased to support this. Other resources are satisfactory.
107. Pupils of all ages learn well because of the good teaching they receive. Teachers manage their pupils very well and constantly encourage them to do their best. Pupils respond well to this and work carefully and sensibly showing great pride in their efforts. This was clearly seen in a very good lesson in Year 4 in which pupils were experimenting with a variety of levers made from card to transfer movement. They all worked with intense concentration and were full of ideas after being very well motivated by the teacher's own enthusiasm. At the end of the lesson they were extremely proud of their efforts and were longing to develop their ideas in future lessons. Lessons are very well planned in year groups to help pupils build on the skills they learn. This enables teachers to share ideas and ensures that all pupils learn the same skills during lessons.



108. The school has good links with a local technical college. These give pupils in Years 5 and 6 the opportunity to go to the college and work with specialist equipment and teachers and learn an even greater range of skills. Two after school cookery clubs, run by teaching assistants, help those pupils who attend regularly and enthusiastically to improve their standards in food technology.

## **GEOGRAPHY**

109. In Year 6, pupils are on course to meet standards expected of pupils nationally by the end of the school year. Pupils in Year 2 are unlikely to meet nationally expected standards by the end of the school year, but they achieve well from a low start. Pupils progress with increasing pace as they move through the school. Teachers provide relevant and stimulating experiences so that pupils gradually become aware of the wider world and are interested in broader geographical issues, such as care for the environment.
110. By the end of Year 2, most pupils understand and draw simple maps and make observations about their local area. They use symbols to identify specific features and become increasingly aware of localities beyond their own. A significant number of pupils have a limited understanding of the world and a restricted geographical vocabulary. Lower-attaining pupils do not make up for their initial disadvantages by the end of Year 2. In a lesson in Year 1, pupils had difficulty describing how they would travel to the local Bluewater Shopping Centre. However, the curriculum includes first-hand experiences to broaden pupils' understanding; for example, when pupils are taken to the seaside and given opportunities to study the features of a place away from home. In an interesting lesson about the journeys made by Barnaby Bear, pupils looked at pictures and explored the different physical features and climates of the places he had visited. The teacher skilfully teased out pupils' ideas, allowing them to articulate their thoughts. This helped to strengthen their vocabulary and broaden their understanding of the wider world.
111. Pupils in Years 3 to 6 make good progress. They have a sound understanding of more distant places and pupils can identify significant features and places on a world map. They understand how people can improve or damage the environment and they have clear views, which they can explain. In their study of local weather, pupils in Year 6 demonstrated a good knowledge of wind scales and direction. In Year 5, pupils become increasingly confident in the use of Ordnance Survey maps. Pupils' limited understanding of physical processes, such as river or coastal erosion, and their restricted geographical vocabulary limit their rate of learning. Every year a group of pupils does fieldwork. This enables pupils to gain first-hand experience of collecting evidence, considering it and recording their findings in a variety of ways. Parents help with these activities; this enhances pupils' learning because there are more adults to answer questions and give advice.
112. The teachers' careful use of questions and answers at the beginning and end of lessons ensures that all pupils are included and are able to contribute. Teachers know their pupils well and construct questions that are carefully aimed to elicit pupils' understanding and extend their learning. When tasks are carefully chosen to ensure the right level of challenge, pupils make good gains in learning. For example, in a lesson in Year 2, pupils worked in groups to plan a trip to Bluewater, to the Lake District or to Switzerland. The teacher chose the groups carefully, aware of pupils' previous experience and knowledge, so that all pupils were able to participate.
113. In most lessons, there is good use of literacy; for example, when pupils in Year 5 write letters giving their opinions about local traffic problems. Occasionally, pupils with weaker reading skills do not achieve as well as they could because they are set similar tasks to other pupils; for example, in a lesson where lower-attaining pupils were unable to complete the missing words in sentences. The use of numeracy is satisfactory; for example, the use of tally charts and data analysis by a Year 1 class who had conducted a local traffic survey. There are few computer programs for pupils to use in geography and, as a result, ICT is not used as effectively as it could be.
114. Pupils' behaviour and their attitudes to the practical aspects of geography are good. They behave well and are enthusiastic when discussing or responding to questions, but are less keen on writing up the results of their investigations. For example, in one Year 5 class, pupils enjoyed

doing a survey about the traffic problems in Dartford and analysing the results, but they were less enthusiastic when asked to write a questionnaire.

