

INSPECTION REPORT

WEST KINGSDOWN CE PRIMARY SCHOOL

West Kingsdown, Sevenoaks

LEA area: Kent

Unique reference number: 130948

Headteacher: Mr T I Whittaker

Reporting inspector: Mr Michael Raven
3961

Dates of inspection: 11 – 15 November 2002

Inspection number: 250271

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

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INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Type of school: Infant and Junior
School category: Voluntary Controlled
Age range of pupils: 4 – 11 years
Gender of pupils: Mixed

School address: Fawkham Road
West Kingsdown
Sevenoaks
Kent

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Appropriate authority: The Governing Body

Name of chair of governors: Mrs P A Bosley

Date of previous inspection: May 1998

INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

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3961	Michael Raven	Registered inspector	Physical education Educational inclusion English as an additional language	Characteristics of the school Interpretation of the school's results How well are pupils taught? How well is the school led and managed?
9736	John Brasier	Lay inspector		Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development How well does the school care for its pupils? How well does the school work in partnership with parents?
20064	Christopher Keeble	Team inspector	Mathematics Information and communication technology	How good are curricular and other opportunities?
17768	Heather Monaghan	Team inspector	Science Design and technology Music	
27301	Cynthia Messom	Team inspector	English Foundation stage of learning	
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PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

West Kingsdown Primary School serves 262 boys and girls aged from four to eleven. There are more girls than boys. Pupils are taught in ten classes, four of which contain mixed age groups. The youngest children in the Reception class attend school part-time in their first term. Almost all pupils come from White United Kingdom backgrounds and the representation of minority ethnic groups is very low. The area from which the school draws its pupils is socially mixed, but few pupils come from higher social class backgrounds. A small proportion of pupils comes from Travellers' families, some of which are permanently housed, whilst some travel for part of the year. In the last year, about 14 per cent of pupils joined or left the school other than at the usual time. There are no pupils learning English as an additional language. About one pupil in ten has been identified as having special educational needs and a relatively high proportion has a statement of special educational need. Pupils' special needs cover a wide range of learning, emotional and behavioural, speech and physical difficulties. Children start school at the age of four with skills which are about average for their age overall, although their language skills are less well developed than those of most children of this age.

HOW GOOD THE SCHOOL IS

This is a good school. Standards in English, mathematics, science and information and communication technology (ICT) are above average by the time pupils go on to secondary school at the age of 11. The quality of teaching is very good overall, with particular strengths in Years 3 – 6. The newly-appointed headteacher provides good leadership, firmly based on a clear understanding of the strengths and weaknesses of the school. The school has received two successive School Achievement Awards since the last inspection. It offers good value for money.

What the school does well

- It promotes very good achievement, so that standards are high by the time pupils come to the end of Year 6.
- Teaching is very good, so that pupils make very good progress in their learning.
- The school generates very enthusiastic attitudes to learning.
- It creates a positive atmosphere, in which very good relationships flourish.

What could be improved

- The promotion of pupils' appreciation of the cultural and ethnic diversity of British society.
- The leadership and management of the provision for the youngest children, in Reception.
- The use of ICT to support pupils' learning in the other subjects.
- The deployment of learning support staff.

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

HOW THE SCHOOL HAS IMPROVED SINCE ITS LAST INSPECTION

The school was last inspected in May 1998. It has made good progress since then. Standards in English, mathematics and science have continued to improve at a similar rate to the national trend. In Year 6, standards in all three subjects are higher than they were at the time of the last inspection. The quality of teaching has improved, as have pupils' attitudes, behaviour and personal development. There has been good progress overall on the issues identified for improvement at the last inspection. However, work on cultural and ethnic diversity remains weak.

STANDARDS

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

Performance in:	compared with			
	all schools			similar schools
	2000	2001	2002	2002
English	B	A	B	B
mathematics	B	C	A	B
science	C	A	C	C

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

In the most recent national tests for pupils in Year 6, standards in English were above the national average. The inspection confirms that this is still the case this year. Standards in mathematics remain above average, although they are not quite as high as they were last summer and the school has recognised this in setting slightly lower targets for Year 6 pupils this year. Standards in science are better now than they were in the last set of tests. They are above average. This improvement has come about as a result of the school's careful analysis of pupils' performance in national tests and also in response to an increased focus on meeting the needs of the most able. Standards in national tests have risen at a rate consistent with the national trend in improvement over the past five years. The school sets appropriately challenging targets for pupils' performance in English and mathematics tests. Standards in Year 6 are well above average in history. They are above average in ICT, religious education, art and design, design and technology and music. In no subject are standards below average. In the most recent national tests and assessments in Year 2, standards in reading and mathematics were below average. They were average in writing. In all three subjects, standards are now higher. They are well above average in writing. Standards in reading are above average and in mathematics they are average. The improvements this year are partly due to the fact that the pupils now in Year 2 have fewer special educational needs than last year. Improvement has also come about, especially in writing, because of teachers' particularly good application of national guidance on teaching the basic skills. Standards in Year 2 are also above average in science, religious education, art and design, and music. They are well above average in history. In ICT, design and technology, geography and physical education they are average. By the end of their time in the Reception class, most children aged five are likely to have the skills expected nationally in all the areas of learning for children of this age, including personal, social and emotional development, communication, language and literacy and mathematical development. Taking the school as a whole, pupils achieve very well in response to the very good teaching they receive and as a result of their very positive attitudes to learning. Achievement is particularly strong in Years 3 – 6.

PUPILS' ATTITUDES AND VALUES

Aspect	Comment
Attitudes to the school	Very good. Pupils are very enthusiastic about all that the school has to offer.
Behaviour, in and out of classrooms	Good. Pupils behave very well in most classes. In the playground the behaviour of a few pupils is sometimes less well controlled.
Personal development and relationships	Very good. Pupils get on very well together in classes. They work together well, and share and take turns with consideration. They show

	very good respect for the adults who work with them.
Attendance	Satisfactory. It is in line with the national average.

TEACHING AND LEARNING

Teaching of pupils in:	Reception	Years 1 – 2	Years 3 – 6
Quality of teaching	Good	Good	Very 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 is very good overall. There is a very high proportion of very good teaching, and none was seen which was unsatisfactory. English and mathematics are taught very well, including the basic skills of reading, writing and the use of numbers. Teachers make very good use of national guidance on the teaching of literacy and numeracy. This results in the high standards seen in Year 6. A particular strength of the teaching is the very effective way in which pupils are managed, resulting in very good attitudes and behaviour and contributing positively to pupils' very good learning and achievement. Another significant strength is that teachers keep a very close check on pupils' learning from lesson to lesson, adapting their teaching to meet pupils' needs as these are identified. The school takes good care to see that the needs of all its pupils are well met, including those who have special educational needs and the relatively high proportion of pupils who have statements of special needs.

OTHER ASPECTS OF THE SCHOOL

Aspect	Comment
The quality and range of the curriculum	Although the curriculum is broad and balanced, too little use is made of ICT to promote pupils' learning in other subjects, as required by the National Curriculum, especially in Years 3 – 6. This needs to be improved. Few activities are offered outside lessons, although the school has appropriate plans to improve this provision.
Provision for pupils with special educational needs	Good overall. Care is taken to see that these pupils are enabled to take a full part in all that the school has to offer. However, the children in the Reception class are not always supported as well as they might be.
Provision for pupils' personal, including spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	Satisfactory overall. The school promotes pupils' spiritual, moral and social development well. However, too little is done to promote their understanding of the cultural and ethnic diversity of British society.
How well the school cares for its pupils	Good. There are very good systems for monitoring and supporting pupils' personal development. A careful check is kept on their academic progress. Support and supervisory staff need more training in child protection procedures.

The school has sound links with parents and carers, but they could be more involved in supporting pupils' learning at school and at home.

HOW WELL THE SCHOOL IS LED AND MANAGED

Aspect	Comment
Leadership and management by the headteacher and other key staff	Satisfactory overall. The newly appointed headteacher has a very clear understanding of the strengths and weaknesses of the school and the main priorities for school development and improvement. He has made a very good start on leading the school and has already gained the respect and support of the governing body, pupils and their parents. There are some real strengths in the way subjects are led and managed, for example, in English. However, there is no specific manager for the Foundation Stage (Reception class children) and this is a weakness.
How well the governors fulfil their responsibilities	Good. Members of the governing body are committed to the school and take care to keep themselves well informed. They are appropriately involved in identifying with the headteacher and staff the main priorities for school improvement. They advise the school on spending its budget to support school development.
The school's evaluation of its performance	Satisfactory. The headteacher has already carried out some monitoring of the work in all classes and he has good plans to extend this role in light of priorities identified for development through the inspection. There has been some good analysis of pupils' performance in national tests and the information has been well used to modify teaching. A weakness is that the school does not analyse pupils' performance according to ethnicity and ability, although a start has been made on collecting the necessary information which will make this possible.
The strategic use of resources	Satisfactory. The school uses its money well to support teaching and learning and bring about improvements, for example in writing. However, support staff are not deployed carefully enough where and when they are most needed, particularly in the Reception class. Good care is taken to secure best value for money in obtaining goods and services. There are sufficient numbers of appropriately qualified and experienced staff to meet the needs of pupils and teach the full curriculum. The accommodation is good overall, the only weakness being in the outdoor area for the children in Reception, which is too small. Resources for learning are satisfactory overall.

PARENTS' AND CARERS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

What pleases parents most	What parents would like to see improved
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Teachers have high expectations of their children Their children like school They would feel comfortable approaching the school with a question or problem The school is well managed and led 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The amount of homework The range of activities outside lessons

The inspection team generally endorses parents' positive views, although it finds that leadership and management are satisfactory overall, rather than good. It agrees that there are too few activities outside lessons.

PART B: COMMENTARY

HOW HIGH ARE STANDARDS?

