

INSPECTION REPORT

FURLEY PARK PRIMARY SCHOOL

Ashford

LEA area: Kent

Unique reference number: 132235

Headteacher: Mr Kevin Bailey

Reporting inspector: John Ayerst
3832

Dates of inspection: 9th – 12th December 2002

Inspection number: 248959

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

School category: Community

Age range of pupils: 4 - 11 years

Gender of pupils: Mixed

School address: Reed Crescent
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Ashford
Kent

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Appropriate authority: Governing body

Name of chair of governors: Mr L Gallagher

Date of previous inspection: No previous inspection

INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Team members			Subject responsibilities	Aspect responsibilities
3832	John Ayerst	Registered inspector	Art and design Music	What sort of school is it? The school's results and pupils achievements. How well are pupils taught? How well is the school led and managed? What should the school do to improve further?
1311	Barry Wood	Lay inspector	Educational inclusion	Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development. How well does the school care for its pupils? How well does the school work in partnership with parents?
23300	Lily Evans	Team inspector	English Geography History Physical education	How good are the curricular and other opportunities offered to pupils?
10428	Tom Simpson	Team inspector	Science Religious education Modern languages Special educational needs English as an additional language	
1939	Michael Benson	Team inspector	Children in the Foundation Stage Mathematics Information and communication technology Design and technology	

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PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Furley Park Primary School is a new school. It opened two years ago into new buildings, which have since been extended to double the accommodation. The school is growing rapidly in numbers; each year has seen an approximate increase of 100 per cent in pupils and the school is now of average size with some 250 boys and girls of 4–11 years of age. Since September one half of the teaching staff has joined the school. The school is situated in a new, large development of private housing to the south of Ashford and most, but not all, of the pupils come from this newly established community. It is anticipated that the school will continue to grow, as more houses are built to almost double the present size.

The number of pupils eligible for free school meals (1.5%) is well below the national average as is the number who come from minority ethnic families. The proportion of pupils who speak English as an additional language is low (2.5%). The percentage of pupils identified as having special educational needs (19%) is below average, but the number of those with a Statement of Special Educational Needs (2.5%) is above average. It should be noted, however, that these proportions can change quickly. Several pupils have severe learning difficulties, and some have emotional or behavioural difficulties. A minority need support with speech and communication problems. A few pupils are diagnosed as being on the autistic spectrum, including Asperger's syndrome. Taken together, pupils' attainment on entry to the reception class is above average, but entry to older classes is mixed, with a higher proportion of pupils with special educational needs.

HOW GOOD THE SCHOOL IS

The school is effective. The headteacher and staff have worked very hard to establish the school and manage the changing demands of new buildings, new staff and new pupils. A very good ethos has been established and pupils come to school with very positive attitudes to learning. New teachers have settled in well and teaching is good. Standards are now broadly average and achievement is good. The time is now appropriate for an increased focus on raising the standards of teaching further and improving achievement across the school. The school makes good provision for its pupils across a wide range of attainment and is effective in promoting an inclusive society for all its pupils. Overall, the school provides satisfactory value for money.

What the school does well

- The quality of teaching and learning is good and pupils achieve well in most subjects.
- Pupils' attitudes to learning and relationships throughout the school are very good.
- Pastoral care is good and the many new pupils are quickly integrated into the school.
- The school has formed very good links with its parents and the community.
- The provisions made for pupils with special educational needs and for those for whom English is an additional language are good and they make good progress.

What could be improved

- Not all teaching matches the quality of the good teaching.
- Assessment information could be used more effectively for planning and for determining the provision for pupils on late entry.
- Standards in writing could be further improved.

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 not been inspected previously.

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
	n/a	2001	2002	2002
English	n/a	A*	C	C
Mathematics	n/a	A	C	D
Science	n/a	B	C	D

Key

well above average A

above average B

average C

below average D

well below average E

The national test results for 2002 for Year 6 pupils show that standards were average in English, mathematics and science. In comparison with schools with a similar economic background, standards were average in English and below average in mathematics and science. Similarly the proportions reaching higher levels were average in English and below average in mathematics and science. The tests for Year 2 show standards that are well below average in the three elements of reading, writing and mathematics. In comparison with similar schools they are in the bottom five per cent nationally. Teachers' assessments for science also showed below average attainment.

The 2002 results for both Years 2 and 6 show a considerable drop from 2001. In that year, the standards in Year 2 were above average for reading and mathematics, and average for writing. At Year 6 standards in English were very high and in the top five per cent nationally. In mathematics they were well above average and in science, above average. The difference in results reflects the significant changes of school population during last year. Over the short life of the school, the Year 6 class, for example, increased by 100 per cent and a good proportion of those joining had identified special educational needs. The records show that the pupils who had been at the school for the two years since its opening had, by the end of last year, achieved satisfactorily at the ends of both Years 2 and 6. The considerable changes in teaching and pupil personnel account for standards that are different again in the present school term. Pupils' current work shows that at the ends of both Years 2 and 6, standards are average in all subjects, except in art and physical education in Year 6 where standards are above average.

On entry to the reception class pupils' attainments are above average and they make sound progress, so that they are on course to exceed all their Early Learning Goals by the time they enter Year 1. From that point on, however, the high number of pupils joining the school, which includes a significant proportion with special educational needs, makes it difficult to judge pupils' achievement over periods of time. In most lessons, however, pupils' learn well and there are signs that good teaching is leading to good progress. There are indications of good achievement in all subjects other than geography, history, music and religious education, where achievement is satisfactory. The school has recognised that standards in writing are lower than in reading and in speaking and listening, and has introduced strategies to improve writing. There is no discernible, consistent difference between the attainment of boys and girls.

Gifted and talented pupils generally achieve satisfactorily and the school is working hard to improve the provision in this area. Literacy and numeracy skills are developed satisfactorily across the curriculum. Pupils with English as an additional language and those with special educational needs generally make good progress. The school has agreed appropriate targets; it achieved them last year and is well on course to meet them next year.

PUPILS' ATTITUDES AND VALUES

Aspect	Comment
Attitudes to the school	Very good. Pupils want to come to school and they show pride in their school.
Behaviour, in and out of classrooms	Good. Lessons proceed without interruption and pupils develop an increasing awareness of self-discipline.
Personal development and relationships	Pupils form very good relationships within a short time of joining the school. Good personal development equips them well for the next stage of education.
Attendance	Satisfactory.

The very good relationships between all people in the school and good behaviour have a significant impact on the good quality of pupils' learning and their achievement. The school works in a good climate of harmony in which all are included. Parents appreciate the values and attitudes promoted by the school.

TEACHING AND LEARNING

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

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

The quality of teaching, and of pupils' learning, is satisfactory in the reception class and good in Years 1 to 6. Good teaching and learning occur in English, mathematics and science, and in subjects across the curriculum for pupils in all years, but very good teaching is seen more frequently in Years 1 and 2. Literacy and numeracy skills are taught appropriately throughout the curriculum and the use of information and communication technology is beginning to develop in other subjects.

In good and very good lessons, teachers use assessments from previous lessons to plan well and to provide specific work for the different levels of attainment within each class, so that learning is well focused and purposeful for both higher and lower attainers. Teaching that is satisfactory is generally planned well, but the pace and challenge in these lessons is less apparent. In all lessons, the relationships between adults in the classroom and pupils, and between pupils, are very good. Pupils with special educational needs and those for whom English is an additional language receive similar teaching to their peers and, overall, make good progress.

OTHER ASPECTS OF THE SCHOOL

Aspect	Comment
The quality and range of the curriculum	The curriculum is satisfactory overall and is enhanced by French and German lessons for older pupils.
Provision for pupils with special educational needs	Good. The pupils are well supported by class teachers and learning assistants. Most make good progress.
Provision for pupils with English as an additional language	Good. The support provided, both in individual sessions and in class, is of good quality and the pupils make good, sometimes very good, progress in learning English.
Provision for pupils' personal, including spiritual,	There is good provision for spiritual, moral and cultural development. Spiritual awareness is planned as an element within most lessons. The

moral, social and cultural development	provision for social development is very good and promotes the very good relationships to be seen throughout the school.
How well the school cares for its pupils	The school provides good pastoral care for its pupils. Assessment is satisfactory, but could be used better for planning both at classroom and at strategic levels, particularly for planning the provision for older arrivals.

All statutory requirements concerning the curriculum are met. The school makes very good provision for extra-curricular activities. There is a very good range of after-school clubs and a rich programme of sporting activities. The partnership with parents is good. Parents particularly value the family values of the school and they make a good contribution to their children's education. Links with the community make a good contribution to pupils' learning.

HOW WELL THE SCHOOL IS LED AND MANAGED

Aspect	Comment
Leadership and management by the headteacher and other key staff	The headteacher provides good leadership with a clear direction for the school. Many teachers are new to the school and their management roles have yet to be fully established, so that management overall is satisfactory.
How well the governors fulfil their responsibilities	Governors fulfil their roles well and play an important part in taking the school forward.
The school's evaluation of its performance	Satisfactory. The school monitors teaching conscientiously, but assessment information could be better used for evaluating the school's performance.
The strategic use of resources	Good. This has been a major part of the management's work as the school has been established.

The headteacher has been very successful in establishing the new school and in dealing with the large influx of pupils and a major building programme. It is to his credit that Furley Park is already a flourishing and happy community. Now more attention can be given to raising the quality of provision and the standards achieved. The school has a good number of staff to teach its curriculum, and they work very well together as a team. Accommodation is now very good and learning resources are adequate. The school applies the principles of best value well. It has good potential to improve further.

PARENTS' AND CARERS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

What pleases parents most	What parents would like to see improved
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Most parents believe that their children like school and make good progress. They consider that teaching and behaviour are good and expectations of pupils are high. Parents consider that the school is very successful in promoting good attitudes and they recognise the very good relationships. Pupils are encouraged to be self-confident. The school is led well, is very approachable and promotes a good sense of partnership. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Some parents would like to see a more interesting range of activities outside the classroom. Some would like to be better informed about the progress that their children are making. Some parents have concerns about aspects of homework.

The inspectors agree with the positive comments made by parents. Concerns about homework were almost equally divided between those who wanted less and those who wished for more. The inspectors judge that the quantity of homework is about right and that it is of satisfactory quality. The inspectors

also consider that the school provides a very good range of extra-curricular activities. Reports to parents are satisfactory, but could give more detailed information about recent achievements and future targets.

PART B: COMMENTARY

HOW HIGH ARE STANDARDS?

