

INSPECTION REPORT

**ST MICHAEL'S EAST WICKHAM
CE VA PRIMARY SCHOOL**

Welling

LEA area: London Borough of Bexley

Unique reference number: 101475

Headteacher: Mr R Varney

Reporting inspector: Dr M Bradshaw
6169

Dates of inspection: 16th – 19th June 2003

Inspection number: 251727

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

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INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Type of school:	Primary
School category:	Voluntary aided
Age range of pupils:	4 to 11 years
Gender of pupils:	Mixed
School address:	Wrotham Road Welling Kent
Postcode:	DA16 1LS
Telephone number:	020 8303 3287
Fax number:	020 8298 7358
Appropriate authority:	The governing body
Name of chair of governors:	Mrs K Bellinger
Date of previous inspection:	6 th July 1998

INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Team members			Subject responsibilities	Aspect responsibilities
6169	Dr M J Bradshaw	Registered inspector	Science Geography Physical education The Foundation Stage	What sort of school is it? The school's results and pupils' achievements How well are pupils taught? What should the school do to improve further?
9779	Ms S Smith	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?
30438	Mr R Guest	Team inspector	English Art and design Design and technology Special educational needs English as an additional language	How well is the school led and managed?
32848	Mrs J O'Neill	Team inspector	Mathematics Information and communication technology History Music Educational inclusion, including race equality	How good are the curricular and other opportunities offered to pupils?

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PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

The school has 207 pupils who attend full time from reception to Year 6. The proportion of girls is over 52 per cent, although there is a significant variation from class to class. Children usually enter reception in the autumn term of the school year in which they are five. There are few changes to the school's roll during the school year. The majority of pupils, 87 per cent, is from a white ethnic background. The remainder is from a wide mix of minority ethnic backgrounds, with no group predominating. There are ten pupils whose mother tongue is not English, however all are competent in English and can take part in all lessons fully. The background of pupils is about average; nine pupils (about four per cent) claim free school meals, which is below average, but this overestimates the characteristics of the school's intake. The number of pupils having special educational needs is about average. About 15 per cent have been identified as having significant learning needs, including six pupils who have a statement of special educational needs. Attainment on entry to reception varies from year to year, but has been below average in recent years, which is lower than that previously reported.

HOW GOOD THE SCHOOL IS

St Michael's East Wickham CE VA Primary School provides its pupils with a good education. Pupils enjoy their time in the school and have very good attitudes in lessons. They behave very well. The personal care of pupils is very good and there is a very strong partnership with parents. Pupils make good progress in the school. Although varying from year to year, by the time pupils leave school, their attainment is about average in English, mathematics and science. Teaching is good, and this is leading to the improved learning now evident. The school is very well led and provides good value for money.

What the school does well

- The very good leadership and management shown by the headteacher and governing body.
- The good quality teaching and learning are leading to improving achievement.
- The management and organisation of support for pupils with special educational needs are excellent, and these pupils make very good progress.
- The provision made for pupils' personal development is very good, and this results in positive attitudes, behaviour and relationships.
- A strong working partnership exists with parents and this is effective in helping children make good progress.
- In art and design, design and technology, history and physical education, attainment is above average by Year 6.

What could be improved

- Standards of attainment in writing, including spelling, by Year 6.
- The rate of progress of more able pupils, which is not consistently high enough.
- The outdoor resources for reception children to promote physical development.

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

HOW THE SCHOOL HAS IMPROVED SINCE ITS LAST INSPECTION

St Michael's East Wickham CE VA Primary School was inspected in July 1998. Its progress since then has been good. The areas of weakness identified have been tackled successfully. Attainment by Years 2 and 6 rose initially, but has since tended to decline. This is partly associated with children's attainment on entry to the school being lower than previously reported, and a range of staffing issues, including a high turnover of teachers during the previous two years. Teaching is now good and pupils' learning is improving. The weaknesses in teaching, identified previously in Year 1, have been rectified. The organisation and provision for design and technology and information and communication technology (ICT) have improved. As a result, attainment has improved. Pupils' investigative skills in science are now satisfactorily developed. Extensive assessment data is collected to track the progress of individual pupils. The school has maintained, and improved further, its previous strengths. Attendance is better,

and the provision for pupils' personal development and care has improved further. The organisation for pupils with special educational needs is much better.