The school's results and pupils' achievements

1. There have been some significant improvements in standards since the last inspection. In Year 6, standards in English, mathematics, science and ICT are higher than they were in 1998. Standards in science have risen particularly well, having been below average when the school was last inspected. Pupils' performance in national tests in English, mathematics and science has improved steadily, in line with the national trend in improvement over the past five years. Improvements in national test results have been recognised through the two School Achievement Awards gained since the last inspection. Standards in music and history have risen well. They were below average in music and are now above average. In history standards are well above average.
2. Most pupils in Year 6 have good speaking and listening skills. They listen attentively in lessons to the teacher and to one another. They make good, well thought-out contributions to class and group discussions, expressing themselves clearly. Most read fluently, choosing from the school's good selection of fiction books, which is well set out for pupils to choose from. They read with excellent expression and confidently discuss what they have read. They organise their thoughts well in their writing, producing well planned, carefully structured stories, letters and arguments. Pupils have good spelling skills for their age. They summarise text which they have read succinctly and accurately, picking out the most important points. Pupils enjoy using synonyms and metaphors in their writing.
3. Most pupils in Year 2 use capital letters and full stops appropriately in their writing. They enjoy writing lively and adventurous stories. They learn new spelling patterns quickly, using them to spell new words and liven up their writing. They use connecting words appropriately to make their sentences more complex and interesting. Most show a good understanding of what they read. They read with confidence and enjoyment, tackling unfamiliar words skilfully and correcting their own mistakes.
4. Pupils in Year 6 have a good grasp of all the aspects of mathematics covered at this stage, especially the use of numbers. They are able to read and plot co-ordinates in the first quadrant and most can use all four quadrants confidently. This is beyond expectations for pupils of this age, being expected by Year 9. Even those who have learning difficulties can cope with co-ordinates in the first quadrant, although they need close adult support as they do so.
5. Most pupils in Year 2 understand that multiplication is the same as repeated addition. They are learning the two-times and ten-times tables. They can multiply by two and ten, up to one hundred. The most accomplished are able to explain why 56, for example, is not a multiple of ten.
6. Standards are better than they were five years ago for a number of reasons. There have been significant improvements in the education offered. The quality of teaching is better. At the time of the last inspection teaching was good overall. However, some unsatisfactory teaching was seen. There was none during the present inspection. In 1998, just over two lessons in ten were very good or excellent. Inspectors found the proportion of very good or excellent teaching at the present inspection to be double this, and much higher than that usually found nationally when primary schools are inspected. In Years 3 – 6, the proportion of very good or excellent teaching was very

high, with around half of the lessons seen being so judged. The very good teaching they receive means that pupils make very good progress in their learning and achieve well. They start school with skills which are mainly average for their age. However, their skills in the key area of communication, language and literacy are less well developed than those of most four year olds. By the age of 11, they achieve standards which are generally above average. They progress from a low starting point at the age of four to reach above average standards in reading and writing by the time they move on to secondary school.

7. The overall picture is that standards are better in Year 6 than they are in Year 2. This is clearly reflected in the most recent national tests and assessments for seven and eleven year olds in English, mathematics and science, and it is borne out by the inspection. This is because teaching is better in Years 3 – 6 than it is in Reception and Years 1 and 2. Although teaching is good in these classes, with a high proportion of lessons judged to be of good quality, the proportion of very good teaching is lower, being around two in ten lessons.
8. There have been a number of other improvements since the last inspection which have contributed to the rise in standards. The school has done some good work on analysing the strengths and weaknesses in pupils' work, including their performance in national tests and assessments. The identification of weaknesses in pupils' writing led to a good programme of action, which is continuing, and which the inspection finds has improved standards. The school's well planned and co-ordinated response to this issue included a good planned use of additional resources, such as writing frames and writing guidance books. It also included the enhancement of opportunities for pupils to write more in other subjects. The inspection found plenty of evidence that pupils write regularly, for a range of different purposes, in most subjects. For example, they write poems in religious education lessons and write accounts of investigations they have carried out in science.
9. At the time of the last inspection, there was some unsatisfactory behaviour in Years 4, 5 and 6. This was having an adverse effect on their learning and inevitably the standards they achieved were not as good as they might have been. This weakness has been very successfully overcome. Teachers manage pupils' behaviour very skilfully, so that they behave very well in lessons. They are attentive, enthusiastic and co-operative. The fact that they get on very well and try hard means that they get the most out of lessons, and this has contributed to the rise in standards.
10. Standards in music were below average mainly because the requirements of the National Curriculum were not fully met and the curriculum was too narrow. A lot of good work has been done since then. The subject is very enthusiastically managed. A new scheme of work has been adopted, appropriately based on national guidance, and curriculum requirements are met in full. There has been some good training for teachers. Standards have risen as a consequence of these initiatives.

Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development

11. Attitudes and relationships are very good and behaviour and personal development are good, an improvement compared with the previous inspection.
12. Pupils enjoy school. They are very enthusiastic in lessons and get on well with their teachers and other adults. They are welcoming to visitors and take an interest in them. Once in class, they mainly get down to work well and show a genuine interest in their work, especially in answering questions. This was particularly in evidence in an ICT

lesson on the use of spreadsheets and their comparison with pen and paper, where the pupils freely proffered benefits and disadvantages of the two systems. These positive attitudes are due to the very good relationships between pupils and teachers and the enthusiasm shown by teachers for their subjects.

13. Behaviour is good. It is very good around the school and at lunchtime and in almost all lessons, but is less good in the playground where a small minority of pupils is inclined to resort to physical means to resolve disagreements. There are no exclusions. At lunchtime pupils talk to each other socially. They look after the premises and the school keeps in good condition. Oppressive behaviour occurs from time to time and the school is assiduous in tracking down the causes and finding solutions.
14. Personal development is good. There are many opportunities for pupils to take responsibility, such as membership of the school council, acting as dining room or assembly monitors, helping younger children read and helping them play during wet playtimes. There are, however, fewer opportunities provided for pupils to carry out independent research in the library or in their own time.
15. Relationships are very good. Teachers know their pupils well and enjoy working with them. For example, in a personal and social education lesson, pupils were happy to share their ideas on how they feel about being left out of a group and how they might help others in a similar situation. In a physical education lesson, pupils were keen to demonstrate what they could do and the other members of the class were very supportive, especially to one pupil with special educational needs who needed much coaxing to perform.
16. Attendance is satisfactory. It is equal to the average for primary schools. Unauthorised absence is at a very low level. The school day starts on time and there is good timekeeping throughout the day. Lateness is a minor problem. Daily registration is efficient.

HOW WELL ARE PUPILS TAUGHT?

17. The very good teaching makes an important contribution to the above average standards which are achieved in most subjects, most importantly English and mathematics, by the time pupils are 11. It promotes very good learning. It is one of the main reasons why standards are higher now than they were at the time of the last inspection. It has contributed positively to the rising trend in pupils' performance in national tests in English, mathematics and science.
18. There are a number of reasons why the teaching works so well. Because teachers manage their pupils very skilfully, lessons are orderly. In response, pupils behave very well. They listen carefully, wait their turn to talk and contribute enthusiastically to class discussion. They work hard and try to do their best. All this means that they get the most out of lessons and make very good progress in their learning. In an English lesson in one of the mixed Years 3 and 4 classes, the teacher's good relationship with pupils immediately established good class control. They responded positively, concentrating hard and striving to find appropriate adjectives to enliven their poems. In a Years 5 and 6 mathematics lesson on shapes, the teacher's control of the class was so good that no time was wasted. The day got off to a very purposeful start. Following some clear whole-class teaching on how to calculate the perimeter of a shape, pupils moved into their groups swiftly and were very soon ready to work and learn. Good class control and positive relationships with the pupils in a Year 2 physical education lesson

meant that pupils behaved very sensibly, safely co-operating together and working hard as they practised throwing and catching a ball.

19. Teachers have a good understanding of the subjects they teach, so that they are able to explain things clearly and with authority. This helps pupils' understanding. They also teach with energy and enthusiasm, making lessons enjoyable and promoting good attitudes to school and learning. For example, an outstanding Year 5 history lesson on the Tudors generated tremendous interest, so that pupils worked very hard at finding and using evidence to compare the lives of the rich and the poor. In a Year 2 English lesson, the teacher had a confident, enthusiastic manner and a very good understanding of national guidance on the teaching of reading and writing. She led pupils to make excellent gains in their writing skills. Because the lesson was stimulating and enjoyable, pupils were very eager to learn. They concentrated closely and were keen to contribute their own answers and ideas. In the Reception class, the teacher's very good understanding of the children's mathematical development enabled her to ensure that activities were appropriate and promoted very good learning. They enjoyed counting up to six objects and finding the missing numbers, concentrating very well and making very good progress in their knowledge and understanding of numbers.
20. Teachers keep a close eye on how pupils are getting on from one lesson to the next. They soon spot any problems that pupils are having and take appropriate action. This was seen, for example, in a mathematics lesson in the Years 5 and 6 class. The teacher had checked pupils' work completed in the previous lesson and identified errors, which she set about correcting. She had also identified that some pupils had not done as much work as expected. This was pointed out to them and they were urged to work harder. In a Year 6 English lesson, the teacher's very clear understanding of pupils' capabilities and achievements was put to very good use in grouping pupils together and matching work to their needs.
21. In many lessons, especially in English and mathematics, whole-class introductions are followed by group work which is carefully planned to enable all pupils to make good progress, whatever their background or previous accomplishments. In a Years 5 and 6 mathematics lesson the work on co-ordinates being done by the whole class was carefully simplified so that those who have learning difficulties could achieve success, with adult support, as could those who had just joined the class and needed to catch up. In the same lesson, the work for the most capable was appropriately planned to challenge and stimulate them, leading them to achieve standards well beyond those expected. When pupils from Travellers' families are going to be away travelling, good quality support from the Travellers' Support Service helps to ensure that they have work to take with them, so that they do not fall too far behind. Specialist teachers from the service help the school to support these pupils in catching up on what they have missed, once they return to school.
22. The way that learning support staff are assigned to classes means that teachers and pupils do not always gain as much from their work as they might. Although there are some examples of support staff giving very good quality support, they are not always there when they are most needed. In Reception, for example, there is too little support for the teacher and children. There is not always a member of the support staff present in this class. It means that the needs of children who have special educational needs are not met as well as they should be at times. The need for the teacher to devote much of her time to supporting those who have special educational needs, in the absence of support staff, means that the needs of the other children suffer too. There were also some examples during the inspection of support staff being present in lessons inappropriately. For example, in a Year 5 ICT lesson two learning support

assistants were learning alongside the pupils. They were not, therefore, in a position to help pupils with their learning.