The school's results and pupils' achievements

1. In the last two years the school's test results at the end of Year 6 have moved from very high in English, high in mathematics and above average in science in 2001, to average in all three subjects last year, and below average in comparison with similar schools. The tests for the end of Year 2 show a similar fall. Standards that were above average in reading and mathematics, and average in writing in 2001, fell to standards that are well below average in all three elements in 2002. In this latest year, in comparison with similar schools the results are in the bottom five per cent nationally.
2. The changes in results reflect the significant changes of school population over the past two years. During their time at the school, the Year 6 class, for example, doubled in size and a good proportion of those joining had identified special educational needs. A number of pupils joined just a few weeks before the tests were taken. It is clear, however, that pupils who had been at the school for the two years since its opening had, by the end of last year, achieved satisfactorily at the ends of both Years 2 and 6.
3. It is very difficult to judge pupils' attainments over periods of time at present, because of the very high numbers of pupils joining the school at all levels and the absence of comparable assessment data at the time of joining. However, in most lessons pupils' learn well and there are indications of good progress now being made. Pupils' present work shows that at the ends of both Years 2 and 6, standards are average in all subjects, except art and physical education in Year 6 where standards are above average. On limited evidence there are indications of good achievement in most subjects by the end of Year 6, with the exception of geography, history, music and religious education, where achievement is satisfactory.
4. Levels of attainment on entry to the reception class are generally above average and pupils' achievement is satisfactory during their time in the reception class in all areas of learning. In response to sound teaching they enter Year 1 with almost all having exceeded the Early Learning Goals for pupils of that age. From that point on, however, the high number of pupils joining the school, which include a significant number with special educational needs, clouds the measurement of achievement.
5. From Years 1 to 6, in response to good teaching, pupils' learning in most subjects is good and, if the numbers of pupils in the school remained reasonably constant, there is evidence to suggest that this would lead to an improvement in standards over time.
6. Across the curriculum in general, pupils of most levels of attainment, make satisfactory progress in the reception class and good progress in Years 1 to 6. This is because most teachers plan well for the different groups in their class. Provision for gifted and talented pupils is still developing, but even so they make satisfactory progress. Pupils with English as an additional language are helped to gain access to the curriculum by good provision that helps them to acquire early language skills quickly. Once those skills are acquired they make good progress.
7. Pupils with special educational needs are well supported in lessons by class teachers and skilled support staff. Most make good progress in relation to the targets in their individual education plans. Pupils with a Statement of Special Educational Needs are particularly well supported and their progress in accessing the curriculum is particularly good.
8. Literacy and numeracy skills are developed satisfactorily across the curriculum. The school's strategies for developing literacy and numeracy are sound in English and mathematics lessons as well as in other subjects.

Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development

9. From the outset the headteacher gave a high priority to the establishment of good attitudes and behaviour of all pupils and high quality relationships across the school. The strategy has been successful as the pupils' very good attitudes and relationships, and their good behaviour, are distinctive features that promote good learning. Parents, including many new to the school this term, are very appreciative of the school's stance on behaviour issues, and the evolving maturity of their children.
10. Children in the reception class receive a good foundation that establishes well the ethos of the school. They settle quickly into their surroundings, try hard at their work and are interested in the day's activities. Throughout the school pupils are good listeners who are engaged by many aspects of their learning. They behave well both inside and outside the classroom and form very good friendships with each other and with staff. As pupils progress through the school, they increase in confidence, and take increasing responsibility for their learning.
11. The behaviour of the pupils is good at all levels and it improves as pupils mature. One in four lessons have very good behaviour. Staff do not need to exert an obvious control, as pupils do not take advantage, and are easily corrected. Pupils with recognised behaviour difficulties are managed well and seldom have an adverse impact on the lesson. Pupils are relaxed towards the school's expectations for self-discipline and appear pleased to be part of an ordered community. The school deals with the very rare instances of bullying very quickly and effectively. It has not needed to use exclusions as part of its behaviour strategies since opening.
12. The very good relationships, seen at all levels, are a characteristic of the school. Teachers and staff are very effective role models in whom pupils have real trust. All parts of the school family are included, with strong mutual respect and in harmonious relationships, which help to promote an effective teaching and learning environment. Pupils are courteous, polite and very welcoming to visitors.
13. Pupils' personal development is good and is supported well by the good provision for raising pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural awareness. This is a caring and inclusive society where pupils look after each other. All pupils display a well-developed sense of moral and social awareness and they gain a sense of independence as they move through the school. The pupils maintain the site well and there is no litter, graffiti or vandalism. Pupils participate enthusiastically in the very good range of extra-curricular activities and are beginning to have some success in inter-school competitions.
14. Levels of attendance are satisfactory. Many pupils have good attendance, but too many pupils are absent because family holidays are taken during term time. A few pupils find it difficult to arrive at school on time, but lessons are not affected by any lack of punctuality. There is no truancy.

HOW WELL ARE PUPILS TAUGHT?

15. The quality of teaching is good, as is the quality of learning. In over one half of the lessons seen during the inspection, the teaching and learning were good or better and the remainder were satisfactory. Teaching was very good in one lesson in 12 of the lessons seen. There was no unsatisfactory teaching.
16. Good teaching and learning occurs in subjects across the curriculum for pupils in all years, but mostly satisfactory teaching is to be seen in the Foundation Stage and in geography, history, music and religious education teaching is satisfactory overall. Very good teaching is seen more often in Years 1 and 2. A strong characteristic of the good and very good teaching is the good quality of planning that uses teachers' assessments from previous lessons to provide specific work for the different levels of attainment within each class, so that learning is well focused and purposeful.

17. In most subjects teachers have a good knowledge and understanding of the subject matter and of pupils' learning. In a very good science lesson for Year 1 pupils, exploring the way that sound travels, the teachers' exposition stimulated a high level of interest and enquiry as she used a wide range of sound sources to illustrate the process and asked challenging and searching questions. Higher and average attainers were suitably challenged and lower attainers both challenged and supported, so that all pupils worked hard and made very good gains in their acquisition of knowledge and understanding.
18. Expectations for good standards of work and behaviour are evident in most lessons and pupils respond with good focus and they concentrate well for extended periods. Most lessons move at a good pace and teachers use a good range of appropriate methods for the work in hand. The tasks chosen are interesting and challenging, and pupils clearly enjoy learning.
19. Teaching that is satisfactory is generally planned well, but the pace and challenge in these lessons is less apparent. Consequently, while the pupils make satisfactory progress, the high standards achieved in the good lessons are not evident. In all lessons, however, the relationships between adults in the classroom and pupils, and between pupils, are very good. This makes a significant contribution to the good progress made in most lessons. The quality of the homework, in terms of extending the pupils' learning and improving their progress, is mostly sound, as is the quality of marking.
20. The teaching of the literacy and numeracy hours is sound. Pupils' work indicates that their learning in both literacy and numeracy is supported appropriately across the curriculum in other subjects. There are good examples in science and mathematics. The development of the new computer suite has raised the profile of information and communication technology in the school and teachers are gaining in confidence and starting to use the resources effectively. Most of the teachers and support staff have developed their personal skills well and pupils work to good purpose in the suite, at tasks that range across the curriculum.
21. Pupils with special educational needs, including those with a Statement of Special Educational Needs, are effectively supported in lessons by teachers and well-trained support staff. They are regularly provided with individual or group work that meets their specific needs. From time to time they are partially withdrawn for intensive and relevant extra tuition. The special educational needs support staff provide particularly high quality support for those pupils who have a Statement of Special Educational Needs and enable them to gain ready access to the National Curriculum.
22. The needs of the few pupils for whom English is an additional language are met well by teachers. The teaching consists of in-class support as well as individual work outside the class with a visiting specialist to focus on particular language skills. The quality of this work is good.

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

23. The school provides a curriculum that meets all the statutory requirements of the National Curriculum and the provision for religious education, and has satisfactory breadth and balance. The curriculum is enhanced by a very good range of after-school clubs and by the inclusion of French and German for older pupils. The provision for children in the Foundation Stage is satisfactory and all the Early Learning Goals for children of that age are covered. For pupils in Years 1 to 6, all subjects have a suitable allocation of time, including German in Year 5 and French in Year 6. Literacy and numeracy strategies are satisfactorily implemented.
24. The schemes of work for the different subjects are satisfactory and provide good frameworks for teachers to plan their work. Subjects have good breadth and quality of content, but the process of tracking the progression of skills across the curriculum has yet to be completed.
25. The long-term planning for science, religious education, art, and music is satisfactory and in other subjects the planning is good. In most subjects medium-term planning is evolving. In English and science, the balance of the curriculum across strands of learning is uneven. For example, in English, the school, through its monitoring, has recognised that the range of writing has been

insufficiently broad and this is now an area of development. The provision for physical education is good in all aspects. Day-to-day planning is good in most subjects and a common format has been established across the school, ensuring that all areas are taken into consideration. All lesson plans include consideration of pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. In science, however, the planning does not sufficiently identify the needs of the different pupils in the class.

26. Planning for pupils with special educational needs, including those with a Statement of Special Educational Needs, is effective. There is an appropriate policy in place that satisfies the requirements of the most recent Code of Practice. Relevant individual education plans are drawn up and reviewed at regular intervals, and class teachers' planning has due regard for these pupils' needs. The individual education plans currently in use, however, are unwieldy. The special educational needs co-ordinator is appropriately looking at alternatives. Overall provision for the pupils, however, is good, because of the good quality of support provided by teachers and classroom assistants.
27. The school has recently introduced long-term planning for personal, social, health and citizenship education from a commercially available scheme of work. This includes sex education and the raising of awareness of the dangers of misuse of drugs. Medium and short-term planning in this area is developing as teachers plan each half term of work. At present the provision is satisfactory.
28. A very good range of extra-curricular activities enhances the curriculum provision. The headteacher and staff give freely of their time and effort and clubs are so popular that they are oversubscribed and a number of them have waiting lists. A very good variety of sports activities are available and pupils compete in football, netball, cricket, rounders and athletics. Other activities include music, drama, art, board-games and homework clubs.
29. Pupils in Year 5 have weekly lessons in German, while those in Year 6 have lessons in French. The aim of these sessions is to give the pupils a taste of learning modern European languages and provide them with a basic vocabulary. The approach is largely oral and supported by appropriate books and videotapes. The content of lessons revolves around relevant themes such as 'myself', 'my town', 'my family' and 'things I like'. The pupils also learn songs in French and German. They enjoy these lessons. They are keen to learn and to share their developing, but elementary, knowledge of the languages. The lessons successfully promote pupils' interest in modern European languages, and contribute well to the school's overall curricular provision.
30. There are good links with the local community. In a recent and successful Book Week, the school appealed for help with raising multicultural awareness. They received warm response from local people who loaned the school artefacts and objects from countries around the world. A local author and a local Muslim came to talk to the children. The school, which is adjacent to a very large building site, has involved itself with the builders who allow pupils to visit the site to see the work going on. Older pupils also recently participated in a sponsored competition for the use of information and communication technology. In a model construction competition pupils at the school were runners-up in designing, building and adapting a vehicle.
31. Good links exist with nursery, secondary and special schools. Pupils from the local special school have visited and taken part in lessons at Furley Park to help to prepare for integration into local secondary schools. Pupils from Furley Park visit the local secondary schools and have been involved in drama and language activities both at Furley Park and at a neighbouring secondary school.
32. The school provides equality of access and opportunity for all pupils across the curriculum. The school is well regarded by all parents for its success in quickly integrating pupils when they arrive from other schools. There is no significant difference in the performance of boys and girls, and they are equally challenged to take part in all school activities. Teacher's planning identifies separate additional work for higher attaining pupils, and the needs of these pupils are being met, so that they make satisfactory progress, but the school is at present seeking to improve the provision for its higher attaining pupils. The school has identified some pupils with exceptional abilities in specific areas of the curriculum or in activities. The school is working to meet their needs as far as

possible and is seeking to improve this provision further. Pupils with special educational needs and those for whom English is an additional language, make good progress during their time in the school, and are fully included in the classroom and school life.