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	C	A	D	E
Mathematics	B	C	E	E
Science	B	C	D	D

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

Although varying from year to year, children enter reception with below average attainment levels. They achieve well and most children will reach the expected standard in mathematics by the time they start in Year 1. They will exceed what is expected in reading, but many will not reach the expected standard in writing. In other areas of learning, except for aspects of physical development, they are likely to meet the standards expected. Standards at the end of Year 6 improved up to 2000, but tended to decline after this. In the 2002 National Curriculum tests at age eleven, standards were below the national average in English and science, and well below the average in mathematics. Compared with schools with a similar intake, results in English and mathematics were well below average; they were below average in science. Current Year 6 pupils' attainment is about average in English, mathematics and science. In recent years, attainment in reading, writing and mathematics has tended to be above average by Year 2. This year, standards are closer to the average, with little high attainment. Throughout the school, pupils' reading skills tend to be above average, while writing, including spelling, is below this. By Year 6, standards in art and design, design and technology, history and physical education are above average, and they are about average in other subjects. During their time in school, most pupils achieve well, and this is improving with the good teaching.

PUPILS' ATTITUDES AND VALUES

Aspect	Comment
Attitudes to the school	Pupils' attitudes to school are very good. They are keen, enthusiastic and enjoy learning.
Behaviour, in and out of classrooms	Behaviour in the school is very good, and this contributes very well to pupils' learning. Pupils are polite, thoughtful and courteous to adults and their peers.
Personal development and relationships	Pupils' personal development is very good. Excellent relationships exist, including those between adults and children.
Attendance	Attendance is good, having improved during the past year. There is virtually no lateness.

Pupils' enthusiasm and enjoyment help the development of very good behaviour. High levels of mutual respect ensure that pupils co-operate fully with their teachers. Pupils respond positively to the opportunities provided for them to take responsibility.

TEACHING AND LEARNING

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

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

The quality of teaching was previously described as good overall. It has improved and no unsatisfactory teaching was observed during this inspection. Almost three-quarters of the lessons seen were good or better, including about a quarter that were very good. Teaching is good in reception and Years 3 to 6, and very good in Years 1 and 2. Examples of very good teaching are seen throughout the school. Teaching is now very good in English and mathematics in Years 1 and 2, and good in Years 3 to 6. Relationships with pupils are very good and they are managed very well. Planning gives good attention to detail, including promoting pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. However, not enough thought is consistently given to how to challenge more able pupils. This is particularly evident in the analysis of pupils' books. Teachers make effective use of resources, including support staff. Teaching in most subjects is good overall. ICT skills are used well to support learning in some other subjects. Pupils' numeracy and literacy skills are developed satisfactorily across the curriculum. Improving teaching is leading to good learning by pupils. They work hard, and consistently show interest and concentration.

OTHER ASPECTS OF THE SCHOOL

Aspect	Comment
The quality and range of the curriculum	The school provides a sound curriculum. It has appropriate breadth, balance and relevance to meet the needs of pupils in the school.
Provision for pupils with special educational needs	Provision for pupils with special educational needs is very good. The area is excellently managed and organised, which helps to ensure pupils' very good progress.
Provision for pupils with English as an additional language	All pupils whose mother tongue is not English are competent at English, and achieve as well as other pupils in the school.
Provision for pupils' personal, including spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	The provision for pupils' personal development, including citizenship, is very good. The very good spiritual, moral and social provision, in particular, ensures pupils develop as mature, responsible and reflective young people.
How well the school cares for its pupils	The school provides a safe and supportive environment in which pupils feel secure and can flourish. Good assessment procedures are in place, and satisfactory use is made of the information gained.