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

23. Although the curriculum has improved since the previous inspection, there are weaknesses. The school does not meet statutory requirements to use ICT in all subjects of the National Curriculum, except physical education, in Years 3 to 6, and in English, mathematics and science in Years 1 and 2. Apart from this, the curriculum is broad and balanced and meets all the requirements of the National Curriculum. Religious education is taught in accordance with the locally agreed syllabus. The curriculum for the children in the Reception class is appropriately based on national guidance and meets all requirements. The allocation of time given to all subjects is appropriate. A high proportion of teaching time is appropriately allocated to the teaching of literacy, reflecting the school's emphasis on writing.
24. National strategies for the teaching of literacy and numeracy have been successfully introduced. National guidance is well used by teachers in planning their lessons and meeting the needs of pupils. The National Literacy Strategy in particular is used very effectively and this is having a positive impact on standards in reading and writing. The effectiveness of the teaching of literacy skills is very good and that for numeracy skills is good.
25. Sex education and lessons on the mis-use of drugs are covered appropriately through the programme for personal, social and health education. This includes helpful contributions from the police and the school nurse.
26. Good use is made of the local environment to enrich pupils' learning experiences and there are very good links with the community. The governors feel that strong links with the community are so important that they have a committee specifically to develop the existing effective links. There are regular visits to the parish church, and the vicar conducts assemblies in the school. The headteacher occasionally gives the sermon in church. There are also links with other churches in the area. Many local groups use the school's facilities at the weekend and after school. Year 6 pupils go on a week's visit to an activity centre. This visit gives the pupils an opportunity for outdoor pursuits and for social development. Other classes visit places of local interest to support their learning. Older pupils attend the local swimming pool on a weekly basis. The school works with local secondary schools, and pupils from these schools come for work experience. There are strong links with local playgroups and these are helpful when the children first start school.
27. At the time of the inspection, there were only a very few extra-curricular activities and this is a weakness. There are appropriate plans to develop this aspect of the school's provision, especially to offer more sporting activities. Pupils do have access to a wide range of private instrumental tuition in school. Care is taken that the pupils concerned do not miss the same lessons each week.
28. There has been a good improvement since the previous inspection in the provision for the spiritual development of pupils. Assemblies are a rich learning and spiritual experience. One assembly, taken by the headteacher for Remembrance Day, was excellent. Pupils came into assembly reverently, so helping to create a worshipful atmosphere. Pupils were given the opportunity to think deeply about the assembly's meaning. Opportunities for spiritual development are identified in lessons in many

subjects, as well as in acts of worship. These are seen, for example, in English, history and religious education. For instance, in a Year 3 poetry lesson pupils had very good opportunities to explore other people's feelings and some of their own as they discussed the poets' use of powerful, expressive language.

29. Pupils are taught the difference between right and wrong and are able to discuss reasons for these with understanding. They take good care of the school, respecting the environment, their own and others' property and the resources which they use. The school council meets regularly. This helps to give pupils a sense of responsibility and it helpfully introduces them to the workings of the democratic process. The pupils themselves believe it to be an effective forum in which issues which are important to them are debated and solutions found. The school promotes an attitude of caring for others. Older pupils help to look after the younger ones, especially those in the Reception class. Pupils value the opportunity to take part in regular 'circle time' sessions, where issues, feelings, thoughts and values are discussed.
30. Although the school provides pupils with appropriate opportunities to appreciate their own cultural heritage and traditions, for example, through art, history and music, it does too little to promote their awareness of the cultural and ethnic diversity of British society. This needs to be improved. The school has a particular responsibility to do this because the school itself is almost entirely composed of both adults and pupils from White United Kingdom backgrounds, and there is very little representation of ethnic and cultural minorities. Although there are a number of Travellers' children at the school, and there are many Travellers families in the immediate area, pupils know almost nothing of Traveller culture. They do, however, have some negative stereotypical beliefs. The school is aware that it needs to tackle this issue and some good quality training for staff has already been arranged to enable them to raise pupils' awareness and understanding of Travellers. Although pupils are exposed to some work on the customs and beliefs of some of the major faith groups in British society, this sort of work plays too slight a part in pupils' cultural development. It does not contribute positively enough to the promotion of good relations between people of different racial groups. Conversations with pupils show that they are strikingly unaware of the cultural and ethnic diversity of British society as a whole.

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL CARE FOR ITS PUPILS?

31. A high quality of pastoral support pervades every aspect of the school. This was also true at the time of the last inspection. Pupils with special educational needs are well integrated into school life. The assessment of pupils' attainment and progress is now good, an improvement over the previous inspection.
32. The school is a safe environment. All the expected safety measures are in place. Regular safety inspections are carried out and any issues identified are recorded and appropriate action is taken. At times, the children in the Reception class are only supervised by one adult, which is unsatisfactory because the arrangement of the teaching areas requires at least two adults to look after the children's safety. There are sufficient numbers of first-aiders, cleaning chemicals are locked up, electrical equipment is regularly inspected and fire drills are held as necessary. Child protection procedures are satisfactory overall, with good practices offset by a lack of training. The nominated person [the headteacher] is experienced in child protection with good contacts and knowledge of local procedures. Staff, including midday supervisors and classroom support assistants, are inadequately trained in the warning signs of child abuse and the action to take if a pupil discloses abuse, but plans are in hand to remedy this. The school has appropriate procedures to ensure that pupils are not exposed to

unsuitable material on the Internet. Pupils who have difficult home circumstances, or are looked after away from their parents or who are on the 'at risk' register, are carefully monitored and, where appropriate, are offered extra support. Topics and issues covered in the personal and social education programme help pupils to look after themselves and they also play a significant part in the school's good procedures to counter harassment, along with assemblies. Pupils are very well looked after. Staff are trained in medical procedures for handling diabetics. Medicines are administered safely by the school secretary.

33. The procedures for the promotion of attendance are good. Full attendance is appropriately rewarded and this helps to encourage good attendance. Telephoning home to make enquiries, if no message has been received, occurs on the second day of absence. The Education Welfare Officer is involved where necessary and provides a good service.
34. The procedures for promoting good behaviour are good. There is a very good commitment by all adults to emphasise rewards, be consistent to the behaviour policy, treat the children in the way they are expected to treat adults and make school enjoyable. The weakness is the lack of training for midday supervisors in behaviour management, which the new headteacher is planning to remedy. The awareness of parents and children of the school's behaviour expectations is seen as very important, and it is also planned that the incidence of rewards far outweighs the use of criticism or sanctions.
35. Support for pupils' personal development is very good. Support mostly comes from teachers' close observation of progress and their keen interest in pupils' success. They talk sympathetically about their pupils, especially the ones causing them concern. All are supported equally well in lessons, in accordance with the school's policy on racial equality, and all are free to approach any member of staff when they need help with a personal problem.
36. Overall, the school has good procedures for checking on pupils' attainment and the progress they make, including those with special educational needs. A good range of detailed records is maintained. In particular, the school has improved assessment procedures for pupils in Years 3 to 6 since the previous inspection, which identified the need for better records to be kept.
37. The assessment of children in the Reception class is at an early stage of development. The school carries out a helpful assessment of the children's skills when they first start school. There are some good recent records of assessments of what children know and can do, particularly in personal and social development and language. Although these are starting to help teachers to plan appropriate work to meet the children's different needs, they need to be more sharply focused and analytical.
38. The school carries out both statutory and optional tests in English, mathematics and science in Years 2 to 6. Teachers make accurate assessments of the levels at which pupils are working and comprehensive and detailed records are compiled for each pupil. These are used to plan appropriate work for pupils and to group them within their class. This ensures that all pupils' needs are met, including those who have various special educational needs, so that they make good progress. Records are passed on to the next teacher and used to plan subsequent work, to track pupils' progress and to set targets for improvement. Some science assessments recorded at the end of a topic, for example, on forces, relate to pupils' general ability. They are consequently less useful to the next teacher as they are not linked to the teaching programme and do

not record what pupils know, understand and can do. A detailed analysis of pupils' test results in Year 6 enables teachers to identify any weaknesses in pupils' understanding. This results in improvements to the teaching programme supported, as necessary, by additional resources.

39. Teachers' day-to-day assessment of pupils' work is good. During the inspection there were many instances of these assessments being used to focus teaching and adapt planned lessons to take account of pupils' understanding. This is very effective in maintaining pupils' interest and enthusiasm and ensures that they work with confidence and make good progress. Written work is marked regularly, giving pupils helpful feedback on what they should do to improve.

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL WORK IN PARTNERSHIP WITH PARENTS?

40. Parents have a high opinion of the school and are very pleased with the education provided. They particularly appreciate the approachability of the school, its leadership and management, its high expectations, the good progress made by their children and the good teaching their children receive. They greatly approve of the way their children mature while attending the school. The inspection team generally agrees with the parents. One parent in six feels that it would be good to see more activities outside lessons and the inspection team supports this view.
41. The contribution of parents to the pupils' learning at school and at home and, consequently, the impact of parents on the work of the school, are unsatisfactory because parents do not support reading and homework as well as they might. This is particularly noticeable in Reception, where support is very scant, and it is a factor for all children up to the age of seven. This is a disappointing response to the school's efforts to involve parents more in the work of the school.
42. The school provides satisfactory information for parents. There are three evenings per year when parents are invited to discuss their children's progress. There is a very good prospectus and good newsletters. Reports are friendly and the summaries represent the pupils well. However, they contain too few suggestions about how parents might help their children at home. Curriculum information is provided regularly for each class so that parents know what is being taught and can support their children at home and parents are made aware of their children's targets. The school takes care to inform all parents about its work. If they are living at separate addresses both are sent copies of all the necessary information.
43. Parents' support for the school is good in some areas, such as helping on trips and with swimming, but disappointing in others, such as helping with homework and reading. The lack of help with reading is particularly disappointing when the school itself is making a substantial effort to help the pupils. Parents are welcome to help in school, but few do.
44. Parents are invited to school performances. The parent-teacher association provides valuable finance for the school. The whole village is welcome to the May and Christmas Fairs. Parents of children who have special educational needs are invited to attend the termly reviews of their individual education plans. Few do so. Induction in to the nursery is preceded by a home visit, and the parents of children starting in Reception receive a welcome pack and are invited to a meeting, but this is not well attended.

HOW WELL IS THE SCHOOL LED AND MANAGED?