33. The provision for pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural education is good. Many lessons make an important contribution to pupils' spiritual development. In assemblies pupils are also encouraged to reflect on non-material aspects of life and to develop spiritual awareness. The assemblies include an act of collective worship and often raise moral or social issues for pupils to consider.
34. The provision for moral education is good and for social development the provision is very good. The programme for personal, social and health education makes an important contribution to pupils' personal development. All adults in the school work to develop pupils' awareness of right and wrong and to set a moral framework. Class teachers are encouraged to develop their own strategies for managing and promoting good behaviour. Teachers and other staff are good role models in highlighting the importance of good relationships in an inclusive, secure and well-ordered community. Pupils' contributions to lessons are valued and opportunities are taken to build self-esteem.
35. Pupils are given good opportunities to develop a sense of personal responsibility and initiative in a variety of ways. Their views are sought and considered carefully. The school does not yet have school council, but is working towards establishing one. Pupils' achievements are regularly celebrated. The headteacher keeps a record of positive achievement through his 'Golden Screen' system, where the headteacher records pupils' achievements in all areas on his computer, and all teachers keep their own records. At all ages pupils are asked to take on areas of responsibility, such as taking the register to the office or preparing the recorded music for assembly. Through positive reinforcement of good behaviour, the school focuses on developing a sense of worth in all its pupils. This is a very effective and important factor in fostering pupils' enthusiasm for the school. Pupils quickly learn good social skills, and this is shown in their confidence in school and in the courtesy they show to each other.
36. Provision for cultural development is good. Pupils learn about, and are encouraged to celebrate, many cultures, particularly those represented among the pupils and staff of the school. The school works hard and effectively to prepare pupils for life in multicultural Britain. There is a focus on other cultures in religious education, history, geography and English. In addition, French and German are included in the curriculum for older pupils. Recently the school was involved in an extended project on Islam, led by a learning support assistant who is of that faith. The project gave pupils a first-hand insight into another culture. The school works very well to use the local resources and arranges visits to places of historic and cultural interest, such as Canterbury Cathedral. Regular visits from artists, such as those who come to lead poetry and drama workshops, and authors take place to work with pupils and to extend their cultural experiences.

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL CARE FOR ITS PUPILS?

37. In the two years since the school opened, the support, guidance and welfare agenda has been developed to an overall good level, except child protection procedures, which are satisfactory. The pastoral care of pupils and their welfare is a major concern for all staff. The focus on the welfare of pupils contributes positively to the quick integration and settlement of all pupils when they arrive at the school, which in turn impacts on their progress and development.
38. The pupils come from over 100 previous schools and, although one in three pupils are new to the school this term, the headteacher and staff work to gain a thorough knowledge of each pupil's background. This attention to detail helps pupils to settle and become quickly integrated into the school's activities.
39. Overall, the monitoring of pupils' personal development is satisfactory throughout their time in the school. There is a formal paperwork system in the reception class, where monitoring is good. Pupil's positive achievements are recognised by their class teachers, in assemblies and through

the headteacher's 'Golden Screen Awards'. The system has the advantage that it can produce a computerised summary for the pupil's whole school career. The recording of pupils' personal development is further supported by staff's informal personal observations and discussions at staff meetings, which allow teachers to track progress over a long period and give knowledgeable reports to parents. The school's knowledge of each pupil allows it to involve professional agencies, as required, for pupils with special educational needs, or pupils for whom English is an additional language. Parents who are involved feel well consulted about the development of individual education plans and targets.

40. The school has a wide range of relevant and well-defined support, guidance and welfare policies, which guide and underpin its actions. In general, policies are implemented consistently across the school and with a good understanding by all staff. The staff handbook gives good direction to staff for finding the sources of information. The school is successful in establishing relationships with outside agencies, to support the pupils on a routine basis, or if there are specific problems.
41. Child protection procedures are satisfactory. The school is vigilant and communicates the importance of this aspect to parents. The headteacher has received recent training, but not all staff have yet received appropriate training since joining the school. There is good support from the outside agencies, but the school does not display the 'Childline' number.
42. Procedures for monitoring and promoting behaviour are good. Staff are strong role models who have high expectations for good behaviour and respect for the individual pupil as their core values in the classroom. Each class has worked out its own rules and expectations, and behaviour posters and guidelines are displayed throughout the school, with the emphasis on pupils' developing self-discipline. Teachers' very good relationships foster strong mutual respect, and adults are well practised in raising pupils' self-esteem through well-directed praise and support, so that pupils are encouraged to speak honestly and share their problems. Pupils see sanctions as fair, and parents are involved appropriately. Initially the school tracked behaviour incidents, but has found a declining need. Staff monitor pupils appropriately, and new-starters in particular, so that they have a thorough knowledge of any short-term problems between pupils. They have been very effective in detecting and eliminating any oppressive behaviour by discreet and sensitive interventions, or by the involvement of parents when necessary.
43. Procedures for monitoring and improving attendance are good and attendance has been satisfactory since opening. Parents have a thorough knowledge of their responsibilities for attendance and punctuality, and most telephone the school as required. The school effectively analyses trends in attendance and chases parents for explanations for absence if not forthcoming. Despite the school's best efforts, however, the incidence of parents taking holidays within the term is high.
44. Health and safety procedures are good. During the major building programmes of the last two years, the school took extra care to provide a safe environment for all pupils and staff. Consequently, the minor accident rate is below average. Staff are very vigilant of the safety implications and all lesson planning has an awareness of health and safety. There are sufficient first-aiders on the staff, and first-aid facilities are good.
45. Overall, the school's procedures for assessing pupils' attainment and progress are satisfactory. The school has introduced a wide range of strategies to assess and monitor pupils' standards and achievement. These include assessments when children first enter the reception class, the use of non-statutory national tests in literacy and numeracy in Years 3, 4, and 5, and end of topic assessments in other subjects. Samples of pupils' written work are routinely collected to compare with national standards. Targets in relation to National Curriculum test levels are set in English and mathematics throughout the school, but the process is more established in Years 1 and 2, and for pupils in Year 6.
46. These developing strategies provide a sound basis for the school to move forward, but they have not yet impacted fully on standards or provision, largely because there has not yet been time to implement a whole-school approach. For example, although there are instances of good practice

in several classes, these are not seen consistently throughout the school; some subjects are assessed in some classes and not in others. There are also not enough rigorous, diagnostic strategies in place for assessing the attainment of pupils who enter the school after the Foundation Stage, so that teachers can quickly identify individual strengths and weaknesses, and what needs to be done for them to take them forward.

47. While some analysis of assessment data has taken place, including that provided by the National Curriculum tests taken by pupils at the end of Years 2 and 6, this practice is still under development. Although it does support some grouping of pupils, it does not always identify common areas of weakness within subjects, to improve planning and the allocation of resources. In many lessons across the curriculum, work set is well matched to the needs and aspirations of pupils with different levels of attainment in the class. However, this is largely due to the skills of individual teachers and because they know their pupils well, rather than the outcome of a whole-school assessment strategy. In other lessons, including some in science, assessment data is not used enough to match tasks to different levels of attainment and, as a result, pupils across the ability range do not always learn as effectively as they could.
48. Arrangements for the assessment of pupils on entry to the reception class are satisfactory, but better analysis of assessment information at the Foundation Stage could lead to a curriculum that is more closely matched to the individual needs of the pupils. Assessment of pupils with special educational needs, especially those with a Statement of Special Educational Needs, is careful and informs their individual education plans well. The special educational needs co-ordinator appropriately plans to develop this area of the provision further by; for example, purchasing a new commercial assessment package.
49. Targets for older pupils are not always challenging enough to advance their skills and knowledge. Some of the targets set for younger pupils, although matched to National Curriculum aspirations, could be better couched in language to which the pupils could relate and assimilated into their own strategies for personal improvement. In some subjects, such as art and design and music, end-of-topic assessments do not have enough regard for the development of pupils' skills in the subject.

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL WORK IN PARTNERSHIP WITH PARENTS?

50. Parents speak very highly about the openness and warmth of the headteacher and they consider that he, and his staff, listen carefully to parents and react positively to their suggestions. Parents tell us that the school has played a very important part in helping to establish this new community; they value the school as a community asset and consider that they have very good links with the school. The good partnerships that have been formed enable parents to make a good contribution to their children's' learning at school and home.
51. Parents have a high level of interest in their children's education. Over one in three parents returned the parents' questionnaire, and the pre-inspection meeting for parents was well attended. When these views, plus the views of some parents at the school gate, are considered, they indicate a very good level of satisfaction with the school. They are universally approving of the approachability, values and attitudes of the school, and the standards achieved. Most parents believe that their children like school and make good progress, and that teaching and behaviour are good. There are no areas of significant dissatisfaction, but some parents expressed concerns about the range of activities offered outside the classroom, the information provided about their children's progress and the amount of homework set.
52. After a detailed inspection, it is judged that parents are not justified in their criticism of activities outside the classroom, as the range of extra-curricular activities is very good. However, the pupils' enthusiasm for clubs and activities has produced an intense competition for places, and clubs for pupils in Years 1 and 2 are inevitably limited. Both the information on progress and the information on homework are considered satisfactory, although there are areas for improvement that are identified below.

53. The effectiveness of the school's links with parents is satisfactory. Informal communications at either end of the school day are strong. The headteacher has a high profile in welcoming parents at the start of the day, and staff make a caring handover of pupils at the end of the day. Parents are welcomed into the school, and teachers and parents have a strong mutual trust, which gives pupils confidence and security.
54. The impact of parents in the school is good. Some parents come to work with pupils within the school, and they provide support on outside visits. Parent governors are committed and are enthusiastic about the future well-being of the school, and form a valuable link between parents and the governing body. The Friends of Furley Park School Association has been quickly established and organised, and involves many parents in entertaining events and fund-raising.
55. Overall, the quality of information for parents is satisfactory. Both the temporary prospectus and the annual governors' report to parents are satisfactory documents in fulfilling information needs and representing the essential ethos of the school to prospective parents, but they have minor statutory omissions. Many essential policies are inclusive of parents. Classroom and display boards around the school are informative, and notices in windows communicate information about topic work to parents. Written communications are of good quality, regularity, and timeliness, and are respectful to the role of parents. The twice yearly newsletter produced by Year 6 pupils is a very informative communication for parents. Annual reports to parents are satisfactory. They give comprehensive reviews of pupils' abilities in each subject of the National Curriculum, but do not report on how well pupils have reached past targets or describe future targets. Reports seek the views of parents separately, and pupils can give their views as part of the process.
56. Parents are encouraged to make a good contribution to their children's education. They are well supported at induction, and are soon made to feel part of the school. From a good beginning, parents support the school well, and all parents have signed the home-school agreement. Parents feel no barrier to approaching the school on issues, and meetings to discuss pupils' progress are effective. Homework procedures find favour with most parents, and they can conduct a conversation with the teacher through the home-school liaison books. Parents have enjoyed evenings on the standardised tests for pupils in Years 2 and 6 and sex education, but there have not yet been opportunities for curriculum evenings of a more general nature. The collaboration with parents is high. The school also provides good information for parents to help with decisions about the transfer of their child to the next stage of education.
57. The parents of pupils with special educational needs are kept fully informed about their children's progress. They generally trust the school's judgement, particularly regarding the support for pupils with special educational needs and the setting up of individual education plans. Parents of pupils with higher levels of need meet the special educational needs co-ordinator at regular intervals to discuss new targets and the provision that their children are receiving, but they are not currently involved in setting the targets.