The curriculum meets statutory requirements and the school provides a good range of activities outside of lessons. Parents are very satisfied with the school, and a strong partnership exists between the school and parents.

HOW WELL THE SCHOOL IS LED AND MANAGED

Aspect	Comment
Leadership and management by the headteacher and other key staff	The leadership and management of the school are good. The headteacher provides very good leadership. Many subject co-ordinators are relatively new in their roles.
How well the governors fulfil their responsibilities	The governing body is very good and provides very effective support for the school. All statutory duties are in place. Governors are

	knowledgeable, informed, supportive and yet critical when necessary.
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Aspect	Comment
The school's evaluation of its performance	Governors have a very good understanding of the school's strengths and weaknesses. Resources are diverted to support identified areas of weakness.
The strategic use of resources	The school makes good use of its resources. It prioritises its use of resources to support pupils' education and learning.

The school has sufficient teachers and support staff. Accommodation is good, and learning resources are satisfactory. Outdoor resources to promote children's physical development, including wheeled vehicles and ride-on toys, are inadequate. The school's bursar monitors this spending excellently. The school is very aware of the need to obtain good value for money in all that it does, and excellent use is made of information to compare the school's performance and to obtain best value.

PARENTS' AND CARERS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

What pleases parents most	What parents would like to see improved
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Children like school and behave well. • Children's rate of progress. • Teaching is good, and children are expected to work hard. • The information about their children's progress. • The way the school works with parents. • The school is approachable. • The school is well led and managed. • Children are helped to become mature and responsible. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The amount of homework. • The range of activities outside of lessons.

Inspectors agree with parents' positive views. They agree that pupils like school, behave well and that they are helped to become mature. Teaching is good and most pupils are expected to achieve their best. Pupils' rate of progress is generally good, although some more able pupils could achieve more. Links with parents are very good. The school is approachable and welcoming. The headteacher and governors provide very good leadership. Homework is set regularly and the overall provision is satisfactory and similar to that in most primary schools. There are good opportunities for pupils to become involved in activities outside of lessons, although many of these have been principally sport orientated.

PART B: COMMENTARY

HOW HIGH ARE STANDARDS?

The school's results and pupils' achievements

1. Over the period 1998 to 2002, in National Curriculum tests at the end of Year 6, pupils' results have been erratic. In English, results have fluctuated from well above average to well below average. In mathematics, after being above average in 1999 and 2000, results have declined. In science, the improvement matched the national trend until 2000 and results were above average, but have declined since then. In 2002, results were below average in English and science, and well below average in mathematics. Compared with similar schools, they were well below the average in English and mathematics, and below average in science. The number of pupils in each year is relatively small and, over the past three years, the combined results have been about average in English, mathematics and science. Inspection evidence indicates broadly average attainment this year, which is supported by the teacher assessments. There is, however, limited evidence of higher attainment, and standards in writing, including spelling, are below average. The appropriate targets set for at least Level 4 attainment in English and mathematics were not met last year. This year's targets are more challenging, and likely to be achieved. Over the past few years, boys have tended to do better than girls; a large difference is not evident this year.
2. Over the period 1998 to 2002, in National Curriculum tests at the end of Year 2, pupils' results rose up to 2001, but declined last year. The decline was most noticeable in reading. Results in reading, writing and mathematics have generally been above or well above average. In 2002, attainment in reading was similar to the national average; those in writing were above average and in mathematics they were well below average. In comparison with similar schools, results were above average in writing and mathematics, and about average in reading. Attainment this year is not so strong, being close to the average in reading, writing and mathematics, although there is little high attainment. Over the past three years, girls have performed better than boys in reading, writing and mathematics; this year the reverse is the case. Teacher assessments in science indicate that, in both 2002 and 2003, all pupils achieved the expected level, but none higher than this. Inspection evidence confirms this assessment. In both Years 2 and 6, some of the variation is accounted for by the high mobility of teachers recently and the differences in pupils' characteristics from year to year.
3. The previous report indicated that standards were about average, or better, in most subjects by Years 2 and 6. Standards in ICT and design and technology were below those expected in both Years 2 and 6. In most subjects, attainment currently is similar to that reported previously, except in design and technology where it is above the expected level throughout the school, and ICT where it is average by Years 2 and 6.
4. Attainment on entry to the reception class is below average, which is lower than previously reported. It fluctuates from year to year, and was especially low when current Year 1 pupils joined the school. During their time in reception, children achieve well. The majority of children are on course to meet, or exceed, the early learning goals in personal, social and emotional development. In English, children's achievement in reading is good and over half the children will exceed the standard expected when they start Year 1. In writing, however, few children reach the standard expected. In mathematical and creative development, and in their knowledge and understanding of the world, most children achieve the expected standard. Many children count objects and order numbers to ten, and add two numbers together to make up to ten. Most