45. Leadership and management are sound, overall. The headteacher has made a good start since his appointment at the start of the school year. He has a clear understanding of the strengths and weaknesses of the school and has quickly and accurately identified the main priorities for improvement. He is well aware, for example, that the use of ICT needs to be developed further and he has already taken steps to address the weaknesses in the provision for pupils' cultural development. It is clear that the headteacher has already established his leadership and that the governing body, pupils and parents respect him.
46. There are strengths in the leadership and management of other key staff, but there are also weaknesses. There is an appropriate system of year group management for Years 1-6. All subjects now have a co-ordinator, although in physical education the headteacher is filling this role in a caretaker capacity. English is co-ordinated very well and the management of science is also strong. In both subjects, some good monitoring and evaluation have led to appropriate action which has resulted in improved standards. The management of the provision for pupils who have special educational needs is sound overall, but an important weakness is that the special educational needs co-ordinator does not manage the provision for children with special needs in the Reception class. This is part of the general weakness that results from there being no dedicated manager for the Foundation Stage (Reception class children).
47. The headteacher has made a good start on monitoring and evaluating the work of the school. He observed teaching in all classes as part of his preparation for taking up the post. Since September, he has taught in all classes and this has helped him to identify strengths and areas for development. He is planning an appropriate programme of classroom observations based on issues identified by the inspection. Although the school uses national and local data appropriately to compare the performance of its pupils in national tests with that of other schools, there is a weakness in that pupils' attainment and progress are not analysed by ethnicity. The school is not in a position, therefore, to tell whether different groups of pupils do any better or worse than others. A start has just been made on gathering the data which will make such analyses possible.
48. The governing body fulfils its role well. Members take care to keep themselves well informed about the work of the school. Many make regular visits to the school, for meetings with the headteacher and staff, both formal and informal, and to observe what goes on in lessons. There is a helpful community liaison committee of the governing body, which promotes the partnership of the school with its community. Governors join with staff in planning meetings to identify priorities for school development and improvement. Through its finance committee, the governing body gives appropriate advice to the school on managing its budget to support school improvement priorities, such as the decision to maintain the pupil to teacher ratio at as low a level as possible. Governors have a clear understanding of the strengths of the school. They know well the context in which it works, and are able to see its performance realistically in that context. They are just beginning to explore their role in evaluating the cost-effectiveness of some of their spending decisions.
49. The strategic use of resources is satisfactory overall, with a number of good features offset by the unsatisfactory deployment of classroom support staff. Specific grants are well used for the specified purposes, and special educational needs funding is topped up by the school. Day-to-day financial administration is efficient and modern technology is used satisfactorily in accounting, but not for maintaining assessment and attendance records. The school's financial procedures were audited recently. A large number of

minor points for improvement was identified and appropriate remedial action has been taken. The office is a welcoming contact point for visitors.

50. The principles of best value are applied well. Comparisons of efficiency are made with similar schools and particular interest is shown in the local authority's value added analyses, which are considered superior to national analyses based on free school meals. Links with local technology and sports colleges are producing useful initiatives. The cost of installing closed-circuit television for security was appropriately challenged by the governors and alternative arrangements made. Appropriate consultation takes place with parents before the development plan is finalised. Comparisons of costs are made, for instance the grounds maintenance contract has been awarded to another contractor as a result of competitive tendering.
51. The school is well staffed with a good spread of qualifications and experience. Of especial value are the qualifications held or being sought by learning support assistants. Staff development is driven primarily by the development plan, with secondary input from individuals' development needs as identified through performance management. There are good arrangements for the induction of newly qualified staff, who receive all their entitlements and a friendly welcome from most staff. Staff are highly committed and work together as a team. There is good collaboration between teachers and classroom support assistants.
52. The quality of education provided is assisted by the good accommodation. The buildings are well suited to the needs of today. The outside play areas are good overall. However, the dedicated outdoor area for the children in the Reception class is too small. Rooms are generally spacious and well lit. The school has made a sound start on its plans to increase accessibility for disabled pupils.
53. Resources for learning are satisfactory in most subjects, with some good examples, for example, in physical education. There are some weaknesses in resources for ICT. There is only a small number of computers available in the ICT suite. Although these have been recently augmented by four new laptops, the use of these is limited due to software restrictions.

WHAT SHOULD THE SCHOOL DO TO IMPROVE FURTHER?

54. The governing body, headteacher and staff should now:

- (1) identify and plan opportunities across the curriculum to ensure that pupils gain a good understanding and appreciation of the cultural and ethnic diversity of British society;
(Paragraphs 30, 65, 78, 92, 143)
- (2) ensure that the provision for children at the Foundation Stage is effectively managed, including the provision for those who have special educational needs;
(Paragraphs 22, 32, 37, 46, 49, 59, 60, 61, 63)
- (3) identify and plan opportunities for pupils to use ICT as they learn in English, mathematics and science throughout the school, and in all other subjects except physical education in Years 3 to 6, as required by the National Curriculum;
(Paragraphs 23, 86, 99, 105, 115)
- (4) review the deployment of classroom support staff to ensure that they work where and when they are most needed.
(Paragraphs 22, 32, 59)

The school is aware of the need to improve the use of ICT across the curriculum. Some work has just begun on preparing teachers to promote pupils' cultural development more effectively.

The school should also plan to address the following minor weaknesses:

- support and supervisory staff lack training about their role in child protection procedures;
(Paragraph 32)
- parents and carers are not sufficiently well involved in supporting the work of the school and their children's learning at home and at school;
(Paragraphs 41, 43, 44)
- there are too few activities for pupils outside lessons, particularly sporting activities.
(Paragraphs 27, 40).

PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS

Summary of the sources of evidence for the inspection

Number of lessons observed	55
Number of discussions with staff, governors, other adults and pupils	37

Summary of teaching observed during the inspection

	Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very poor
Number	2	20	18	15	0	0	0
Percentage	4	36	33	27	0	0	0

The table gives the number and percentage of lessons observed in each of the seven categories used to make judgements about teaching.

Information about the school's pupils

Pupils on the school's roll	YR – Y6
Number of pupils on the school's roll (FTE for part-time pupils)	264
Number of full-time pupils known to be eligible for free school meals	18

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	30

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

Pupil mobility in the last school year	No of pupils
Pupils who joined the school other than at the usual time of first admission	21
Pupils who left the school other than at the usual time of leaving	16

Attendance

Authorised absence

	%
School data	5.9
National comparative data	5.4

Unauthorised absence

	%
School data	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	23	15	38

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		Reading	Writing	Mathematics
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	21	22	23
	Girls	14	15	15
	Total	35	37	38
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	92 (94)	97 (94)	100 (100)
	National	84 (84)	86 (86)	90 (91)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	21	21	23
	Girls	14	15	15
	Total	35	36	38
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	92 (97)	95 (100)	100 (97)
	National	85 (85)	89 (89)	89 (89)

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

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

Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 2 for the latest reporting year	Year	Boys	Girls	Total
	2002	22	19	41

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys	18	17	20
	Girls	18	19	19
	Total	36	36	39
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	88 (92)	88 (87)	95 (95)
	National	75 (75)	73 (71)	86 (87)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys	14	21	18
	Girls	19	19	18
	Total	33	40	36
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	80 (71)	98 (71)	88 (74)
	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	230	1	0
White – Irish	0	0	0
White – any other White background	1	0	0
Mixed – White and Black Caribbean	3	0	0
Mixed – White and Black African	0	0	0
Mixed – White and Asian	0	0	0
Mixed – any other mixed background	0	0	0
Asian or Asian British - Indian	1	0	0
Asian or Asian British - Pakistani	0	0	0
Asian or Asian British – Bangladeshi	0	0	0
Asian or Asian British – any other Asian background	0	0	0
Black or Black British – Caribbean	0	0	0
Black or Black British – African	1	0	0
Black or Black British – any other Black background	0	0	0
Chinese	0	0	0
Any other ethnic group	0	0	0
No ethnic group recorded	0	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)	11.4
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	23.2
Average class size	26.4

Education support staff: YR – Y6

Total number of education support staff	11
Total aggregate hours worked per week	216

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Financial information

Financial year	2001/2002
	£
Total income	574,155
Total expenditure	580,848
Expenditure per pupil	2,112
Balance brought forward from previous year	22,485
Balance carried forward to next year	15,792

Recruitment of teachers

Number of teachers who left the school during the last two years	5
Number of teachers appointed to the school during the last two years	5
<hr/>	
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	262
Number of questionnaires returned	57

Percentage of responses in each category

	Strongly agree	Tend to agree	Tend to disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know
My child likes school.	64	36	0	0	0
My child is making good progress in school.	54	46	0	0	0
Behaviour in the school is good.	39	59	2	0	0
My child gets the right amount of work to do at home.	38	41	18	4	0
The teaching is good.	63	32	4	0	2
I am kept well informed about how my child is getting on.	46	46	9	0	0
I would feel comfortable about approaching the school with questions or a problem.	58	42	0	0	0
The school expects my child to work hard and achieve his or her best.	65	35	0	0	0
The school works closely with parents.	49	46	5	0	0
The school is well led and managed.	53	40	0	0	8
The school is helping my child become mature and responsible.	49	51	0	0	0
The school provides an interesting range of activities outside lessons.	40	38	9	9	4

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

55. The quality of education provided for children in the Foundation Stage is good, and gives them a good basis for future learning. The environment is lively, colourful, interesting and exciting, and children enjoy taking part in all the varied activities which are provided to enable them to reach the standards expected by the end of the Reception year – the Early Learning Goals.
56. The children attend part-time in the mornings initially, and this gradually builds up through the year until they are attending for a full day. When the children start school, their knowledge, skills and understanding are generally what is expected for children of this age. However, in the area of communication, language and literacy, their skills are less well developed than is usual at this age.
57. During their time in the Foundation Stage, most children make good progress in all areas of learning, due to the good atmosphere and ethos, the good teaching and the wide range of activities offered.
58. Most children are likely to reach the Early Learning Goals by the time they join Year 1, but although they make good progress in communication, language and literacy, this is the weakest area of development because of the lower level of skills they have on starting school.
59. The teaching seen during the inspection was good overall. It is best when more than one member of staff is present. Teaching is strengthened because they work well together as a team. The range and quality of learning experiences offered to the children is better than at other times. Teaching is less strong when the teacher is unsupported by other staff and the range of learning opportunities is more limited. The demands of children who have special behavioural needs are difficult to balance at such times against the needs of the rest of the class, and this sometimes results in less effective learning for all. The lack of a designated Foundation Stage co-ordinator means that issues of this nature are not always picked up immediately and dealt with as soon as possible, and there is no overall plan for further development.
60. The planning of learning activities has recently been strengthened and improved. It now soundly covers all the areas of learning. However, although a good start has been made to the observation of children and assessment of their learning, there is scope for further development. Assessments could be more sharply focused, carried out in a more systematic way by all Reception staff, so that better use could be made of the information gathered to help teachers plan their work with the children.
61. Staff have a good grasp of the Early Learning Goals and good knowledge of the needs and development of very young children. However, there are times when more opportunities for child-led activities with more sharply focused intervention in the learning would lead to greater challenge, and would result in better progress in learning.
62. There is an awareness of the need to prepare children for the transition from the Foundation Stage into Year 1. For example, good care is taken to introduce the children to elements of the national literacy and numeracy strategies, which they will encounter in Year 1.