HOW WELL IS THE SCHOOL LED AND MANAGED?

58. The headteacher provides good leadership. He has worked very hard and successfully to set up the school and is clear about the needs of the school and the direction to be taken. The ethos of the school is very strong, pupils' attitudes to learning are very positive and the school provides a very good environment for learning. Overall, however, the management of the school is satisfactory. Many of the teachers with responsibilities for management, such as subject co-ordinators and the deputy headteacher, are new to their posts and their management roles are not yet fully established.
59. Now that a substantial number of teachers are in post, the school is in a good position to carry forward work so far undertaken to raise standards and improve provision. Arrangements to monitor and evaluate the school's performance are satisfactory and are being further developed. There are indications that standards are improving, but the work to establish good practice is only now beginning to take effect. Large numbers pupils joining the school at a late stage, some of whom have special educational needs, often cloud evidence of improving standards. Even so, pupils'

learning is now good in most lessons. The staff together form a strong team, with a very firm commitment towards raising the quality of the school's provision. Strategies are in place to improve standards further. For example, teachers plan their lessons to a school format that ensures that appropriate attention is given to the different levels of attainment in the class, and that pupils' spiritual awareness is considered.

60. Systems to keep the management of the school informed about its progress are sound. Pupils' test results are analysed to show particular areas for improvement and action is taken, to focus on and strengthen those areas. A recent result of this process was the decision to focus on, and raise the standard of pupils' writing in English. Targets are set for pupils and teachers. The school is working towards the appropriate targets whole-school targets negotiated with the local education authority and is on course to meet them. Assessment and the use of assessment to inform teachers' planning is satisfactory, but information gained from teachers' assessments could be better used to evaluate the school's strengths and weaknesses and for strategic planning.
61. The monitoring, evaluation and development of teaching is satisfactory. Each teacher is observed teaching regularly, either by a senior member of staff or by a colleague in the role of a subject co-ordinator. The monitoring is done consistently, but could be more rigorous. The information gained from monitoring is used to form strategies for improvement and it is intended to develop this process further. Such approaches have established a sound framework for continuing development and improving the consistency of good teaching.
62. Many staff with delegated management responsibilities have not yet established themselves fully in their new roles, but those who have been in post longer work effectively and make a good contribution to the work of the school. Subject leadership is satisfactory overall, and teachers have sufficient expertise to lead effectively. There is a strong sense of teamwork amongst staff and relationships are good. All teachers, except those who are newly qualified, have a responsibility as subject co-ordinators and, in that context, all monitor the teaching of their subjects and pupils' work. This is in addition to monitoring carried out by the headteacher and the deputy headteacher.
63. Due to the school's very positive ethos, pupils enjoy learning and the school takes great care to promote pupils' well-being and confidence. Under the strong leadership of the headteacher all pupils, whatever their race or creed, are valued and every opportunity is taken to include them in the full life of the school. Consequently, the school functions in a climate where all pupils are included and supported as individuals; because each pupil is valued, they in turn value each other.
64. The governing body is very supportive of the school, and governors, under the guidance of the headteacher, understand its strengths and weaknesses well. The governors are mindful of their responsibilities and fulfil their statutory duties well. They regularly review the school's performance and work closely with the headteacher and staff to improve the provision that the school makes and the standards it achieves. A number of governors regularly visit the school as part of their responsibility for a particular subject or aspect of the school.
65. Development planning is satisfactory. Strategic planning is not straightforward in the longer-term because there are many unknown factors that are outside the control of the school; for example, the rate of growth of its catchment area. The school development plan covers the necessary areas well, appropriate priorities are planned and costed and success criteria are identified. The plan is the outcome of widespread discussion between governors and staff. Training needs are identified clearly and effective provision is made.
66. The school works very well towards its aims and uses its financial resources well. It seeks successfully to obtain the best value when purchasing goods and services. Finances are managed well and resources are used effectively to further the school's priorities. All monies provided for specific purposes are used well for those purposes. At present the management of the school is carrying a larger than usual amount of money into the next financial year to meet the demands of equipping the new building. The needs for resources are identified each term and the necessary purchases made. This works well and all subjects are adequately provided for. There is a good range of well-selected materials in sufficient quantity. Resources are well organised and

accessible to pupils and teachers. The library, however, still needs more books. Resources for information and communication technology are very good.

67. Staffing provision is good; there are sufficient teachers to meet the needs of the curriculum and they are well supported by a good number of effective support staff. The teaching staff are well matched through their qualifications and experience to meet the demands of the curriculum. Provision for staff development is good and procedures for performance management are well established. Good arrangements are in place for the induction of newly qualified teachers and for teachers new to the school. Good links are in place with other schools and professional establishments in the area, which provide wider and more frequent opportunities for professional development. During the inspection students from a local college were in the school to observe lessons. The teaching staff, classroom assistants, administrative and lunchtime staff make a most valuable contribution to the life of the school.
68. The accommodation of the school is very good. The new buildings, which are not yet fully occupied, provide spacious accommodation of good quality. A room for information and communication technology has been established and the hall offers a large space that is used well for a good variety of activities. The playgrounds and fields are extensive and provide wide opportunities for pupils to play, and for games. Overall the school sets a colourful and welcoming environment for learning.
69. Overall management of the provision for pupils with special educational needs is good. The co-ordinator for special educational needs has gradually increased her role in the relatively short time that she has been in post. She has received relevant training and is to extend this further. The special educational needs co-ordinator helps to manage support staff, who meet with her at regular intervals to discuss emergent issues. She now chairs pupil reviews. The headteacher is very involved in the school's provision for special educational needs and sees this as a very important part of the school's philosophy of inclusion. He still manages the financing of the provision himself, but plans to hand this aspect over to the special educational needs co-ordinator in due course. The named special educational needs governor is very knowledgeable and active in his strategic oversight of the provision. He visits the school regularly to meet the special educational needs co-ordinator and the pupils, and reports back appropriately to the full governing body. All statutory requirements in respect of pupils with special educational needs, including those with a Statement of Special Educational Needs, are fully met.
70. The day-to-day administration of the school is good and effective use is made of technology to deal with the routine bureaucratic demands on the school. The school office is well organised and administrative staff make a good contribution to the smooth running of the school. They deal effectively with requests for information and other bureaucratic demands. Pupils are safe and secure. Relationships between pupils and all adults are very good and contribute to the purposeful working environment.

WHAT SHOULD THE SCHOOL DO TO IMPROVE FURTHER?

71. To continue to raise the standards of work and improve further the good quality of education provided in many aspects of the school, the headteacher, staff and governors should:

- (1) continue to develop the monitoring of teaching and the provision of professional development to ensure that all teaching matches the good quality seen in many parts of the school;
(paragraphs 15, 19, 61)
- (2) develop further the use of assessment information to:
 - a. plan curriculum provision and to help shape the strategic planning for the school;
(paragraphs 47, 59, 60)
 - b. meet the needs of pupils on late entry, so that they can start to move forward as quickly as possible.
(paragraph 46)
- (3) extend further the recently introduced strategies to improve standards in writing.
(This weakness is mainly discussed in paragraph 95 and is identified by the school as an area for development)

In addition to the key issues above, the following less important weaknesses should be considered for inclusion in the action plan:

1. Arrange for all adults in the school to receive appropriate training in child protection awareness.
(paragraph 41)

PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS

Summary of the sources of evidence for the inspection

Number of lessons observed	71
Number of discussions with staff, governors, other adults and pupils	24

Summary of teaching observed during the inspection

	Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
Number	0	6	34	31	0	0	0
Percentage	0	8	48	44	0	0	0

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

Information about the school's pupils

Pupils on the school's roll	YR – Y6
Number of pupils on the school's roll (FTE for part-time pupils)	249
Number of full-time pupils known to be eligible for free school meals	4

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Special educational needs	YR – Y6
Number of pupils with statements of special educational needs	6
Number of pupils on the school's special educational needs register	48

English as an additional language	No of pupils
Number of pupils with English as an additional language	6

Pupil mobility in the last school year	No of pupils
Pupils who joined the school other than at the usual time of first admission	84
Pupils who left the school other than at the usual time of leaving	9

Attendance

Authorised absence

	%
School data	5.2
National comparative data	5.4

Unauthorised absence

	%
School data	0.0
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	15	14	29

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		Reading	Writing	Mathematics
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	11	10	11
	Girls	11	12	12
	Total	22	22	23
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	76 (100)	76 (100)	79 (100)
	National	84 (84)	86 (86)	90 (91)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	12	12	12
	Girls	12	12	13
	Total	24	24	25
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	83 (100)	83 (100)	86 (100)
	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	12	15	27

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys	9	8	10
	Girls	11	11	14
	Total	20	19	24
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	74 (100)	70 (88)	89 (88)
	National	75 (75)	73 (71)	86 (87)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys	8	11	11
	Girls	12	13	12
	Total	20	24	23
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	74 (80)	89 (80)	85 (75)
	National	73 (72)	74 (74)	82 (82)

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

Ethnic background of pupils**Exclusions in the last school year**

Categories used in the Annual School Census	No of pupils on roll	Number of fixed period exclusions	Number of permanent exclusions
White – British	218	0	0
White – Irish	0	0	0
White – any other White background	11	0	0
Mixed – White and Black Caribbean	1	0	0
Mixed – White and Black African	0	0	0
Mixed – White and Asian	0	0	0
Mixed – any other mixed background	1	0	0
Asian or Asian British - Indian	3	0	0
Asian or Asian British - Pakistani	1	0	0
Asian or Asian British – Bangladeshi	0	0	0
Asian or Asian British – any other Asian background	0	0	0
Black or Black British – Caribbean	0	0	0
Black or Black British – African	1	0	0
Black or Black British – any other Black background	0	0	0
Chinese	0	0	0
Any other ethnic group	4	0	0
No ethnic group recorded	5	0	0

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

Teachers and classes**Qualified teachers and classes: YR – Y6**

Total number of qualified teachers (FTE)	11
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	27.7:1
Average class size	25

Education support staff: YR – Y6

Total number of education support staff	17
Total aggregate hours worked per week	277

Financial information

Financial year	2001 - 2002
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	£
Total income	374,468
Total expenditure	363,586
Expenditure per pupil	1,846
Balance brought forward from previous year	23,789
Balance carried forward to next year	34,681

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Recruitment of teachers

Number of teachers who left the school during the last two years	3
Number of teachers appointed to the school during the last two years	14

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

249

Number of questionnaires returned

88

Percentage of responses in each category

	Strongly agree	Tend to agree	Tend to disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know
My child likes school.	70	27	2	0	0
My child is making good progress in school.	62	34	0	0	3
Behaviour in the school is good.	53	44	0	0	2
My child gets the right amount of work to do at home.	48	44	8	0	0
The teaching is good.	71	25	0	0	3
I am kept well informed about how my child is getting on.	44	44	10	0	1
I would feel comfortable about approaching the school with questions or a problem.	80	20	0	0	0
The school expects my child to work hard and achieve his or her best.	76	24	0	0	0
The school works closely with parents.	51	45	1	0	2
The school is well led and managed.	86	13	0	0	1
The school is helping my child become mature and responsible.	66	33	0	0	1
The school provides an interesting range of activities outside lessons.	40	36	13	3	8

Other issues raised by parents

Parents were very positive in their comments about the school and no other issues were raised.