115. Teaching is satisfactory and the teaching methods used are good. Geographical skills are taught satisfactorily, so that the pupils get a feel for the subject and realise that it affects their lives in various ways, such as traffic congestion, holidays and climate. At the beginning and end of lessons teachers use questions well to ensure that all pupils are suitably challenged and feel confident to take risks in their learning. This results in pupils progressing well in those parts of the lessons. For example, in a lesson in Year 5, the teacher's questions enabled pupils to learn a lot about the distribution of traffic congestion. In some lessons, the objective is too broad, and not always clearly understood by pupils. Teaching assistants make a good contribution to pupils' learning; they support individual pupils well and work together with the teachers very effectively.
116. All teachers assess their pupils well and books are suitably marked with positive comments and questions for the pupils to consider. Although teachers know their pupils very well, there has been little use of assessment information to monitor the progress of groups. Pupils with English as an additional language progress satisfactorily and are included well in lessons. Pupils with special educational needs make satisfactory progress overall, although when they are given tasks that are too difficult, their rate of learning slows.
117. The overall range of learning opportunities in geography is satisfactory. Provision for practical experiences is good, so that pupils get out to the local area and recognise the relevance of geography in their everyday lives. Pupils learn about local and distant places and gain a sound understanding of map work. However, the lack of resources limits aspects of teaching and learning in the classroom. Opportunities for pupils to develop their skills of enquiry are hindered because there are not enough globes, maps, atlases and photographs. Geography makes a valuable contribution to pupils' social development when they work in groups to investigate issues and consider matters of local concern. In addition, it contributes significantly to their cultural development through the study of other countries and the ways of life of others.
118. The leadership of the subject is satisfactory. The curriculum is planned well but the range and number of resources for the subject are unsatisfactory. The recently appointed co-ordinator monitors teachers' planning and gives advice to colleagues. Staff training includes joint professional development with teachers from nearby schools. Since the last inspection there has been satisfactory improvement in the subject. The standards attained by pupils by the end of Year 6 have improved and the quality of learning and teaching has been maintained.

## **HISTORY**

119. The standards of attainment by pupils in Years 2 and 6 are on course to meet national expectations by the end of the school year. This is because of the enthusiastic leadership and teaching of the subject, the very good use of local resources to support learning, and the effective use of literacy skills by pupils.
120. Standards have been maintained since the last inspection, with an improvement in the quality of pupils' written work. The achievements made by boys and girls are similar. The achievements made by white European, West African and Asian pupils are also similar. Pupils with special educational needs and those who speak English as an additional language achieve well, but the better structuring of tasks for lower-attaining pupils could help to raise standards further.
121. The quality of teaching and learning is good. Pupils in Year 6 know about some of the main events of World War II. They complete timelines to show the sequence of events over the six-year war period. They extend these to include the decades after the war. They understand some of the events; for example, the actions of Hitler in Germany, the effects of the Treaty of Versailles and the legacy of World War I, which form a background to the short term events leading to the outbreak of the Second World War. They investigate, using printed texts and the Internet, the precautions taken in London as a result of air raids. They explore the role of the Home Guard in maintaining morale. They develop their use of evidence by studying photographs and exploring literature such as 'The Diary of Anne Frank'. In Year 4, pupils maintain close links with a local archaeological dig to extend their understanding of the Anglo-Saxons and of how evidence is found for past societies. Pupils use the reports of the digs to find information. They supplement

this by exploring relevant addresses on the Internet. In Year 3, pupils use their Internet and literacy skills to collect and present information about the lives of the Ancient Greeks. Pupils are very interested and enthusiastic about their learning because of

the challenges generated by their teachers. In Year 3, the tasks set for pupils reflect and enhance their literacy skills and so help pupils gain a sense of achievement. In other years, what is expected of pupils of different abilities is not so clearly identified.