63. Arrangements for admission to the school are generally satisfactory. However, there are some weaknesses. More care needs to be taken to ensure that adequate resources are available for children entering the school with special educational needs that are already identified, so that no time is lost in giving them the support they need. Good links are established with the local playgroup, and staff visit to discuss children who will soon be coming to the school. Opportunities for visits to the school by parents and children are appropriately organised to enable them to meet staff and experience the activities in the Reception class. At present there are no home visits by staff. Parents are insufficiently involved in the work of the Reception class and in supporting the education of their children.

Personal, social and emotional development

64. Most children enter the school with average levels of maturity and they make good progress in their personal, social and emotional development. They become more confident with adults and with each other, and most children are likely to attain the Early Learning Goals by the time they join Year 1. A few will exceed them. Most children settle quickly into school life and are confident and happy to come to school. They generally establish good relationships with each other and with the adults in the Reception class. Most initiate interaction with other children and adults, but a few are shy and have to be encouraged by adults to relate to others. The children are generally kind and gentle to each other and work and play well together. They concentrate well when they are involved in a task, and this is due to the careful matching of the activity to the level of capability of the children, and the gentle encouragement by staff to persist until the task is finished. The children are learning how to behave well in whole-class and small-group activities, as well as when working and playing independently. They are developing a clear sense of right and wrong. They share with each other sensibly and help each other with their activities. They comfort each other sensitively when they are upset and a few are confident enough to organise themselves and others in group play.
65. The children are learning how to take turns co-operatively and to respect other people's ideas and opinions. However, too little is done to promote the children's awareness of the values, beliefs and customs of people from a range of different cultural and ethnic backgrounds. There are few resources for learning and play which reflect cultural and ethnic diversity.
66. Children understand the class rules and know what behaviour is expected of them, tidying up well after activities and taking care of equipment. They know that they must put their coats on when it is cold outside, must wash their hands when they are dirty and after using the toilet.

Communication, language and literacy

67. Children's communication, language and literacy skills are generally below average on entry to the school. Their skills develop well in the Reception class. Most are just about on course to reach expected levels by the end of their time in Reception, in response to the good teaching they receive. Most children talk as they play and work. A few will happily explain to others what they are doing and initiate conversations, but these are in the minority. For example, two boys playing together negotiated a swap of their roles in the 'shop' so that they could try both of them out, taking it in turns to be the 'customer' and 'check-out person'. A girl negotiated entry to the home corner by knocking on the door and saying, "Can I come in?" She waited patiently until the child inside said "Yes, come in" before she went in.

68. A few children are shy and find it difficult to initiate conversations without adult help, being unwilling to try anything without encouragement and support from adults. The staff are aware of the differing language needs of the children and they are very good at providing support to those who lack confidence. They help them to develop their willingness to speak in group situations, and at times persuade them to tell something to the whole class. They are also very good at encouraging the more articulate children to develop their language skills further.
69. All of the children love listening to stories, and taking part in reciting rhymes and singing jingles and songs. They make up their own stories in play using toys, teddies and dolls and outdoor play as starting points. One little girl played happily in the dolls' house encouraging the dolls to talk to each other and carrying out tasks in the home corner. Children are at different stages of recognising letters and sounds. A few know some of the letters of the alphabet and their sounds but most are still trying to learn quite a small selection.
70. The children enjoy looking at books. They have favourite books, and handle them carefully. They can hold books the right way up, and turn the pages in order. They point out individual words in pages and can recognise a few simple words. Children respond naturally to stories expressing humour, kindness and sadness, and they are beginning to relate these stories to incidents in their own lives. For example, they could talk about things that they find "scary" after hearing the story of the 'Bear and the Scary Night.' "Fireworks are scary, they make a big bang". "Ghosts are scary. They make you jump."
71. Some can recognise and write their first name. All children make marks on paper and some can write letters to form simple words, trace over words, or copy the teachers' writing with good pencil control. They use their writing skills effectively in play to make lists or write notes in the home corner, in the shop and office.

Mathematical development

72. The children make good progress in this area. By the end of the Foundation Stage their skills are likely to be similar to those expected nationally. Most of the children can name basic shapes, such as square, triangle, rectangle and circle, can make shapes with play-doh, and use shapes to make sticky paper pictures.
73. The children are also developing mathematical language and can recognise that two square shapes are the "same" and that two other shapes are "different". They explain that five is more than two and that "one line is shorter than another". They are developing a basic mathematical language and understanding of capacity, weight, length and space through practical exploration in sand and water play, the home corner, the shop and outdoor play. For example, children described containers as "full" and "empty" and could estimate the length of cubes they had put together. "My line is longer than yours. I have eight cubes and you only have three".
74. Throughout the Foundation Stage, children develop a good understanding of numbers. When children first enter the Reception class, most recognise numbers and can count to five. Some exceed this, being able to name and recognise numbers to 20. Some can sequence them in order. They can recognise numerals to ten and can count dots to six on a dice, selecting numbered parts of a robot when it is their turn, and putting them together to form a whole robot at the end of the game.

75. Children enjoy sticking two funny arms, two eyes to see and two legs to run and walk, on their model teddies. They write picnic lists with the right amount of food for the teddies, and pack the basket for their picnic. Through playing games and singing songs with given numbers of objects such as 'Ten green bottles', the children are developing an awareness of addition and subtraction. A few are beginning to add up and take away small numbers such as $2 + 5 = 7$, recording the answer in their books, but most still need support to do this.

Knowledge and understanding of the world

76. Most children come to school with average experience in this area. They make good progress and are likely to meet the Early Learning Goals by the end of the Foundation Stage. Children examine bark and leaves, collected from the school grounds and park, with magnifying glasses and follow instructions to make apple pies.
77. The children learn about parts of their bodies such as nose, eyes, hair, wrist and elbow, and can relate their play to their own experiences while playing. For example, two boys chatted about when they went to the seaside with their mums while playing in the sand. They use a computer program, 'Millie's Maths' to select features and compose pictures of funny creatures, for example, a caterpillar with six legs, six spots and six hats, and then print them out. Their skills at the computer are advanced for their age. They can use a computer mouse proficiently and can type simple commands, can drag the mouse, and use it to put features on the face of their creature. They examine toys that move in different ways and make frisbees out of paper plates, trying out the best way to fly them in the outdoor area.
78. Children use construction kits to build. They make models using commercial and found materials, cut and stick paper, print various articles, paint and make collages. They are beginning to develop a sense of different times. They happily recount what they did at school yesterday, as well as what they are going to be doing at the weekend, and in the holidays. They do not have sufficient opportunities to learn about different religions, languages and cultures. There is too little work on the festivals, food and stories of a range of different cultural and ethnic traditions.

Physical development

79. Children's physical development is similar to that usually found when they first start school. They make good progress and, by the end of the Foundation Stage, most will achieve the Early Learning Goals and a few will exceed them. In their outdoor play, children show good awareness of space and of others by balancing well on tricycles and other wheeled toys, steering them with skill and being able to stop when required.
80. Children run, jump and hop all over the outdoor area but opportunities for climbing, sliding and balancing are limited due to the lack of space. Throughout the Foundation Stage, small toys and the use of paint brushes, jigsaws, threading beads on a string, pencils, and small and large construction equipment help the children to develop their physical and manipulative skills well. The children dance rhythmically to music and throw and catch balls with skill, showing a good sense of space. They put away their outdoor toys carefully and efficiently.

Creative development

81. Children enter the Reception class with average skills for their age. They make good progress throughout the Foundation Stage and most are likely to achieve the Early Learning Goals by the end of their time in Reception. A few will exceed them. They are offered a good range of activities, including drawing, model-making, painting, imaginative play and music and their creative attempts display increasing imagination and confidence.
82. The children enjoy making music and singing songs, and are extending their repertoire of songs, nursery rhymes and jingles. They learn to play instruments in time with the music, do actions to the songs and clap repeated patterns. They play imaginatively in the home corner and shop, dressing up in suitable clothes and shoes and mimicking adult talk and behaviour. One little girl was seen holding a lengthy imaginary conversation on the telephone. A small range of props helps extend their imagination. For example, two little girls made imaginary ice cream out of sand in the outdoor playhouse and then called out, "Ice cream, ice cream" to all the other children. Cooking, eating and drinking are enjoyed throughout the Foundation Stage and these and other opportunities to smell and feel, give children good opportunities to respond to sensations and explore their senses.

ENGLISH

83. In the most recent national tests in Year 6, standards in English were above average. They were also above average when compared with similar schools. Evidence gathered during the inspection confirms this. It shows that standards in Year 6 are generally higher than those found nationally. They are better than they were at the time of the last inspection. Speaking is well developed and most pupils contribute confidently in groups and lessons, during assemblies and when with their peers. They generally answer in sentences and give reasons for their responses readily. Discussion is rightly encouraged in most lessons and is often beneficial to learning. Most pupils listen well when either an adult or child is talking. They show respect and are keen to listen to other points of view and other ideas rather than just their own. Pupils are given good opportunities to talk and to extend their vocabulary and this is effectively extending their thinking skills.
84. In this year's national tests and assessments in Year 2, standards were average in writing but below average in reading. They were below average compared with those in similar schools. The inspection shows that standards are better now. They are above average in reading and well above average in writing. There are two main reasons for this. The first is that there are fewer pupils in Year 2 this year who have special educational needs. The other is that the teaching of English has improved, particularly in response to weaknesses which the school identified in the teaching of writing.
85. Most pupils enjoy reading, even those who are less fluent and expressive. Many pupils are above average readers for their age. They read with good expression, emphasising important words or phrases and characterising voices and recounting action. In Year 2, most are beginning to use information books effectively and put their good knowledge of the alphabet to effective use. They can put what they have read into their own words whether retelling a story or recalling information. Most pupils in Years 3 to 6 can read satisfactorily and an above average proportion read well when compared to expectations of their age. Younger pupils use books from schemes that develop skills and vocabulary progressively; and then as they progress they become 'free readers' and are given access to a range of 'real books' in school in the classrooms and school

library. Some borrow books from the public library. Less accomplished pupils use a range of appropriate strategies to read, their preference being to match sounds to letters and build up words they are not familiar with. The most able are adept and fluent readers and read a range of texts. Many older pupils are beginning to use higher order skills such as skimming and scanning effectively to locate what they are looking for. Pupils have some knowledge of accessing and using information via the Internet and have satisfactory planned opportunities to do so. However, there is room for further development in this area and also in the teaching and learning of the skills of accessing and using information in the library. Some pupils in Year 6 have no knowledge about this at all.