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

72. Children enter the reception class twice a year at Furley Park; in September and in January. At the time of the inspection, one class had been established. The children's skills, knowledge and understanding are above average on entry to the reception class, although there are a small number of children who are below average. They are making satisfactory progress, so that they are on course to exceed the Early Learning Goals in all areas of their development by the time they enter Year 1 next September. This results from sound education being provided by the staff at this stage. The school has not been inspected before so it is not possible to make any judgements about improvement since the last inspection.
73. The quality of teaching is sound overall, although knowledge and understanding of the world and personal, social and emotional development are well taught. Staff have good understanding of this age group and the work is planned to encompass all the areas of learning included in the Early Learning Goals. Most work is carefully designed to meet the needs of the children and they are managed well. Learning support assistants are effectively deployed and in particular give very good support to pupils with special educational needs and those for whom English is an additional language. Time is usually used well, although occasionally activities go on for too long and the pace of learning is too slow.
74. The quality of learning is sound overall. Children follow a sound curriculum that provides a range of activities, routines and experiences that are chosen to match the learning needs of the children. Most activities are sufficiently demanding and help the children to make progress. Some are not demanding enough or, because the outcomes planned are not made sufficiently clear, they are not as effective as they might be. The children are well motivated to learn and supported well by their parents. There are satisfactory assessment procedures in place so that staff have a good understanding of how the children are progressing. Better analysis of this information should help the staff plan the children's curriculum in more detail, and match it more closely to individual needs of the children.
75. The atmosphere in the class is good. The children feel safe and trust the staff. All the children are included in the activities undertaken. As a result, these children are making good progress in their work.

Personal, social and emotional development

76. The children are making good progress in their personal, social and emotional development. There is a calm and productive atmosphere in which children are well taught and, as a result, most children are already close to exceeding the Early Learning Goals by the time they enter Year 1 in September. The children co-operate well with each other and are confident in a wide range of situations. For example, they know how many children are allowed in the 'hospital' area or the sand at one time. They are thoughtful and caring to each other and to the adults whom they are with. The way in which clear and purposeful routines have been established by the staff is making a very good contribution to this. For example, in literacy sessions the children know what is expected of them. As they are able to listen carefully and take their turn, by putting their hand up, they learn more than might be expected. For children so young they work well independently, such as when working on a computer program or reading quietly to themselves. An example of their willingness to co-operate was seen in a physical education lesson where all children were using footballs. They avoided collision, concentrated hard on what they were doing and often made space for their friends to move.

Communication, language and literacy

77. The children are making satisfactory improvements in their communication, language and literacy skills over their time in the reception class. Those for whom English is an additional language are well supported and make good progress. Teaching overall is satisfactory in this area and phonic awareness is being taught effectively. The children are on course to meet the Early Learning Goals for language, literacy and communication by the time they enter Year 1 in September. Some children are already achieving above average levels in some elements of this area of learning.
78. The children can communicate effectively and with confidence when they are given the opportunity to do so by the teacher. Good examples of this included when the children were discussing the sound 'g' as part of their literacy work. Children were very eager to offer words with the same initial sound, such as 'goat', 'goggles' and 'goldfish'. The children enjoyed the challenge of this work and participated well, responding to questions and offering answers. Most children speak clearly and can make themselves understood easily. They are very polite, occasionally asking visitors if they need anything or are looking for something. In the role-play area, they use a 'hospital' to rehearse their own experience of doctors or hospitals. Much of this activity is predictable. Better guidance needs to be devised for supporting language and children's thinking in these activities so that there is a clearer structure and outcome in mind than at present. Children's reading is developing well and parents are making a good contribution to their children's progress; hearing them read nightly. Most children can retell stories, often using the books to 'read' the story. Some children, for example, having heard the story of 'The Ginger Bread Man', were able to retell the story with confidence and great enjoyment. The children's writing is satisfactory and they are beginning to form letters accurately and know many initial sounds. Some activities that follow up writing, however, are not sufficiently demanding; for example, some involve colouring when the children might be extending their knowledge and skills. A few children can spell with a degree of plausibility.

Mathematics

79. In response to the satisfactory teaching of mathematics children achieve soundly and are on course to exceed the Early Learning Goals in this subject by the time that they enter Year 1.
80. The children are making satisfactory progress in developing their mathematical understanding. The children are becoming increasingly confident with number. Most can count up to ten and if they are using objects can count up two or three to say how many more items there are. They recognise numbers and know larger numbers, if, for example, they have a birthday or house number to remember. Knowledge of these numbers and operations is further consolidated in numeracy lessons or in everyday activities, where staff often incorporate practise with number. Good examples of this were seen in special educational needs lessons, where children counted the sides of Christmas decorations they were making and the number of raisin buttons decorating their gingerbread men. They have completed some simple graphs, but still find it difficult to develop their own criteria for sorting or organising information. There are areas in the classroom where display is mathematically focused and this helps to support the children's learning. In role play and other activities there are opportunities that are not taken to develop the children's mathematics understanding and skills further. A clearer focus on the outcomes of imaginative activities could yield more opportunities to enrich the depth of the children's mathematical development.

Knowledge and understanding of the world

81. Children enter the reception class with broadly average general knowledge. This area of learning is taught well, and by the time the children enter Year 1 they should have covered the Early Learning Goals and show levels of attainment that are above average for their age. They are making good gains for their age, especially in the development of their skill using information and communication technology.
82. They are learning well about the world around them, through well-planned lessons that stimulate and arouse their curiosity and interest. For example, they have been studying the 'five senses'

through a series of practical activities that give them opportunities to make simple predictions and to record what they have found out in a simple way. The children enjoyed this work and know that they can use their senses to tell them a lot about what they are working on. For example, groups of children experienced blind tasting of everyday food whilst studying taste. This made a good contribution to their communication skills as they described these foods. One child described a banana as 'slimy' and 'slippy' until realising that it was a banana when it became tasty!

83. The children are becoming skilled at using information and communication technology. Very good use is made of the information and communication technology suite as well as classroom machines. The children can use a mouse with confidence to place the cursor where they wish to on the screen. They can use simple programs to select tools and effects from a toolbar and then use these to good effect in their work. A very good example of this occurred when the children were deciding how to decorate a Christmas tree already on the screen. They were able to colour fill, add dots or spray all at different sizes. The children were able to decide how their tree would look and print the finished product. Many children are already working at Level 1 of the National Curriculum for information and communication technology. The development of hand-eye co-ordination is helped by this activity.

Physical development

84. The development of the children's physical skills is taught well and is good overall. The children are making good progress over time, so that when they begin Year 1 they are likely to have above average skills for that age. In one lesson children were working in the hall on ball skills. The children maintained good control of a small football, both on their own and with a partner. They could send the ball to their partner with accuracy and weight and, when receiving, nearly always catch it. They co-operated very well and made space for each other. Their willingness to collaborate makes a very good contribution to their progress as no time is wasted. Children with special educational needs make good progress during these sessions. For example, the learning support assistant assigned to one pupil worked extremely effectively to ensure that this child was fully involved and included in the lesson and worked on the same objectives as the rest of the class. Some children are aware of the effect that exercise has and know that it is important to exercise to stay well.
85. There is a good outdoor area where the children can further their physical development. It has space for outdoor apparatus, but the school still lacks large construction equipment that would make best use of this area. During the inspection this area was not used because of the bitterly cold weather.
86. The children are making good progress in developing their manipulative skills.

Creative development

87. The children are achieving average standards in their creative development. They are making satisfactory progress in response to the satisfactory teaching. The children enjoy joining in with songs and rhymes. They participate readily with great gusto with the telling of stories they know well such as 'The Gingerbread Man'. There are good opportunities for role play and the children readily participate in the area that is currently set up as a 'hospital'.
88. Children are given opportunities to explore colour and shape and to make simple decorations for seasonal celebrations. They are able to choose the colours they prefer and take great care to get the right effect. Learning support assistants encourage the children very effectively to make individual choices that reflect their ideas.

ENGLISH

89. Standards in English are broadly in line with the national average at the end of Years 2 and 6. These standards are similar to those in the 2002 national tests for pupils at Year 6, but the current group of pupils in Year 2 are attaining higher standards than last year's class. Achievement is now good for both groups of pupils because, while standards at the beginning of Year 1 are average, a considerable number of pupils, some with special educational needs, join later and levels of attainment are mixed.
90. At the end of Year 2, standards of speaking and listening are at least average. At this stage pupils achieve well, they improve their skills and a substantial number reach the higher levels and can talk with assurance in a range of situations; they use standard English and adapt their speech to the needs of the listeners. A majority of pupils are confident when talking to an audience or listening to others. They respond thoughtfully to their teachers' questions, and higher attainers ask pertinent questions. Some lower attaining pupils have less confidence in talking to others and find difficulty in developing clear explanations.
91. In Years 3 to 6 pupils achieve well and, by Year 6, standards are above average in speaking and listening; many pupils are capable of giving full explanations and presenting work orally. Many have a good command of standard English vocabulary and grammar, and show increasing confidence in using technical vocabulary for different subjects. Higher attainers in Year 6 understand the use of jargon when estate agents use language to describe properties. Pupils adapt their talk to specific curriculum areas, respond to and question each other's ideas and give their own opinions. For example, in a history lesson for Year 6 pupils, a higher attainer gave an opinion about the reintroduction and use of identity cards, relating World War II to current times: 'I think it would be helpful to cut down crime'.
92. Standards in reading by pupils in Year 2 are at the national average. By the end of the year, many pupils use pictures, phonics and context to help to read the texts, and have built up a sight vocabulary. They read from carefully graded books, and pupils of higher and average attainment can talk about the main events of the story. Many parents hear their children read regularly and home-school reading diaries are used well by parents and teachers alike. Most pupils use alphabetical spelling prompts or texts like dictionaries, and they know that they offer meanings and help with spelling. Higher attainers know that some words have more than one meaning and can offer a range of meanings. They are unfamiliar with reference books from the library, as this is a very recent facility, which has yet to be fully exploited as a teaching aid.
93. In Years 3 to 6 pupils achieve well in their reading. Most pupils read a variety of texts accurately and have positive attitudes to reading. The best readers in Year 6 have a very good understanding of texts and can extract information for project work from books and the Internet. Pupils' library skills, however, have been hindered because the library has only recently been completed. Pupils from Year 6 have library responsibilities.
94. Writing standards are broadly average in Years 1 and 2, but pupils make good progress in writing neatly and joining their handwriting. By the end of Year 2 pupils convey meaning with appropriate and interesting vocabulary, higher attainers beginning to write complex sentences. Most pupils use capital letters and full stops appropriately. More simple spelling is usually accurate for most pupils. Lower attainers are well supported and make good progress.
95. In Years 3 to 6 most pupils make satisfactory progress in writing. The school has recently recognised the need for more opportunities for extended writing and these have been provided. The range of writing genres is developing and is satisfactory. By the end of Year 6 most pupils write confidently, in a variety of writing forms, such as non-chronological, reporting style, letters and poetry. However, a low standard of handwriting, grammar and presentation of work by a significant number of pupils is too readily accepted. Pupils fail to check their grammar and use of punctuation, which they can self-correct if prompted. A number of higher attainers present extended pieces of research, including letters they have written, which are of a high quality. They often make good use of information and communication technology to present this research work.