122. Pupils in Year 2, in their study of the Great Fire of London, understand the importance of eyewitness accounts in finding out about the past. In the style of the diary of Samuel Pepys, they write their own first hand accounts. In Year 1, pupils explore change, past, present and future, through their own lives and the lives of people they know. They do this very well in paired groups and share information and experience. Assessment of pupils' progress is well monitored and pupils learn well because teachers with good subject knowledge effectively match learning to the abilities of the pupils. Teachers expect pupils to rise to the challenges they set, and are very good at managing pupils' behaviour. Consequently pupils gain confidence by learning in quiet, settled lessons.
123. The leadership and management of the subject are very good. The monitoring of teachers' planning is effective and the expectations of standards are clearly identified for teachers. Monitoring gives a clear view of the strengths and weaknesses of the teaching and learning. The use of visits and the Internet to support pupils' learning is very effective and this results in pupils becoming confident about learning from their own community.

## **INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY**

124. Standards in Years 2 and 6 are on course to exceed those expected of pupils nationally by the end of the school year. All pupils achieve very well and make very good progress. This represents very good improvement since the last inspection.
125. In Year 2, pupils are skilled in using the mouse and the keyboard. They use word processing and graphics well and they can change fonts, use clipart from a database of pictures, and move and resize objects. In one Year 2 class, pupils used their ICT skills to draw Tudor houses, which they had learned about in history. They drew and coloured their houses, and then resized and moved them to adjust their drawings. They typed additional information onto the drawings and saved their work.
126. In Year 6, pupils use more complex word processing and graphics skills. They transfer text and images between programs and use the Internet to access information. They add sound and moving images to their work and use their skills to plan a presentation for other pupils in the school. They use ICT for processing data and the production of graphs and charts to support other subjects. In one Year 6 class, the pupils used multi-media technology to plan a presentation. They were able to add sound, moving images and clipart to their work. When they met problems, they took suitable actions to resolve them.
127. All pupils, whatever their ability, experience, background or preferred learning style, are included very well in ICT. The skilled and careful use of question and answer techniques and the use of demonstrations ensure that all pupils are included and are able to contribute to the lessons. At the beginning, and at intervals during lessons, the technology allows teachers to demonstrate the skills required, by presenting them directly to the screens pupils are working at. In this way, pupils' different styles of learning are catered for.
128. In all classes, literacy and numeracy are used well. Pupils add suitable text to their work, and discuss their work with other pupils and the adults working with them. They use their numeracy skills to analyse data and construct graphs and charts, and use their knowledge of shape and space for their work in designing objects and places.
129. Pupils behave very well in ICT lessons. They are very interested and enthusiastic about their work and they are very keen to learn and do well. In a Year 5 lesson, where pupils were planning a pop

star's lounge, they were listening attentively and followed demonstrations from the teacher carefully. They helped each other during quiet discussion and were very considerate to each other. They regard their work as important, can recognise the progress they are making and feel a sense of achievement and pride in their learning.