86. Pupils' enjoyment of writing is clear from the start of Year 1. Planned practice of handwriting throughout the school is having a positive effect on standards, and there is notable recent improvement in this area. Pupils in Year 1 are beginning to write on their own and in Year 2 most understand the need to organise their thoughts into sentences. Punctuation is used well. The most able pupils in Year 2 employ speech, exclamation and question marks appropriately to punctuate their writing. They experience and can recreate a good range of styles for different purposes and audiences. Pupils in Year 2 also learn useful features of word processing. However, there are insufficient opportunities to make use of computers to reorganise and redraft text in most classes throughout the school.
87. In Year 3, pupils learn how prefixes change the meanings of words, such as 'cover' and 'uncover'. They learn definitions of words, for example, 'sprinkle' means to 'scatter droplets of water', and then apply these more interesting words to their writing and their understanding of poetry.
88. In Year 4, pupils study how writers use powerful verbs and adjectives to create maximum impact for the reader, and they then try to apply this knowledge to their own writing. For example, they write, "I could magically transform a velvet cushion into a beautiful bird". They enjoy the sensations that language creates. This work is further developed as they select words to describe a desert island, and suggest, "deserted, quiet, silent, tropical, spooky, haunted, creepy, weird, strange, drenched in snow".
89. In Year 5, pupils learn how synonyms can improve their writing and use these to write a poem about mud. "Mud is squiggly, slippery, sludgy, mud is irmy, squirmy, slime". They learn the difference between metaphors and similes, and apply them to their writing. For example, one pupils wrote, "Alice is a bouncy kangaroo", and, "Alice bounces joyfully around the playground like a kangaroo." Having read a poem by Alfred Lord Tennyson, 'Winter', they write their own poems, trying to copy elements of the writer's style in their own work. "Shine, sun, shine, show your brightness in the sky".
90. In Year 6, pupils readily understand such terms as 'passive' language and 'connectives' when the teacher is making suggestions to improve their writing. The analysis of pupils' work shows that they have many good opportunities to write for a wide range of different audiences and purposes. They are able to plan and organise writing in a range of styles such as explanations, newspaper reports, biographies and diaries. They compile banks of words and phrases to create atmosphere and build suspense when setting a story. Their writing is of high quality, using a good range of atmospheric words to set the scene such as, "The spooky night her lonely dark waits impatiently for the light to gently fade away to darkness, nightmares which hang around in their doom world during daytime come out to trouble at night in her vile glare of blackness". Most pupils use powerful adjectives readily to create a feeling of mystery or fear in their writing. Pupils also write in the style of famous authors, such as E Nesbit. One pupil

commenced a story in this style with, "It all started when Susan came home and told Maria about school" and ended, "School was jolly splendid."

91. The quality of teaching is good. It promotes good learning and achievement. Although children start school with language skills which are below average for their age, they make good progress so that standards are above average by the time they leave. A high proportion of the teaching is very good, particularly in Years 3 to 6. The National Literacy Strategy has been adapted to suit the learning needs of pupils and it is used very effectively, raising standards. Work is well planned by teachers and is suitably adapted for pupils with special educational needs and the most able.
92. In most lessons, teachers introduce lessons and their expectations clearly. They make sure that pupils understand what they are to do and what it is expected they will learn. Work is carefully planned to meet pupils' needs and matched to their particular capabilities. Teachers take good care to check on pupils' progress and modify their teaching as necessary in light of this. The final, whole-class discussion, or 'plenary' is used effectively to ensure that the teacher has good knowledge of how pupils have got on and that all pupils have understood and made progress. Although some progress has been made since the last inspection in introducing texts which represent the diverse nature of multi-cultural Britain, there is room for further improvement.
93. The subject is very well managed by an extremely effective co-ordinator. She has maintained the successful application of the National Literacy Strategy and has checked that it is being followed consistently and effectively in classrooms. She has excellent knowledge of the strategy and gives very good advice to staff on planning and raising standards. Initiatives she has led, such as improving writing, have been very effectively managed and they are successfully raising standards.
94. There are plenty of good opportunities for pupils to use their reading and writing skills in many subjects. For example, in Years 1 and 2 favourite stories such as 'Snow White' and 'The Three Bears' are used as inspiration for a house-building activity in design and technology lessons. In Year 3, pupils making clay pots wrote a wish to be contained inside their pot. In Year 4, good work was seen in science where a writing frame assisted pupils to write fluently about frogs, and extend their vocabulary to include specialist scientific vocabulary. In Years 5 and 6, pupils make good use of their writing skills in history lessons. For example, they write newspaper reports, such as, "Down in the Kitchen – a Tudor Feast" and "Tudor Fashion Craze".

MATHEMATICS

95. Standards are above average in Year 6. They are better than they were at the time of the last inspection. They are average in Year 2. Standards in the most recent national tests were below average in Year 2 and lower than those achieved in similar schools. This is because the group of pupils taking those tests contained a high proportion of pupils with special educational needs. This was evident when inspectors looked at the work of those pupils, who are now in Year 3. Standards in the tests were well above average in Year 6 and better than those in similar schools. They are not quite so high now, but the inspection took place early in the school year, when pupils still had many months of learning to do before taking national tests. Pupils achieve well, taking the school as a whole. Achievement is at its best in Year, 3 to 6, where the teaching is strongest. The inspection found no great difference in the attainment of boys and girls. However, in the end-of-year national tests for 11-year-olds earlier this year, girls performed slightly better than boys.

96. In Year 2 most pupils can count accurately, read and write numbers to at least 100 and understand place value. They are able to manipulate numbers confidently and appreciate that multiplication is repeated addition. They can use a 100 square to identify multiples of 2, 5 and 10. The most able can accurately predict whether any number up to 100 and beyond would be divisible by 2, 5 or 10. They understand simple fractions in a practical context, so that they can identify and shade in, for example, half of a given shape. The most able are developing good mental strategies to add single and two digit numbers. Most pupils recognise and are able to identify various two and three-dimensional shapes, such as a square, triangle and rectangle.
97. By the age of 11, the majority of pupils have a good understanding of place value. They are able to apply various different methods of calculation, showing a secure understanding of the principles involved. For example, most pupils can accurately multiply numbers such as 360×50 in a number of different ways. They understand equivalent fractions and can simplify fractions by cancelling common factors. They have good knowledge and understanding of shape, space and measures. They use terms such as 'obtuse and reflex angle' and 'rotational and reflective symmetry', accurately. They are able to read and plot co-ordinates on a grid in all four quadrants, most making confident use of negative as well as positive numbers. Pupils have good data handling skills, for example, making competent use of spreadsheets on the computer to plan the cost of a school visit. They confidently apply their knowledge of mathematics to work in other subjects, for example, in science with work on temperature.
98. The quality of teaching throughout the school ranges from satisfactory to very good. Overall, the quality of teaching in Years 1 and 2 is good and in Years 3 to 6 it is very good. Teachers have a good understanding of the subject. This enables them to explain things clearly, making lessons lively and interesting, so that pupils can easily understand and learn with enthusiasm and enjoyment. Resources are used well to demonstrate things and make them clear. For example, a large grid was displayed clearly and used very effectively in a Years 5 and 6 lesson to demonstrate the plotting of co-ordinates. Teachers manage their pupils very well and there are harmonious relationships between staff and pupils. This effectively creates a very positive atmosphere, in which pupils concentrate very well and work hard. Lessons get off to a brisk and stimulating start, with an appropriate mental exercise for the whole class.
99. The school does not make enough use of ICT in mathematics. There are a few examples of pupils using appropriate software, for example in the area of polygons, but this is not generally well developed throughout the school.
100. The subject leader has a very good grasp of her subject and she sets a very good example through the high quality of her own teaching. She appropriately monitors standards and teaching and learning through checking teachers' plans and pupils' work and observing lessons. There has been some helpful analysis of national and school tests and the weaknesses identified have influenced subsequent planning. Learning support assistants have been trained to support the teaching of mathematics.
101. The school has made good improvement since the last inspection. The quality of teaching, the influence of the subject leader and the introduction of the National Numeracy Strategy have all made a significant impact.

SCIENCE

102. Standards in science are above average in Years 2 and 6. In national tests earlier this year, standards in Year 6 were average and similar to those in similar schools. They

are better now, thanks to some changes to the curriculum and teaching which have been made in response to the school's analysis of pupils' performance. In particular, a greater emphasis on pupils investigating science and finding things out for themselves is having a positive effect in improving their understanding and raising standards. Standards in Year 6 are better than they were at the time of the last inspection, when they were below average. There are no great differences between the standards achieved by boys and girls.

103. Scientific investigations now receive appropriate emphasis and the older pupils enjoy the challenge of planning their investigations and make good progress in developing these skills. There is a good balance between other aspects of the science curriculum. Pupils achieve particularly well in the context of life and living processes with standards above national expectations. They are developing confidence in their knowledge of materials and physical processes with achievement in line with standards nationally.
104. Pupils in Year 2 can identify many sources of light around the school and most can recognise the difference between a light source, and light which is reflected from a shiny surface. By Year 4 pupils know that temperature is a measure of heat. They can read a thermometer and most can plot temperature changes on a graph without help. Some recognise that an ascending line indicates an increase in temperature. Pupils in Year 6 know that some solids dissolve in water and that these can be recovered by means of evaporation. The most able pupils can devise different methods of achieving this. When planning investigations all pupils are confident in making predictions and some can explain these in terms of their scientific knowledge. Pupils carry out practical investigations with enthusiasm, record them carefully, and enjoy the challenge of explaining their results.
105. The quality of teaching is good, overall. Teachers have a clear understanding of their subject. They plan together in year groups so that all pupils in the same year cover similar work. All teachers structure lessons well and most make the learning intentions of their lessons clear to pupils at the outset. They then know what they have to do to succeed. Most lessons begin with good whole-class teaching which, through careful planned questioning, identifies what pupils already know and links this to what they are going to do. Teachers plan creatively using imaginative ideas to plan interesting lessons. This is very effective in engaging the interest of pupils, especially the older pupils, and both girls and boys demonstrate real enthusiasm for the subject. Pupils are appropriately encouraged to work collaboratively in pairs and groups. They do this well, sharing ideas and equipment, and standards improve as pupils discuss their work together, refining ideas and applying their scientific knowledge to the challenges set. Teachers keep a close eye on pupils' learning and generally modify their teaching appropriately to meet pupils' needs. However, assessment information could be put to better use in meeting the needs of the most able. There is sometimes insufficient challenge for these pupils. This was seen, for example, in a lesson where all pupils were involved in the same activity, which did not stretch the most capable and encourage them to achieve as much as they could. The use of ICT is insufficiently developed in science lessons. None was seen in lessons during the inspection and there were no examples in the limited amount of work recorded so far this term in pupils' books.
106. The management of science is good. The co-ordinator supports teachers informally in their planning, checks the work in pupils' books, and has begun to monitor teaching. She uses the analysis of pupils' Year 6 test results effectively to improve teaching and raise standards.