Pupils from Years 5 and 6 were recently very successful in a nationally sponsored competition for the use of automated display software in a research project.

96. As a result of the good support of teaching assistants and teachers, pupils with special educational needs and those for whom English is a second language make good progress. They listen carefully and participate in discussion with increasing confidence. Teachers make sure that they modify language where it is appropriate to meet the needs of the pupils.
97. Strategies for teaching literacy across the curriculum are satisfactory. Pupils use their reading and writing skills well in subjects such as history, geography, science and design and technology. However, the quality of the presentation of work is often insufficiently high and their speaking and listening skills are not given enough importance. Pupils use their literacy skills well in numeracy lessons and in lessons where small group work involves co-operation. Across the curriculum, mixed ability groupings encourage lower attainers to develop ideas through collaborative working, such as, in Year 4, developing a team game.
98. The quality of teaching is good overall. Teaching and learning ranges from very good to satisfactory. There is no significant difference between key stages and the quality of teaching and learning was good or better in more than one half of the lessons seen. Good features of teaching in most lessons are good planning and grading of work that ensures that pupils work as independently as possible. Support for pupils with special educational needs is good; teachers give confidence and support that enables the pupils to make good progress. The positive approach of teachers and their effective management of pupils leads to good attitudes to work. In a few lessons, however, pupils spend too long on the carpet, or the discussion is too long, and this leads to poor concentration. Higher attainers are not always sufficiently extended. For example, in a few lessons they are not sufficiently challenged. Occasionally teachers fail to follow up interesting ideas contributed by the pupils. Opportunities to extend reading skills to higher levels are not always exploited sufficiently so that pupils do not always tax their powers of interpretation. Parents support homework well and this has a good impact on; for example, pupils' progress in reading. The recording and assessment of reading is developing well, but teachers do not routinely record the assessments they make.
99. The two English co-ordinators are working hard to monitor learning in the areas of reading and writing. They recognise that the main areas for development are in writing and in standardising teachers' record keeping. Resources are satisfactory and continue to be extended. Assessment is satisfactory. End of year assessment and optional standardised tests are in place and inform progress, but more detailed assessment of pupils on entry is required so that their needs can be better planned for. The literacy strategy is in place and effective. Ongoing assessment is used to set targets for pupils in Years 1 and 2, but the process is at an early stage of development for Years 3 to 6, and pupils are not fully familiar with their targets. This is because the targets are often in language that pupils find difficult to understand. In addition, the targets lack focus on what pupils need to do to improve. English makes a good contribution to pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. The use of information and communication technology to support learning in English is satisfactory.

MATHEMATICS

100. The evidence of pupils' work, in their books and in lessons, indicates that, at present, in Years 2 and 6, standards are in line with national expectations and pupils are achieving well.
101. Results of the latest national tests show that the proportion of the pupils attaining the expected Level 2 at Year 2 was well below average and for those attaining Level 4 at Year 6 was average. Pupils' results were also well below those of similar schools at Year 2 and below those at Year 6. The number of pupils taking the test has increased dramatically as the school has grown and it is not possible to compare results year on year. At the time of the last tests, many pupils had recently been admitted to the school and there was a high proportion of pupils with special educational needs. These factors mean that the tests do not give a totally accurate picture of the pupils' performance in mathematics. The average standards seen in the inspection come about

because pupils are now settling into the school well and the gaps of knowledge, skills and understanding in mathematics are being addressed.

102. By Year 2 the pupils' mental skills are improving both in speed and accuracy. They can count on in twos accurately, although they find it more difficult to count back, especially when counting from numbers like twenty-four. Many are still experiencing difficulty with simple doubling; for example, double seven, and their answers ranged from 16 to 19 before being accurately answered. Higher attaining pupils calculate much more accurately and quickly. When asked how they complete operations they say they just know, which indicates that their rapid recall memory is improving. Both average and higher attaining pupils are beginning to cope with more difficult calculations, such as four lots of five, or three lots of four, working the answer as a multiplication, rather than repeated addition, which is the preferred strategy of lower attaining pupils. Work samples also show that the pupils are covering an appropriate range of work in other areas of mathematics. For example, the pupils have gained a sound understanding of different plane shapes and carried out simple investigations to find out the number of edges, vertices and faces that each possesses. They know the names of most of these shapes.
103. By Year 6 the pupils' knowledge and understanding across all aspects of mathematics are developing well, and they are beginning to fill in some gaps from earlier years. The pupils with special educational needs are making good progress. In number, the majority of the pupils use the four rules well, and this helps them to find the answer to written problems accurately. They quickly decide what they need to do, and most pupils can identify what information in a problem is important and what can be discarded. The mental arithmetic programme is making a good contribution to this developing skill. Pupils show competence in their use of decimals and mixed fractions. Their understanding of shape and space is satisfactory. They know the names of most shapes and solids and have a sound understanding of both reflective and translational symmetry. Many can readily find the area of a regular plane figure.
104. The pupils' attitudes to mathematics are good throughout the school. They are enthusiastic in their response to the mental warm-up to the lesson and want to be accurate and efficient in their calculations. They encourage each other and are pleased with each other's success. They enjoy using whiteboards to work things out and take a pride in their work.
105. The quality of teaching and learning is good overall. In the good lessons pupils make good progress, but their achievement over time would be improved if the teaching was consistently good. Lesson planning is good throughout the school. It details different levels of work to match pupils' needs in individual work and provides interesting activities to support the pupils' learning objectives. This enables the pupils to make progress and deepen their understanding of the topic being taught. Teachers make the learning objectives very clear to the pupils and help them to understand what they must learn. The interesting nature of the lessons helps the pupils to maintain their focus and concentration. Occasionally some activities make the pupils too excited and in their excitement they miss the point of the activity. Time is mostly used well; occasionally, however, the pace slows in part of the lesson, energy levels fall and as a result, learning slows.
106. Learning support assistants overall make a sound contribution to the pupils' learning. The most effective practice was seen when they sat close to the pupils they were supporting. The assistants made sure in these cases that the pupils were fully involved, thinking mathematically and working very hard intellectually. On the occasions when the assistants 'sat out', some pupils could not cope with the pace of the oral work and with the main teaching activity, consequently, they did not make as much progress. Lessons are usually pitched at the right levels for the pupils' age and drawn from the correct level of the National Numeracy Strategy. Nevertheless, teachers are sometimes surprised by the lack of knowledge and skills of the pupils. This was particularly true in Years 3 to 6. This is happening because many of the pupils are still relatively new to the school and have not been systematically assessed on entry to find where their strengths and weaknesses lie. This remains a weakness in the present mathematical provision and makes it difficult for teachers to plan their work with the necessary accuracy, in the face of new admissions. The present arrangements mostly work because the teachers know their pupils very well and have made fairly accurate day-to-day assessment based on their responses to their work. Better,

sustainable procedures need to be devised to cope with the large numbers of pupils joining the school.

107. All aspects of the mathematics curriculum are covered and statutory requirements are met in full. The school is successfully implementing the National Numeracy Strategy. Resources are now good and are well used. Whilst pupils have some opportunities to use their numeracy skills appropriately across the curriculum, there are not enough planned opportunities for them to do this. In some aspects of design and technology, for example, pupils use their measuring skills when cutting and marking out axles for their vehicles. In science, however, they do not readily draw on existing skills; for example, to display their results in graphic form. Information and communication technology is being used occasionally to support learning in mathematics, but it needs to be more systematically developed.
108. The subject leader provides sound leadership overall. Some auditing of the strengths and weaknesses in mathematics has been carried out and this has resulted in improving the pupils' problem solving skills. Overall, however, a more rigorous analysis of pupils' performance is required to provide the information needed to set the strategic direction of the subject for the future.

SCIENCE

109. The average results gained in the 2002 National Curriculum tests of pupils at the end of Year 6 are broadly reflected in current standards. Standards in the present Year 2, however, are not as high as reported in the 2002 teacher assessments and are around the expected levels. This is mainly because of differences in attainment between the different year groups. Pupils in some other age groups, however, have above average standards in science, which bodes well for the future. It is very difficult to judge pupils' achievement because of the very high inward mobility. On the basis of the limited evidence available, however, pupils make good progress in most lessons and achieve well. Standards in investigative science, particularly at the higher levels, are not as high as those in the more knowledge-based elements of the subject.
110. The majority of pupils in Year 1 are able to provide sensible ways in which an investigation into how far sound travels could be conducted. Pupils in Year 2 are aware that different fruits contain different numbers of seeds. They make reasonable estimates and successfully count them, recording their findings on a graph. They also distinguish successfully between natural and man-made materials. Pupils in Years 3 and 4 know which materials make the best thermal conductors and insulators, although a minority are not clear about the reasons why. Most, but not all, pupils in Year 4 understand how an investigation can be kept 'fair'. A few, however, are not entirely clear about this concept and lack confidence in planning an investigation of their own. Year 5 pupils have a sound understanding of the different characteristics of liquids, solids and gases. By Year 6, the pupils give a good range of definitions for living organisms, using appropriate scientific terminology. They are clear about the need for a 'fair' test in an investigation, being aware of the concept of a 'control', and the need to change only one variable at a time when carrying out a successful scientific investigation. There was little evidence, however, of pupils' developing the ability to construct higher-level investigations of their own to solve scientific problems.
111. Pupils' attitudes in lessons are mostly very good. They enjoy science and are often excited by it, particularly when planning and carrying out investigations. Most are very keen to contribute sensibly to preliminary discussions and to listen to the opinions of others. In the best lessons, they co-operate very well in paired and group planning sessions, settle well to tasks and carry these out in a focused way. Just occasionally, they call out inappropriately and are more inclined to express their own opinions than to listen to those of others.
112. The quality of teaching ranges from satisfactory to very good, but is good overall. Methods are regularly varied and interesting. This keeps the pupils interested and has a positive impact on their pace of learning. Questions and activities are frequently challenging, which encourages the pupils to think deeply about their work and successfully extends their scientific knowledge and understanding. Explanations are clear, ensuring that the pupils know exactly what they are expected to achieve. In some lessons, however, work set is not closely enough matched to the

attainment levels of different pupils in the class. This has an adverse effect on the achievement of pupils across the ability range.