130. The quality of teaching and pupils' learning are very good throughout the school. Lessons are very well planned and the learning intentions for pupils are made clear to pupils. Demonstrations, tasks and explanations all contribute very well to the progress pupils make. Pupils benefit from the skills of a specialist teacher, together with those of their class teacher and teaching assistant. The guidance pupils receive is clear and explicit, with all adults working together as a team. Teaching methods are highly effective and pupils are managed very well. In a Year 5 lesson, when pupils were designing a pop star's lounge, the expectations of pupils were very high and individual support from adults was very good. Pupils achieved very good results and were able to experiment and be creative. Time checks given by the teacher enabled pupils to manage their time very well. There was a well thought out activity for pupils working in pairs to develop and extend their ideas. The closing session was used to summarise and consolidate their learning, with some pupils' work being used to illustrate what had been learnt. The teacher used pupils' views about how well they had achieved the objectives to judge how successful the lesson had been.
131. Assessments are of good quality and the way they are used is very good. There are half termly assessment tasks and the information is used to monitor pupils' progress. Teachers have a good knowledge of their pupils' strengths, weaknesses and the progress they are making, and this is used to plan future activities and tasks. Pupils know what they have learnt and what they need to do next. Teachers have also begun to use pupils' self-assessment, and this is going to be extended. There is a portfolio of teachers' assessments, which helps ensure that teachers mark pupils' work consistently. The marking of work is regular and constructive. Pupils receive comments from their teachers, including questions for them to consider. Pupils are beginning to respond in writing to these questions, so that the marking is becoming a dialogue between teacher and pupil. Targets are set and pupils are aware of their own targets.
132. Pupils with English as an additional language make very good progress and are included in lessons very well. Pupils with special educational needs make very good progress because they are provided with a multi-media range of teaching methods. The use of a range of visual and aural techniques, together with individual opportunities to practise new skills, means that all pupils are provided with the chance to learn well.
133. The curriculum is planned well throughout the school. A team of teachers work together to ensure that there is clear progress in planned work. This is particularly important because pupils' achievement is changing as the younger pupils progress through the school. The impact of teaching is such that the younger pupils will be achieving higher standards than the current older pupils as they progress through the school. Pupils receive a very good range of opportunities to learn word processing, graphics and modelling. The teachers are beginning to use sensors in their lessons as an introduction to control technology; their wider application is planned. The wider and more co-ordinated use of ICT in all subjects is also planned.
134. ICT makes a very good contribution to pupils' social development by providing many opportunities for pupils to work together and help others. The school provides a well-attended ICT club at lunch-time and an after-school opportunity for family learning. This family learning session provides a very well-organised opportunity for children and parents to learn together. It also provides parents with an opportunity to find out more about how their children learn.
135. The leadership of ICT is very good. The co-ordinator, the manager of the suite of computers and the ICT governor all have an excellent understanding of how the subject should proceed. There is a very clear and accurate understanding of the progress pupils make, and this is used very well to plan developments. Staff confidence has improved considerably through the support of the co-ordinator and the specialist teacher. Other staff have been closely involved in developing the subject, so there is excellent commitment to the improvement of effective teaching and learning.
136. There are very good resources for the subject, which are used very well. There is an excellent, well-staffed suite of computers so that pupils are supported well. The range of software provides ideal opportunities for pupils to learn effectively in most subjects. New resources are being added to extend the curriculum.

137. There have been significant improvements in pupils' achievements and progress, the curriculum and resources. These improvements have already led to improved attainment. Attainment will continue to improve as the younger pupils move up through the school.

## **MUSIC**

138. Improvement since the last inspection is satisfactory. Although the overall standard of pupils' work has remained the same, there has been an improvement in pupils' attainment in composition. In the last inspection teaching was found to be mostly good. It is now satisfactory, overall.
139. In Years 2 and 6, pupils' attainment is on course to be in line with national expectations by the end of the school year and pupils achieve satisfactorily. Pupils in the after-school performing arts club achieve well in relation to their age. In lessons, pupils make satisfactory progress in creating short pieces and in developing skills in listening to music. They make good progress in vocal skills and sing confidently in lessons and assemblies. In Year 2, pupils know the difference between high and low sounds. They suggest ways that symbols can be used to record a short melody and begin to understand the different sounds produced by instruments. In a lesson in Year 2, pupils looked at an Indian sitar and contrasted its sound with the classroom instruments that they usually play. They knew that the different shape and length of instruments affects the sound that they produce. By Year 6, pupils use musical vocabulary well when discussing their ideas and begin to understand simple notation. They show secure rhythmic and vocal skills. For example, in a lesson, Year 6 pupils clapped different rhythmic patterns accurately, whilst keeping a steady pulse. They sang the round, 'London's Burning' in four parts, with a few pupils playing the recorder and another the keyboard. Pupils then recorded their performance and used this to suggest ways that the overall effect might be improved.
140. Pupils with special educational needs make satisfactory progress, due to the good support they receive from teaching assistants. The more musically able pupils make satisfactory progress in lessons. However, a few pupils are capable of better progress. Pupils who attend extra-curricular provision make good progress in extending their musical skills. Satisfactory provision is made for developing pupils' literacy and numeracy skills in lessons, and ICT is used satisfactorily to enable pupils to practise composing tasks.
141. The weekly singing practice for pupils in Years 3 to 6 provides a good opportunity for pupils to sing together. In one practice, pupils gained confidence in singing in four parts and then learnt the opening phrases of the spiritual 'Swing Low Sweet Chariot'. They enjoyed learning the pentatonic melody and it helped to reinforce their knowledge of different scale patterns. Pupils throughout the school have good attitudes toward the subject. They handle the instruments carefully and work well together. They are always well behaved.
142. Teaching and learning in Years 1 to 6 is satisfactory overall, and one very good lesson was seen. Teachers manage the pupils well and lessons are well organised. Teaching is effective when a clear link is made between listening and performing tasks. This was evident in a lesson in Year 4, when pupils learnt about the five-note pentatonic scale. They heard some Japanese music, which used the scale, and then composed their own short pentatonic melody. As a result, pupils made very good progress in developing their understanding of the sound and use of the scale. Very occasionally, however, insufficient challenge is provided for more musically able pupils in lessons.
143. The co-ordinator provides good leadership. She regularly monitors the provision and advises colleagues. Resources are good and include a range of tuned and untuned percussion instruments, as well as CDs and books about music and musicians. Assessment procedures and schemes of work are satisfactory. They are used well and provide effective support for the less musically confident teacher. The subject makes a good contribution to pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. There is good provision for extra-curricular activities. There is a recorder group and a performing arts club, and the 'Arts Week' provides additional opportunities for pupils to develop their creative skills in music, dance and drama. Pupils have been involved in Christmas concerts and in a performance of 'The King of the Beasts'. These activities help to foster pupils' interest and enhance their musical skills.