ART AND DESIGN

107. Standards in art and design are above average in Years 2 and 6. There is a wide range of good quality work on display both in the classrooms and throughout the school, with examples of collage and needlework as well as painting and drawing. Displays are very well mounted to show off the pupils' work to the best advantage and there are many eye-catching examples that relate to different subject areas, amply demonstrating the value of art right across the curriculum. There is, for example, a very effective frieze of houses, relating to work done in geography lessons in Year 1. This features a good, clear design of a terrace of buildings, and excellent use of colour, producing a very natural as well as carefully worked result. By Year 2 pupils are given plenty of good opportunities to experience and investigate a range of different materials to help them to make choices about and develop a real feel for colour, texture, form, and working in two and three dimensions. Pupils demonstrate both flair and control when learning about different materials and the effect on these of cutting, tearing, crunching, and folding. Pupils work collaboratively, sharing their skills and producing a combined result they can be proud of. This helps to consolidate their knowledge and understanding about the different materials used and what could be done with them to produce good art. Year 2 pupils are introduced to some of the work of famous artists, such as Matisse's snail collage – a well-selected, colourful and stimulating image to help them develop their own ideas.
108. By Year 6, pupils demonstrate the control they have developed in using a number of tools and techniques. In one lesson, pupils were developing their ideas for making clay pots, responding attentively to information about technique, and clearly demonstrating good approaches in the use of tools and handling equipment, drawing on their past learning and experience. A range of different ideas was developed by individual pupils, and effort and originality were valued as well as form, enabling pupils to be proud of their efforts without negative comparisons with others. Some of the wall displays by Year 6 pupils are most impressive, demonstrating contrasting ideas and a full range of techniques. Of particular note were some appliqué banners, beautifully made with great attention to detail and rich in colour and texture in a variety of materials, on the theme of Bed Gellert.
109. The quality of teaching in art and design is good. It contributes to pupils' enjoyment and enthusiasm and the high standards which they achieve. The teaching in lessons observed was at least satisfactory, and in some instances good or very good. Pupils of a wide range of ability benefit equally in the lessons observed, demonstrating good individual support through a wide variety of materials and tools available for use at any one time. The teachers use praise most effectively, and in return they earn the respect and enthusiasm shown for the subject throughout the school. Teachers have a good knowledge of the subject and this allows them to build consistently upon skills previously taught. A particular strength in this respect is the careful use of questioning and discussion at regular and appropriate intervals during a lesson, so that teachers can monitor pupils' learning and give appropriate feedback on their performance.
110. The subject is managed well by the co-ordinator, who has an appropriate specialist qualification. The place of art and design within the school is strengthened by good, positive management and planning, and the results are evident in the pupils' work.

DESIGN AND TECHNOLOGY

111. Standards in design and technology are average in Year 2 and above average in Year 6. They are better in Year 6 than they were at the time of the last inspection. The issue raised then of some teachers' lack of subject expertise has been addressed.

112. During the inspection, no lessons in design and technology were seen because this subject alternates on the timetable with art and design. Judgements were made based on discussions with teachers and pupils, examining work in pupils' books and files and observations of work displayed around the school and in photographic records.
113. The average standards in Year 2 result from sound teaching. Teachers appropriately build on pupils' knowledge of stories to provide an interesting context for their house designs and pupils go on to make houses for a favourite character. Teachers plan and prepare their lessons well. They provide some good quality resources, such as the structured planning sheets which help pupils with weaker reading and writing skills to communicate their own ideas for designing their product. Pupils are taught an appropriate range of skills. In Year 1, they successfully cut paper and join hinged flaps to models to make doors and window shutters. In Year 2 they form a variety of roof shapes, make a ladder out of straws and successfully attach a cylinder to a flat surface.
114. In carefully planned lessons in Years 3 and 4, pupils investigate pneumatics, using hypodermic syringes to make a variety of moving models. For example, they have made a jack-in-a-box and a mouse which emerges from its hole. In Years 5 and 6 pupils design shoes for different purposes and times, making careful drawings before using a range of appropriate materials to make their shoes. Feathers, sequins and buttons are used for decoration, and this results in a range of good quality and highly individual finished models. In discussion, the pupils are able to describe their designs and the modifications they make in response to their evaluations of their product.
115. The subject is well managed and teachers are supported in their planning by a comprehensive scheme of work using national guidance. There is too little use of ICT. Pupils in Years 3 to 6 are not taught how mechanisms can be used to make things move in different ways using ICT control programs, as required by the National Curriculum.

GEOGRAPHY AND HISTORY

116. In Years 1 and 2, history and geography are taught in the form of topic lessons with aspects of both subjects being incorporated into the themes. The subjects are taught separately thereafter, although the aim is to develop cross-curricular links where possible between these subjects and other curriculum subjects. Standards are well above average in history in Years 2 and 6 and throughout the school. Geography was not timetabled for this term in Years 3-6, so no lessons were observed, but discussion with pupils and the quality of the displays around the school indicated that standards are average.
117. Pupils in Year 2 learn about ways of life at different times in the past. A very interesting lesson was seen where pupils were developing their ideas about how people kept warm in the past. Very good use was made of real life objects from the past and the present, such as a bed warmer into which hot coals would be placed, hot water bottles, and items such as duvets and electric blankets. Some pupils found the sequencing exercise quite difficult, but the use of differentiated material and good questioning technique by the teacher resulted in all pupils grasping the concept of time, using a time-line as a marker for illustrating the passage of time. Discussion with pupils showed that they were enthusiastic in their learning about the past, and they were also keen to show and describe the houses they had drawn and painted as a wall display of a street location similar to their own, where different people lived over the years.

118. In Year 2, pupils can talk knowledgeably about the climate in different localities such as their own and in other countries. For example, pupils know about rain forests and the environment they provide for different animals, birds and insects. They know about the climate being hot and wet. They know the difference between wet weather in this country and that of a rainforest, and have made a lively collage showing the rainforest and its climate and inhabitants. The enthusiasm of these pupils when talking about work they had done earlier gave clear evidence of their retention over time of the knowledge and understanding they had gained in geography.
119. By Year 6, pupils show very good knowledge of past periods in history, and the people who lived in those times. They can relate experiences of past times to their own lifestyles, and compare the similarities and differences, expressing their own views about them. An interesting example was seen in a Year 5 lesson where pupils were learning about life, wealth and poverty in Tudor times. As part of the lesson, pupils were asked to draw a small portrait sketch of their neighbour and then give it to them. Each pupil was then able to place their own portrait over the head of any member of two Tudor families, rich and poor, shown in pictures of woodcuts which the pupils had been given. This helped pupils not only to describe the essential characteristics of Tudor life, but to understand the consequences of different lifestyles on the people of those times. Year 6 pupils show a lively interest in history and they are developing a good understanding of change over time. One pupil, when discussing how much plainer the toys would have been in Tudor times, remarked that they would still have enjoyed them because they would not have had any knowledge about toys of the future. Such learning helps to inform pupils about present day matters, including social aspects and learning about situations in another context or from a different viewpoint.
120. In discussion about geography, pupils in Year 6 draw on the knowledge they have gained in Year 5 to talk about pollution, climate change, and recycling of materials. They demonstrate a good level of knowledge and understanding of the important factors and processes affecting the environment, not just in their locality but across the world. For example, they know about the adverse effects of car fumes, and the difference between pollution in the town and country. They are keen to express their own views on pollution, and global warming, showing good depth of thinking, as well as sound basic knowledge concerning the effects of climate change.
121. The teaching of history is very good. Teachers demonstrate very good knowledge, and confidence in teaching the subject. The lessons observed were delivered in an imaginative way, with well-selected resources used effectively to help to bring lessons to life. There was an excellent blend of well-informed whole-class teaching and practical activities, ensuring that pupils made very good progress in their knowledge and understanding.
122. Although no teaching in geography was seen in Years 3 - 6, the evidence of the knowledge and understanding demonstrated by pupils in these year groups, together with the lessons seen in topic work for the younger pupils, show that teaching in geography is satisfactory. There is evidence that good links are made between pupils' learning in geography and other subjects. For example, pupils use maps to mark in the location of battles in their lessons about Boudicca and the Romans.
123. The management of history is very good. The co-ordinator has undertaken some appropriate training. She has very good subject knowledge and leads by example, with great enthusiasm. Her own teaching of the subject seen during the inspection was outstanding.

124. The geography co-ordinator is newly in post, and is also new to the school. She has appropriate plans to develop the subject, which has been without a co-ordinator until this term.

INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY

125. In Year 2 standards are average. In Year 6 they are above average. Standards have risen since the last inspection in spite of the relatively small number of computers in the newly appointed ICT suite. The recent arrival of four new laptops has improved the situation, but there has been an initial problem with licensing some software on these new machines, which has meant that they cannot be used in all circumstances.
126. In Year 2, attainment is average because of the sound teaching of basic skills. Teachers make good use of their subject knowledge, improved resources and National Curriculum subject guidance. The pupils are keen and enthusiastic about the subject and have acquired several skills. These include in word processing entering text, editing and formatting. They are able to use a word bank and other software to reinforce various mathematical ideas. They are also able to program the floor turtle and predict its movements. Pupils enjoy representing graphically information which they have collected. They use various 'paint' programs for art work.
127. By the end of Year 6, pupils have experienced a wide range of ICT work and developed good skills. There is good subject knowledge amongst the teachers particularly of those older pupils. This helps them to explain and demonstrate techniques and skills very clearly, so that pupils easily understand, so making good progress in their learning. Pupils are confident in their use of ICT and there is clear evidence that many of the pupils have access to computers at home although usually for playing games. They are skilful on the computers. They are able to open a program, create a spreadsheet, put in a title, introduce formulae and sum columns. They are then able to discuss the advantages of using computers over pencil and paper methods. They have a clear view of the value (and limitations) of computers to businesses as well as private individuals. Pupils have controlled access to and can use the Internet to search for information, which they print out, for example about the Tudors and about Hindu patterns. Appropriate precautions are taken to ensure that they do not have access to unsuitable Internet sites. At present they have the ability to email within their own school but not, as yet, outside it. The pupils have produced PowerPoint presentations for various audiences and Superlogo. They can use the digital camera. There are many good quality displays in both classrooms and ICT suite giving instructions and advice about the use of computers in the school.
128. The ICT suite has ensured regular access for all classes, but generally lessons are introduced in the classroom and completed in the suite. This is not without its difficulties, since teachers demonstrate skills and pupils watch a small monitor. All teachers plan their lessons carefully, manage the pupils extremely well and in return get a good response from them. Consequently pupils' attitudes to ICT are good. They work hard, showing high levels of concentration. They show pleasant social skills when sharing a computer. Pupils with special educational needs are helped to take a full part in all ICT activities.
129. The ICT subject leader has worked hard and effectively to support her colleagues, producing schemes of work, assessment procedures and giving help following their National Opportunities Fund training. She is fully aware of the limitations on ICT use

across the curriculum which are imposed by lack of some resources, but plans are in hand to buy a projector and more networked computers in the suite.

MUSIC

130. Standards are above average in Years 2 and 6 and throughout the school. This represents a significant improvement since the last inspection, when standards were below average. Pupils and teachers demonstrate a real enthusiasm for music, with a strong emphasis on singing. The standard of singing is good and a CD made last year illustrates that children can use their voices expressively and tunefully to interpret a variety of songs. Extra-curricular tuition is provided for a range of instruments, currently including piano, clarinet and guitar, as well as four graded groups in recorder clubs. The school has established good links with the local church and pupils join with the church choir for services. They have enjoyed a celebration performance involving the choir and instrumental music in Rochester cathedral.
131. The quality of teaching and learning throughout the school is good. Younger pupils sing well with confidence and enjoyment, showing good control of pitch and rhythm. Teachers employ good strategies for teaching the words of new songs using words and pictures so that early readers have access to the singing and can be fully involved. Lessons are well developed with children singing in unison, clapping the rhythm and then performing action songs. The pace of lessons is good so that pupils remain interested and involved. Teachers plan lessons well, selecting instruments that are appropriate. Teaching is clear and good organisation enables all pupils, including those with learning difficulties, to take turns to demonstrate the range of sounds their instrument can make. In a lesson using percussion instruments in Year 1, pupils were taught how to hold and use the instruments correctly and given the opportunity to explore the sounds they make. They begin to learn about performance, devising their own signs for loud, quiet and stop. They take turns to practise using these and conduct the class in music-making using un-tuned percussion instruments.
132. Older pupils have good opportunities to sing in a large group when all those in Years 3 to 6 join together for hymn practice. All pupils, girls and boys, sing with confidence and obvious enjoyment. The visiting pianist is well used to accompany singing and to teach new songs. Pupils also sing unaccompanied and sometimes with a CD accompaniment. In a music lesson, 10 and 11-year-olds listened to a variety of music, including pop and gospel music, and were able to discuss the mood of the pieces. Good teaching enabled the pupils to explore the effect of volume and rhythm on mood and to model it with their percussion instruments. Pupils could demonstrate and explain their interpretation, for example, identifying music as angry because it had harsh drumbeats. The lesson was well planned and developed at a good pace to involve co-operative music making in small groups. Consequently, all pupils were interested and involved throughout and made good progress. There are good opportunities for children to listen to classical music and learn about composers and their lives. However, some opportunities are missed. For example, the composer of the week during the inspection was Beethoven, and although pupils came into assembly each day to the Moonlight Sonata, when questioned at the end of the week they knew little about the music or the composer.
133. The subject is well managed. The co-ordinator monitors lessons to check their effectiveness and has supported teachers well by leading staff meetings to develop their subject expertise. The quality of teaching and learning in additional instrument lessons seen during the inspection was satisfactory.

PHYSICAL EDUCATION

134. Standards in physical education are average in Years 2 and 6 and throughout the school. There are no great differences in the standards achieved by boys and girls. Pupils who have special educational needs are helped to take a full part in all activities and make sound progress.
135. Teachers generally set a good example to pupils by dressing appropriately for lessons and most pupils follow suit. However, there can be a problem with pupils failing to bring their kit to school. They sit out and miss lessons when this happens. This was seen in a number of lessons, including a dance lesson in Year 6. In Year 2, pupils warm-up safely at the start of games lessons. They learn a useful lesson about the effect of exercise on the body as they feel their heart beating faster. Teachers make lessons enjoyable and pupils respond by working hard, with enthusiasm. They practise throwing and catching bean bags and balls and develop skills which will fit them to play traditional games such as rounders, cricket and netball when they are older. Lessons are very well controlled, so that pupils behave very sensibly and co-operate well together. Clear instructions help pupils to improve their skills. For example, the teacher's advice about the need to keep the eye on the ball all the time when throwing and catching led to a clear improvement in pupils' skills.
136. In Year 6 pupils develop and refine their own dance sequences in a series of lessons, in response to music from the 1950s. They approach lessons with an air of excitement and anticipation, but with very good control and discipline. They take their work very seriously and try hard to do their best. The teacher uses his assessment of the pupils' previous performance well to suggest how they could improve their sequence. Although the boys are a bit more self-conscious than the girls, they still try hard and enjoy the lesson. Relationships between pupils and with the teacher are good and respectful. Some pupils appreciate opportunities to demonstrate parts of their performance to the class, but they are not forced to do this if they do not feel confident enough. They watch one another carefully, evaluating what they see sensibly and giving positive, supportive feedback. In response to the good teaching they receive and because their attitudes are positive, pupils make good progress in lessons.
137. Pupils are taught to swim in Year 4. They are taught very well by the headteacher, deputy headteacher and specialist staff at the local baths. They respond very positively, trying hard to do what they are asked, behaving very well and enjoying themselves. Lessons are very well planned to take account of pupils' differing levels of skill. Pupils are taught in five groups, the teaching being carefully matched to their particular capabilities, needs and levels of confidence in the water. Pupils do not have swimming lessons in Year 6, and so it is not possible to know how many acquire the expected ability to swim 25 metres by the end of their time at primary school. However, the school believes that about half do so by the end of Year 5.
138. The subject has been without a co-ordinator for some time until this term. It is now co-ordinated temporarily, but soundly, by the headteacher, who has appropriate plans for the further improvement. Importantly, these plans include the development of competitive sporting opportunities.

RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

139. Standards are above average in Years 2 and 6. Pupils make good progress in their learning. Their progress is helped significantly by the high quality of acts of collective worship. There was a particularly good example of this in the Remembrance Day assembly, where a very spiritual, worshipful atmosphere prevailed, with full participation

by pupils. Pupils enacted the parts of a granddad and dad, using appropriate visual aids from the First World War, really bringing history to life as well as generating great depth of thought about the issues involved. The quality of the hymn singing and the accompanying stories all added to the excellence of the occasion.

140. Pupils learn about a range of religious festivals that represent the diversity of belief and worship around the world. Wall displays reveal a good mix of hand-written or word processed work by pupils, together with carefully planned and prepared drawings and artistic designs. In a Year 2 classroom, for example, there is a very effective collage relating to the Jewish festival of Sukkoth. Carefully coloured leaves decorate the little houses, with roofs that lift up to reveal the writing beneath. This is an effective, informative and interesting display of knowledge, understanding and creative expression. Pupils are clearly very proud of their achievements in doing this, and show good and thoughtful understanding of the implications of only using fallen leaves or branches for building the houses. The pupils were also eager to point out that only the poor people made their houses in this way, showing a good appreciation of differences between people in needs, wealth and lifestyle.
141. There are plenty of good cross-curricular links in the teaching of religious education. A Year 5 display on Islam includes aspects of English, history, and geography as well as religious education. There are maps of Mecca showing its position in relation to Britain. There are examples of Islamic art and a very good range of written work, including poems, and examples of writing from the Qu'ran. By Year 6, pupils talk very knowledgeably about religion. They compare very thoughtfully and objectively religions such as Judaism, Christianity and Islam. They have a good understanding of their own and others' religions, and can analyse and perceive similarities as well as differences between them. For example, a lively debate developed as pupils discussed the similarity between the story of Moses and the Ten Commandments and Mohammed receiving from an angel the basic rules from God for His people. Such discussions enhance and improve social skills as well as helping pupils to understand more readily the moral and spiritual elements of religion.
142. Teaching is good. In a lesson in Year 5 a calm and respectful atmosphere was created and maintained by the teacher. Pupils responded by listening well and contributing sensibly as they discussed some of their own experiences to help them to understand and respect aspects of religious practice. Pupils' written work shows a wide range of teaching approaches and materials to enable all pupils to learn well according to their needs and abilities. Within one class, for example, written work might be produced by some pupils in the form of inserting appropriate words in gaps in a printed page, whilst others produce a page or so of freely written script. This careful attention to individual learning needs helps pupils to develop a good understanding of a range of different faiths, as well as enhancing their spiritual and moral development. There are also exciting and successful special occasions that provide stimulating opportunities for learning, such as when a dramatic group came to the school at Easter time and re-enacted the Crucifixion with Years 3 - 6 pupils taking part. This was thoroughly enjoyed by pupils, and the experience provided a rich source of knowledge and understanding of one of the most important stories of Christianity.
143. Although religious education is well provided for in the school, the co-ordinator's role is in need of further development. The current post-holder is new to the role. She has an appropriate specialist qualification. There is a need to establish a framework for priorities for co-ordinating the subject, with clear aims and plans for the future. The reality of Britain as a multi-faith country is inadequately dealt with. This key aspect of religious education is in need of development, so that pupils are provided with rich

opportunities for learning about people of different faiths in various contexts, especially in Britain, in addition to those living in the country of origin.