children recognise and name two-dimensional shapes such as squares, triangles and circles. Children use colours well to create illustrations of Florence Nightingale or rainbow fish. They enjoy role-play, when, for instance, dressing up in costumes for 'Goldilocks and the Three Bears'. In French, they sing Frère Jacques satisfactorily. Children use the computer mouse confidently when using a 'drag and drop' program to illustrate the story of Goldilocks. They know about locations beyond their immediate environment, such as when talking about France or the journeys of Barnaby Bear. They compare the similarities and differences of human features well. Aspects of their physical development are underdeveloped. There are insufficient opportunities for children to climb, balance or use ride-on toys or tricycles. Virtually all children develop good pencil control and form recognisable letters.

5. Pupils in Year 2 are now achieving about average standards in English, mathematics, science and ICT. Pupils read with accuracy and a good understanding of what they have read. Writing skills, including spelling, are below average. Pupils' speaking and listening skills are about average, with listening being particularly good. The wide use of worksheets restricts the development of pupils' literacy skills in other subjects, although it is satisfactory overall. Pupils' mathematical knowledge is average. Most pupils are confident when working with numbers to 100. They add and subtract accurately. Pupils' numeracy skills are steadily improving and there is satisfactory use in other subjects. In science, pupils' attainment is average by the end of Year 2, but there is little high attainment. Their knowledge and skills have developed satisfactorily. In ICT, pupils' attainment, when using art programs or programming a 'pixie', which is a programmable toy, is average.
6. Pupils' attainment in Year 6 is average in English, mathematics, science and ICT; however, in some areas, such as writing, the extent of higher attainment is limited. Pupils read with good understanding and accuracy, but their writing is below average. They do not have sufficient opportunities to write extensively and spelling is too inaccurate. Handwriting is neat. Speaking skills are average, and listening skills good. Pupils' literacy skills are used satisfactorily to support learning in other subjects but, on occasions, the use of worksheets limits opportunities. Pupils' mathematical knowledge is average. They have secure number skills and solve number problems accurately. A range of graphs is drawn well or produced using an ICT program. Numeracy skills are used satisfactorily across the curriculum, but this could be extended in, for instance, science. Pupils' scientific skills have improved and are satisfactory, although not extensive enough to achieve consistently high standards. There are few opportunities for them to raise questions and plan investigations. Pupils have secure knowledge across all areas of science. In Year 6, pupils use word processing and a paint software package effectively. At times, pupils' knowledge of the keyboard slows the pace of learning in other subjects.
7. Throughout the school, pupils achieve satisfactory or better standards in other subjects. In art and design, in Years 1 and 2 and Years 3 to 6, pupils develop a good range of skills and apply these effectively to attain standards above those expected. The quality of work in design and technology is also good, with examples of above average work in both Years 2 and 6. In the music lessons seen, standards were average, however, there are examples of high attainment, such as by the school's steel band. In geography, pupils attain broadly average standards by Years 2 and 6, although the organisation of the timetable limits the gradual development of skills. In history and physical education, pupils attain broadly average standards by Year 2, but higher than this by Year 6.