## **PHYSICAL EDUCATION**

144. There has been a good improvement in physical education since the last inspection. The standards attained by pupils have improved as a direct result of better teaching and the many planned opportunities for pupils to improve their skills in lessons and at school clubs. Standards in Year 6 are on course to be above those expected nationally by the end of the school year, particularly in games and swimming, where many pupils considerably exceed the expected standards. Pupils in Year 2 are on course to attain standards expected for their age in dance, gymnastics and games.
145. Pupils in Year 2 understand the need for a correct warm-up at the start of each lesson. They know that exercise is beneficial to their health and that it raises the heart rate and rate of breathing. In gymnastics they use space sensibly to avoid collisions and are able to balance with a moment of stillness, before travelling on the apparatus to a new position and balancing again. By the end of Year 6, the vast majority of pupils are able to swim at least 25 metres and many are extremely competent swimmers. Regular swimming lessons for pupils from Year 4 to Year 6 and a carefully graded set of swimming challenges set by the school motivates the pupils to reach high standards. Attainment in games is also good as pupils have many opportunities to develop and improve their skills in lessons as well as in an excellent range of clubs and teams organised and run by teachers, teaching assistants, parents and outside agencies' such as professional football clubs. The school is to be praised for its superb provision of clubs and competitive sport. Only swimming, gymnastics and games lessons were observed during the inspection but from looking at teachers' planning it is clear that all aspects are successfully taught over time. Indeed, by the end of Year 6, pupils have been successfully taught all aspects of the curriculum including athletics and outdoor activities. Pupils, including those with special educational needs and those with English as an additional language, make the same good progress as their classmates as they move through the school and many achieve high standards in their work.
146. The overall quality of teaching is good. It is always at least satisfactory, with nearly half the teaching being very good. Teachers manage their pupils very well, resulting in time being used efficiently to maximise the progress in learning new skills. Lessons generally move along at a brisk pace, with all pupils kept active and fully involved. Pupils are taught to move freely around the apparatus, resulting in time being used most effectively to help them develop their skills. The good subject knowledge of many teachers enables them to set suitable tasks and make pertinent teaching points to help pupils improve their levels of performance. This was clearly seen in a very good games lesson in Year 3 on football in which the teacher stressed the importance of control rather than speed to help the pupils learn more effectively. Good use is made of demonstrations by individuals and groups of pupils to share ideas and show good practice. Teachers fully address all health and safety aspects.
147. The good resources, two halls and good outside facilities are used well to ensure that pupils have many opportunities to learn and develop their skills. Swimming takes place at the local leisure centre and is taught by the class teachers, with invaluable support from teaching assistants and volunteer parents. The annual sports days are popular with both pupils and their parents and give pupils an opportunity to demonstrate some of the skills they learn in lessons. An annual school journey to Wales for Year 6 pupils further extends their opportunities for outdoor activities.