113. There is an appropriate planning structure in place that follows national guidelines. Information and communication technology is used to some extent to support the subject, but it is still in its infancy. Computer programs have been used, however, by pupils in Year 1, to represent data in graphic forms; and pupils in Year 4 have used computer controlled temperature sensors. There are strategies in place to assess and record pupils' attainment. These involve the use of end of topic assessments. Assessment procedures, however, need to be developed further to include; for example, pupils' investigative and other scientific skills. The co-ordinator is enthusiastic and knowledgeable, and has a clear view of where the subject needs to be developed next. However, her role now needs to be extended further to include the monitoring of teaching.

ART AND DESIGN

114. It was possible to see only one art and design lesson during the inspection, but the work on display, and other artwork seen, indicated above average standards at the end of both Years 2 and 6. There are examples of good work in most classes.
115. Pupils generally show good drawing and colouring skills that develop well as they move through the school. Pupils represent their ideas successfully in visual forms in a good variety of media and manage the range of different materials well. Some evidence was seen of the use of information and communication technology for art and design, but not enough to judge overall standards in this aspect. In general, the work seen indicates that pupils of all levels of attainment, including those with special educational needs, make good progress. The pupils' attitude to learning appears good. They take care with their artwork and present it well.
116. It is not possible to make a judgement about the quality of teaching in art and design overall, but in the lesson seen the teaching was very good. The lesson was carefully planned and high expectations were set out clearly at the beginning so that pupils knew the focus of their learning and what they were trying to achieve. Examples of previous work were used to illustrate expectations. The teacher gave very good support to skills development by explaining expectations in terms of line, scale, form and colour mixing.
117. The school has sufficient resources for art and design and they are used well. The recently appointed co-ordinator is working to broaden the curriculum for art and design. The management of the subject is satisfactory, but is not yet fully established.

DESIGN AND TECHNOLOGY

118. Standards in design and technology are average at the end of both Years 2 and 6. Judgements are based on a very small number of observed lessons, scrutiny of planning, work in progress and displays and discussion with pupils and the subject leader. Pupils in all years, including those who have special educational needs and those for whom English is an additional language, are achieving well. The school has done well to establish this foundation subject as a full part of the curriculum. The co-ordinator has made a good contribution to this situation.
119. Pupils in Year 2 were in the midst of a project on making vehicles and, at the planning stage, had prepared very well for making them. The pupils had made careful drawings of their proposed vehicle. The drawings were detailed and very well annotated. Pupils can explain their drawings and why they have made their choices. Their vehicles bear a close resemblance to their plans. They are beginning to think about the order in which they will make their product and can think of ways to improve it. They are not yet able, however, to think through the consequences of some of their decisions. For example, they do not predict that thin card will often buckle or that sticky tape comes unstuck when coated generously with paint.
120. In Year 6 the pupils are making close to life-sized figures of people engaged in different activities or sports. They are becoming skilled in constructing their models using paper, and the figures are

taking on lifelike postures. They are already finding better ways of making joints than they originally tried and are discovering the shortcomings, as well as the benefits, of working with paper spills and papier mache. Their work would benefit from more planning before construction starts so that more of the problems that they experience could be foreseen and overcome. Whilst the pupils' evaluation skills are improving, their written work still does not yet come up to a similar standard.

121. During the inspection, observation and discussion with pupils revealed good attitudes to the subject. They enjoy their work very much and collaborate very effectively, sharing equipment, waiting their turn and helping each other. For example, the figures being constructed in Year 6 are totally dependent on pupils' working with each other. This makes a good contribution to the pupils' personal development.
122. The very few lessons seen were well taught. The teachers have a good understanding of the subject and teach the design cycle well. In particular they get pupils to make decisions for themselves about what materials to use or how things should be fixed together. Introductions to lessons are short, well explained and brisk, which leaves most of the time available for practical activity. This works very well and is one of the best features of the teaching. Good attention is given to health and safety. As a result, the pupils use the right tool and equipment for any given task.
123. The quality of leadership is good and the co-ordinator has established a well thought out curriculum that is broad and balanced. There is a good scheme of work that is based on nationally approved guidelines. This is helping to make sure that skills are developed year-on-year as the pupils pass through the school. Assessment arrangements still remain weak, however, and it will need further work to ensure that pupils are consistently challenged. Information and communication technology is not used effectively to support learning in this subject. Despite these shortcomings staff have applied the advice they have received and as a result, provision for design and technology is improving within the school. A strategic plan to chart development will be needed to take this subject to the next stage of development.

GEOGRAPHY

124. At the end of Years 2 and 6, standards are in line with those expected for pupils of their age. All pupils' achievement, including those with special educational needs and those for whom English is second language, is satisfactory in so far as it can be judged, but evidence is limited because no pupils have been in the school for more than two years. Evidence of standards and achievement for pupils at the age of seven is drawn from talking with children, scrutiny of work and displays. The programme of study, taken from a published scheme, works satisfactorily, but it has not yet been checked and adapted to assure balance and progression of skills. Even so, the subject fosters well research skills, spiritual, moral and social skills, and citizenship. The use of information and communication technology is satisfactory.
125. At the end of Year 2, most pupils understand the use of maps. They know that to find cities they need an atlas, and have good awareness of large-scale maps. They use a map of the school building, a local map to find out where the school is situated, and identify local features such as the church. On a worldwide scale, they enjoy finding 'Barnaby Bear's' destinations, and have a sense of countries and oceans on a world map. Locally they have conducted a traffic survey and concluded that cars are the most frequent users of roads in the school area.
126. By the end of Year 6, higher attainers research and produce good quality projects on rivers. They extract information and put it in their own words, using Internet pictures to illustrate points. They know about environmental issues such as pollution and flood, in relation to the rivers studied. Average and lower attainers produce projects with less commentary and more copying of information. All pupils draw graphs of rivers contrasting and comparing gradients and length of rivers, and use spidergrams to show the uses of water. Pupils in Years 3 and 4 are knowledgeable about recycling and waste paper, having surveyed the rubbish produced in their own class and in the school. They work amicably in pairs and small mixed ability groups to place the school within a local map, the map of Ashford and the county and country.

127. The quality of teaching is satisfactory, but no teaching was observed for Years 1 and 2. Planning is often good and when it is, teachers plan work suited to meet the needs of most of the pupils. However, the work planned for higher attainers sometimes lacks challenge. For example, pupils are sometimes provided with notes that they could have made for themselves. On one occasion, however, the text presented to the class was too dense and difficult for extraction of the necessary information. Teachers encourage mixed ability paired and small group work, but miss opportunities for pupils to extend their communication skills by, for example, presenting and reporting back to the class as members of a group. Pupils in Year 6 make good use of information and communication technology, and present work with pride and care. Too often teachers in Years 3, 4 and 5 accept low standards of handwriting and presentation of work, and there is some evidence of overuse of worksheets.
128. The co-ordinator is new in post and subject delivery is at a developmental stage. There are suitable assessments at the end of each topic, but without enough focus at present on the development of skills in the subject.

HISTORY

129. Standards in history are average at the end of both Years 2 and 6. Achievement in these years is at least satisfactory in so far as it can be judged on limited evidence; no pupil has been in the school for more than two years. The programme of study in place has been taken from a commercially available scheme, and has yet to be adapted to ensure pupils' progress in the acquisition of skills. Teachers work hard to give pupils exciting experiences, and with the help of pupils they construct informative displays of Victorian, Roman and Vikings times, using either original or copies of artefacts of the periods. Wherever possible, pupils visit places linked to their topics and have visitors into school.
130. By the end of Year 2, pupils have a good understanding of differences between the past and present. They know basic facts about Florence Nightingale's life and times. They listen carefully and question a visiting nurse about how the profession has changed since Victorian times. One pupil wrote, 'When Florence got to Scutari, things were in a right state'. Year 1 pupils gain a sense of development through time by looking at houses. When answering questions about building materials, lower attaining pupils referred to their display of houses and buildings from the Stone Age to the present time. They understand that stone and thatch were often used in the past, and that new houses are built from bricks, with tiled roofs. Pupils are thrilled to compare Victorian household items with modern day equivalents, understanding how much harder it was to do work around the house as they look at carpet beaters, sewing machines, chamber pots and many other items brought in by parents and teachers or borrowed from the museum service.
131. By the end of Year 6, pupils know about changes in Britain from the 1930s. From the 1940s period, they learn about identity cards, reserved occupations and clothing. Higher attainers list the reasons for the use of identity cards and the advantages and disadvantages were they to be reintroduced. They also consider a modern plastic equivalent and the advances that have been made by the storing of information on microchips. Lower attainers compare school clothes from the 1940s with the present. Average attainers find out and write about the jobs of people during the war. They have a good understanding of the changing roles of women in wartime, and that they worked in munitions factories and on the land. Pupils in Year 4, having made a scene of Viking ships, were very excited to see their teacher dressed in the costume of a Viking woman. Their questioning of her in role included, 'What is your dress made from?'. One pupil said that if he met a Viking man he would ask him the name he had given his sword, and about how many battles he had won and lost. Pupils had examined a good range of facsimile artefacts from the Viking museum in York, handling and drawing them to gain understanding of their uses.
132. The quality of teaching and learning are satisfactory overall and there are some examples of good teaching in lessons where pupils learn well. Planning of lessons is of a good standard and tasks are designed appropriately for different levels of ability. Resources such as artefacts and facsimiles are used well to give pupils a sense of change over time, and bring a buzz of excitement to

lessons. Pupils handle objects sensibly and with care. Teachers ensure that pupils learn that there is a wide range of sources of information about the past, but pupils' recording of images is limited to drawing. The use of witnesses, such as the nurse or family, opens pupils' ideas to find a variety of sources of history. Some pupils in Year 6 had talked with family members about World War II. Pupils in Year 1 initially had found difficulty guessing the use of artefacts from the past because of their unfamiliarity. Their understanding increased when presented with modern equivalents such as an iron, kettle and vacuum cleaner. The pace of some lessons is slow and in these the pupils are less productive and responsive. Pupils with behavioural difficulties occasionally interrupt the mood of the lesson, but they are handled well by teaching assistants. The quality of writing and presentation accepted is not high enough, in a number of classes. It is better in Years 1, 2, and 6.

133. The management of the subject is at present satisfactory. The headteacher is care-taking the role and has a clear vision for the development of history in the school. Resourcing for the topics currently being covered is good. When appropriate, use is made of 'big books'; for example, about Florence Nightingale and Anne Frank. The use of information and communication technology for researching is not yet fully effective, but it is developing and many pupils take information from the Internet. There is, however, a tendency to print pages that appear to be relevant, rather than to extract what is needed. The information from assessment tends to be minimal. Most assessment is carried out at the end of topics and the assessments of ongoing development of skills are not recorded. Consequently, the records show a high focus on knowledge. History makes a very good contribution to pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural understanding.

INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY

134. Attainment in information and communication technology is in line with national expectations for pupils in Years 2 and 6. An information and communication technology suite has only been established very recently and has been in operation for less than a term. The school is putting this facility to very good use. This, coupled with the enthusiasm of the staff and pupils, is helping to even out the significant variations in skills, knowledge and understanding that are evident in the very large number of pupils who have joined the school recently. Pupils in Years 2 and 6 are achieving well.
135. By Year 2 the pupils are becoming competent using simple programs to design simple cards. They know how to use the mouse to select, click and drag the picture or graphic they have selected to where they want it on the page. They add text in the position of their choice, but weak keyboard skills mean that this often takes much longer than it need. Pupils have also been able to create simple pictures of bonfire night using a 'paint' application. They know how to change the appearance of text by altering the font or size. In Years 3 to 6 the pupils are becoming skilled at using information and communication technology to present information in an interesting and attractive way. In Year 4, pupils are using a graphics program to create pictures in the style of Kandinsky and Mondrian. In Year 6, they use automated display software effectively to make a short slide show about topics such as 'elephants' or 'Kent'. They are making well thought out decisions about how to present information, importing pictures from files, or scanning in work from other sources. The commentary they add is short and concise.
136. The pupils' attitudes to the subject are very good. They are keen to learn and quickly understand new ideas and skills. They listen attentively to lesson introductions, and enjoy seeing work presented on the interactive whiteboard. They value each other's work and are skilled at seeing the strengths as well as the weaknesses. If they have to share a keyboard, they make sure that the time available is fairly shared and when it is not their turn, encourage their friends and make suggestions. They often learn from each other in such sessions. The older pupils enjoy being able to go back to previous versions of their work to make comparisons. This is helping them to understand the progress they are making and often reminds them of things they had forgotten.
137. The quality of teaching is good overall and the teachers are making good use of both the information and communication technology suite and equipment in the classroom. The teachers' subject knowledge is now satisfactory and is steadily improving as they gain new skills and

understanding. For example, they are beginning to make good use of the interactive whiteboard that has just been installed. This is a good example of a high value resource being used efficiently to help to improve the pupils' performance. The teachers' lessons are well planned and organised. They do not waste any time in lessons. Introductions are short, crisp and to the point so that the pupils spend nearly all of their time at their work station. This is helping the pupils to refine and improve their skills. It also enables them to try out different effects or ways of presenting information. The keyboard skills of many pupils are still weak, many relying on one or two fingers to use the keyboard. This in itself is often the most significant factor in limiting the pace at which the pupils work. The school has not yet systematically made arrangements to remedy this weakness.

138. Although there are some opportunities to use information and communication technology across the curriculum, it is not yet systematically used to support teaching in other subjects. On an individual basis class teachers are now beginning to make appropriate links, but this has yet to become a feature of all subjects. For example, Internet use is starting to support learning in history and geography, and in art and design pupils studying the style of Kandinsky and Mondrian are using a graphics application to create pictures. Nevertheless, many possible opportunities to use it in English and mathematics have yet to be realised. This is understandable as the information and communication technology suite has just become available, and many newly admitted pupils are still catching up with their information and communication technology skills. Now that the hardware is in place, links with other subjects at an appropriate level need to be established and built into the planning.
139. The curriculum for information and communication technology is now sound, it is based on nationally available materials. This is working well at the moment, but will need to be modified as more systematic, regular and rigorous assessment of the pupils' performance reveals where the strengths and weaknesses are. The subject leader has done well to establish information and communication technology in the schools' curriculum and to ensure that the staff are using the information and communication technology suite and other equipment to good effect. Information and communication technology skills, knowledge and understanding are now being taught systematically throughout the school. In most aspects the school is doing all that could be expected at this stage in the school's development.

MUSIC

140. Standards in music are average at the end of both Years 2 and 6 and pupils' achievements are satisfactory. Pupils, including those with special educational needs and those for whom English is an additional language, generally make satisfactory progress in their lessons, but this varies because not all teachers have sufficient knowledge and understanding in the subject to sustain consistent progress.
141. In all years pupils sing willingly and with a good tone. This is particularly marked in assemblies, where all pupils take part with very evident enthusiasm. From an early age pupils demonstrate good skills in holding a steady beat and in one Year 2 lesson they clapped simple rhythmic phrases in counterpoint. In most lessons pupils are engaged in composing and they develop compositional skills as they move through the school. More attention could be given, however, to helping pupils to understand simple musical forms and compositional devices. Even so, some of the work in Year 6 is inventive and is performed with confidence.
142. The quality of teaching is satisfactory in the subject, but because some teachers have limited knowledge and understanding of music they tend to teach to those aspects of the subject that they can manage successfully. Consequently, expectations in terms of developing all around musical skills in pupils are limited. Even so, in many cases teachers have sufficient general teaching skills to provide a satisfactory lesson in which pupils make satisfactory progress in the areas under focus. Assessment is not yet developed sufficiently to inform planning. For the most part teachers assess how well pupils have fulfilled the requirements within each topic, rather than assessing how musical skills and understanding are developing. Relationships and class management are good in all lessons and pupils enjoy their music. They come to the lessons

eager to take part and are consistently encouraged by positive responses to their efforts from teachers.

- 143. The music co-ordinator is new to the post and is beginning to develop the subject. Resources are good and the school has recently purchased a programme of work to provide a range of teaching materials and content. There has not yet, however, been focus on professional development in music to improve teaching expertise in the subject.
- 144. Overall, however, the curriculum provided meets the requirements of the National Curriculum. Opportunities to use information and communication technology in music are available, but could be extended. The school has not yet been able to establish opportunities for pupils to learn musical instruments, but there is a music club where about 15 pupils meet each week after school to make music together.

PHYSICAL EDUCATION

- 145. In Year 6 standards are above average in dance, games, swimming and athletics and pupils are achieving well. In Year 2 standards are average and achievement is satisfactory. Assessment of pupils' performance is a strong feature of lessons. The school provides good opportunities, in and after school, for pupils in Years 3 to 6 to participate in a wide range of team games and athletics activities. For Years 5 and 6 there are sporting fixtures and pupils enter local competitions. Pupils in Year 5 are developing useful personal sports diaries.
- 146. Throughout the school, pupils learn about the importance of warming up and cooling down exercises. Older pupils, without being told, start to warm-up as soon as they enter the sports hall. They understand very well the heart's function and the health related benefits of exercise. Teachers teach the value of health and safety; for instance, how to bend the knees when landing after jumping with their feet together and how to use space safely during warming up. During lessons, pupils clearly enjoy the activities and, by Year 2, pupils concentrate well. They control their throwing, catching and dribbling activities using different sized balls, showing improvement with practise. All pupils, including those with special educational needs, co-operate sensibly when working in pairs and small groups.
- 147. Year 4 pupils, having spent the term practising throwing, catching and defending in team games, work with real concentration to design team games. After a one game trial, they all contribute to an evaluation of it and use this to redefine all their game designs. They take account of details, such as pitch size: 'We think a netball pitch, because the football pitch was too big'. They debate the kind of ball to be used, team numbers, scoring and movement with the ball. For example, one pupil asked, 'Are you allowed to pivot with the ball?'.
- 148. By the end of Year 6, pupils produce a dance performance on the theme of 'Ice to Steam'. They present their ideas skilfully in groups to produce body shapes that suggest the textures of waters in different forms. Pupils worked at a variety of heights, speeds and size of movement. Smooth movements represent flowing water, whilst awkward angular shapes are used to suggest ice.
- 149. The quality of teaching was good or better in the lessons observed, but teachers' expectations are generally more demanding of older pupils for their age. Teachers' planning is detailed. For example, plans include opportunities to develop spiritual awareness. Good timing and routines are very well established, so that no time is lost during the lessons. Teachers' knowledge and understanding are good and their enthusiasm, especially with the older age group, inspires the pupils to give their best performances. Lessons meet the needs of all pupils and the strategies used to manage autistic pupils, for example, are sensitive to their individual needs. Where teaching was less successful teachers took too long over explanations and pupils' evaluation of their performance, which made the pace of parts of the lesson too slow to keep everyone involved.
- 150. The success of physical education is partly due to the importance given to providing a wide range of experiences and partly to the expertise and enthusiasm of several members of staff, including the new subject co-ordinator, who is a specialist in athletics. There are several after-school clubs,

which are oversubscribed. Coaching sessions are provided throughout the year. All pupils in Years 3 to 5 have eight weeks of swimming lessons at the local sports centre each year. Self-confidence and success are fostered in this subject, which makes a very good contribution to the spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of pupils. The use of information and communication technology in physical education is underdeveloped.

RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

151. Pupils' standards in religious education meet the requirements of the locally agreed syllabus at the end of Years 2 and 6 and, from the limited evidence available, their achievement is satisfactory.
152. Year 1 pupils understand the feelings that they have in relation to giving and receiving presents at Christmas, although they do not fully appreciate the parallel concept of Christ being a gift to the world. By Year 2, pupils have begun to understand the significance of Christian festivals such as Lent. They recognise, for example, the things that would be most appropriate for them to give up. Some understand the purpose of baptism, although few appreciate the symbolic significance of water in the ceremony. Many can make reasoned judgements about the relevance of Advent traditions to followers of the Christian faith. They also have a sound recall of significant features of Hindu traditions. Higher attaining Year 3 pupils can think of reasons why Jesus is described as 'the Light of the world' in terms of his sacrifice for humanity. Others, however, find this concept too difficult to comprehend. By Year 4, the pupils have a sound understanding of the parables of the 'Prodigal Son' and the 'Good Samaritan', and what it means to be a good neighbour in the biblical sense. By Year 6, most pupils have a satisfactory appreciation of the key beliefs associated with major world religions.
153. Pupils' attitudes in lessons range from sound to very good and are good overall. In most lessons they are interested in the topic they are studying. They are keen to contribute their own ideas to discussions, but are also prepared to listen to the views of others. They focus well on tasks and co-operate well with one another in pairs and groups. Their behaviour is very good.
154. Overall, the quality of teaching and learning in religious education is satisfactory, but a number of lessons are good. In the better lessons, expectations are high and information is delivered well in a knowledgeable way, with a positive impact on pupils' learning. In all lessons resources are used appropriately to stimulate pupils' interest, and a satisfactory range of methods keep the pupils motivated and on task. Questions are appropriately challenging. Pupil management is positive and effective, impacting well on attitudes, behaviour and relationships. Occasionally, questions were not directed at a wide enough range of pupils, allowing some to withdraw inappropriately from discussions.
155. There is a recent, and appropriate, policy for religious education, and provision for the subject suitably meets the requirements of the locally agreed syllabus. National guidelines are also used to inform planning. The school, however, has not yet constructed a scheme of work to reflect its own policy and to provide teachers with more detailed support for their own planning. There is also limited use of information and communication technology to support the subject. End of topic assessments are employed in some classes to identify pupils' progress. This approach, however, is not used consistently throughout the school. Co-ordination of the subject is satisfactory overall, but needs to be developed further to include formal monitoring of standards and teaching. Assemblies regularly support the school's overall provision for religious education.