8. Most pupils achieve well during their time in school, but the pace of learning of more able pupils is not always high enough, and this limits the extent of higher attainment. Currently, learning and achievement are improving because the new staff have settled into the school well following a period of high staff turnover. With the very good support provided by the special educational needs co-ordinator and learning support assistants, pupils with special educational needs make very good progress. All pupils with special educational needs have appropriate targets, which ensure that they reach the highest standards of which they are capable. The extent of the progress achieved is reflected in the fact that virtually all pupils reach the expected standard in reading, writing, mathematics and science by Year 2, and that, by Year 6, none achieve below the expected range of attainment in English, mathematics and science. None of the pupils for whom English is an additional language is at an early stage of acquiring English and they achieve as well as their peers in all subjects.

Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development

9. Inspection evidence confirms the views of the large majority of parents that their children enjoy coming to school, they are happy and confident and have very positive attitudes. They are usually keen to learn and respond to their work with enthusiasm. The previous report suggested that pupils' attitudes and behaviour were positive features of the school; this remains the case, with examples of further improvement.
10. Throughout the school, pupils show high levels of interest and involvement, usually concentrating very well on tasks set until they are completed. This, and their enjoyment of the challenges set for them, make substantial contributions to how well they learn. It is often in response to the enthusiasm with which lessons are presented by their teachers and the interesting range of learning experiences provided. On the few occasions that interest is less well engaged, it is usually where pupils are unclear about what they should do or where work set is not sufficiently challenging. Pupils show high levels of motivation and pride in the way their work is presented. The small minority of pupils with short attention spans respond well to lessons that are planned with their needs in mind and to the strategies used to refocus them on their work. They particularly enjoy practical activities and respond with maturity when expected to take responsibility for their own learning. During the inspection, in physical education, small groups of Year 1 pupils devised their own games, setting rules and making judgements that resulted in revisiting their work to improve it. Opportunities for investigative work have improved since the time of the last inspection and most pupils respond well to the opportunities provided, for example in science. Some of the more able pupils show reduced interest in their work when it is less challenging than they are capable of. Independent research on the Internet is encouraged and pupils respond well, with more able pupils showing good levels of initiative in their approaches to answering questions. Pupils usually respond well to opportunities provided for them to work independently at home and they are confident about how to find books in the library. Activities provided outside of lessons are popular and have high levels of attendance. They are accessible to all pupils.
11. The majority of children in the reception class are on course to meet, or exceed, the early learning goals in personal, social and emotional development. They benefit from many activities that are planned to encourage group work, sharing and co-operation. Expectations that children should listen carefully and behave well are made clear and children respond well. Pupils with special educational needs have very positive attitudes to school. They enjoy attending and feel included in all that the school does. Other pupils respect their contributions and this helps to maintain their interest and enjoyment in school life.

12. Pupils respond positively to the consistently high expectations for good behaviour, and a calm and orderly environment for learning is produced. In lessons, behaviour was always at the very least satisfactory and often much better. The very effective management strategies used by teachers result in the time available for learning being used well and the pupils' positive response. Pupils have a very clear understanding of the school rules and are very well motivated by the system of awards that acknowledges achievements in all aspects of their lives at school. Out of lessons they interact very confidently with each other, staff and visitors. They are invariably well mannered, polite and courteous. At lunchtimes, they play and socialise happily, often showing high spirits, but also very pleasing good will and 'give and take' towards each other. Members of staff on duty deal promptly with the occasional squabbles that arise between pupils. Pupils use school equipment and materials responsibly and show high levels of respect for displays of work and artefacts around the school. During the last 15 years, there have been no exclusions.