## **RELIGIOUS EDUCATION**

148. There has been satisfactory improvement since the last inspection, reflected in overall better teaching and better assessment of pupils' work and progress.
149. From current inspection, pupils in Years 2 and 6 are on course to attain standards broadly in line with the expectations of the Kent Agreed Syllabus for religious education, with evidence of some good work being done by former pupils in Year 6. Progress is good throughout the school and pupils achieve well.
150. In Year 1, pupils are currently learning about Christian baptism. They explore what it means to become a part of something and be welcomed. They learn about some religious symbols such as the cross, water, white clothing and the feelings of sharing and giving as they take part in a

pretend christening. They relate it to their own experiences, as some of them remember their own christening or that of their baby brother, sister or cousin. Pupils learn that not all people believe in the same religions and that we are all different, 'but we're all friends'. In Year 2, pupils are developing these ideas. They looked at photographs of a Hindu naming ceremony they had simulated the previous week, with the help of a Hindu parent. They demonstrated good knowledge and understanding of what happens in the ceremony and talked about Hindu symbols and words, such as 'aum', 'mandir' and 'prasadam'. The colourful costumes they wore and the Hindu dancing they took part in have clearly remained in their minds. They make simple comparisons between the Hindu naming ceremony and Christian christening and record these in pictures or sentences. Progress is good and pupils achieve well.

151. Pupils continue to explore different ideas and beliefs throughout Years 3 to 6. The importance of respecting other people's beliefs and views was emphasised and discussed by pupils in Year 4. A range of Hindu religious artefacts was used to help pupils understand the use and the meaning of various items on a 'puja tray'. Pupils increasingly understand that religion plays a significant role in the lives of many people. For example, pupils recognised that when Hindus leave small offerings such as sweets on the shrine it is 'because their god is important to them and special so they want to give them something good'. In Year 6, pupils are currently exploring how persecution shows itself in many ways. Through effective role-play and sensitive discussion, they learn about how people feel about and respond to such persecution. One girl, for instance, was able to relate to those being discriminated against: 'I felt good because I was being offered lots of good food and things but I felt sorry for those who weren't'. A boy responded, 'Yes, it wasn't fair; we got everything and you were being mean to the others just because they had different coloured eyes'. Pupils are making important discoveries about prejudice and they recognise the links with their learning in history and literacy lessons, about World War II and Anne Frank. They have a sound basic understanding of such things as racism and are developing their own sense of right and wrong. All pupils make good progress and achieve well.
152. The overall quality of teaching is good. In half the lessons observed, it was very good. Learning is good because teachers plan well, with clear learning objectives, which set a clear focus for what is to be learned. Teachers have very good relationships with pupils and manage and motivate them well so that they are involved in and enjoy their learning. Occasionally, in a minority of lessons, noise levels are allowed to rise and begin to distract pupils. Satisfactory assessment is done through evaluation of how the teaching and learning points have been achieved in lessons. Information is recorded and passed on to the pupils' next teacher and to the subject co-ordinator.
153. Because of the good quality of the teaching, pupils' attitudes are good throughout the school. Teachers raise pupils' self-esteem by displaying well-presented pieces of written work and examples of drawings; for example, when work about Rangoli patterns was shown. Pupils are responsive, take part with interest and work well, independently and in groups. Behaviour is never less than satisfactory and is usually good or very good.
154. Religious education is well managed by a knowledgeable co-ordinator. Standards are monitored through checking the teachers' planning and sampling the pupils' work. As yet there has been no monitoring of lessons but this is to be done as part of the school's rolling programme of lesson observations. An appropriate action plan has been drawn up and one of the aims is to raise the profile of the subject. Resources, including a range of artefacts from different religions, are good and are used well. Effective use is also made of visits and visitors to the school to enrich the curriculum. Religious education makes a very good contribution to pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development.