13. Relationships throughout the school and the response of pupils to opportunities provided for their personal development have improved since the time of the last inspection and are very good. The mutual respect evident between teachers and pupils has a good impact on learning as it results in high levels of co-operation and a desire to please. Pupils feel able to share any concerns with adults at the school and thrive in an environment where bullying is unusual. Those spoken to during the inspection are confident they will not be bullied and are familiar with the awareness-raising activities that have been provided on this topic. The various cultural backgrounds that make up the school community get along well together, ensuring very good racial harmony throughout. Pupils listen with respect to what others, including those from a range of ethnic backgrounds, have to say, only rarely interrupting. This results in a growing confidence about expressing their own views and the ability to evaluate the work of others with sensitivity. Pupils show high levels of care and concern for the wellbeing and happiness of others, for example in discussions about topics for the school council agenda. Those representing their classes on the school council do so responsibly and with a clear understanding that their role is to represent the views of their class rather than their own. They show maturity in revising their views and opinions after debating key points. When working in pairs and small groups, pupils collaborate very well, discussing, listening and sharing effectively. From the time they start in reception, there are high expectations for children to take responsibility for classroom routines, organising themselves and helping their teachers, to which they respond very well. As they move through the years, they grow in responsibility and ability to use initiative so that in Year 6, pupils help with younger children, organising activities and support during wet breaks and lunchtimes. In addition, they get the hall ready for assemblies, help with preparation for lessons, supervise access to school during break times and deal with lost property.

14. Attendance has risen significantly since the time of the last inspection, and continues to do so, making a good contribution to learning. For the last reporting year to May 2003, attendance is 95.3 per cent, there is no unauthorised absence and pupils are rarely late. Most absences are for genuine medical reasons, although some parents take their children on holidays during school term time. These are occasionally more than the ten days that the school is authorised to sanction. The school reminds parents of the possible impact of these actions.

HOW WELL ARE PUPILS TAUGHT?

15. The quality of teaching in the school is good. No unsatisfactory teaching was seen during the inspection. About three-quarters of lessons featured good or better teaching, and a quarter that was very good. This is an improvement over the previous inspection when teaching, although described as good, featured unsatisfactory teaching, especially in Year 1. During the inspection, teaching in Years 1 and 2 was very good overall, with none less than good.
16. The teaching for reception children is good. The teacher plans well, with good detail to ensure all areas of learning are covered, but with a clear focus during each session. She demonstrates a good understanding of how young children learn. The teacher and other adults assist effectively in developing children's independence. Children are managed very well, so that they are rarely off task; this makes an important contribution to their learning. Children's learning is also aided by the very effective use of resources, including adults, and also by the range of teaching methods used. As a result, children make good progress in acquiring skills and knowledge. They work with pace and concentration. A particular strength is the attention given to developing children's reading skills. There is, however, less focus on helping children develop the wide range of writing skills.
17. The quality of teaching in the remainder of the school is good overall, and very good in Years 1 and 2. Examples of good or very good teaching are seen throughout the school, and much in Year 6 is very good. In Years 1 and 2, teaching is very good in English, mathematics and physical education. In other subjects, it is mostly good, and this is evident in pupils' recorded work even where little or no teaching was seen. In Years 3 to 6, teaching is good in English and mathematics, and satisfactory or good in other subjects. The strengths and weaknesses are similar throughout Years 1 to 6, although relative weaknesses are less in evidence in Years 1 and 2. Planning is generally good, but it does not consistently give sufficient attention to how to meet the needs of more able pupils. This is especially evident in an analysis of pupils' past work. A positive feature of planning is the attention given to pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. Good thought is given to ensuring that pupils' lack of language skills, such as pupils with special educational needs, does not inhibit learning. A range of recording methods is used effectively. Pupils' learning in all lessons observed was satisfactory or better. Overall, the present good teaching is leading to improving learning and progress, and rising achievement. This is one reason for the rising attainment in Year 6 seen this year. Teachers' subject knowledge is good, and used well when talking with pupils, raising questions or answering pupils' queries. Pupils are usually encouraged to work at a good pace but, in satisfactory lessons, this is not so evident. Basic literacy and numeracy skills are well taught, but the needs of higher attaining pupils are not met consistently. Satisfactory use is made of literacy and numeracy in other subjects, but the overuse of worksheets sometimes limits writing opportunities. The use of ICT across the curriculum has improved over that reported previously, however the tendency to let more able pupils word process their work as an extension task slows their progress in writing. The management of pupils is very good and results in the high standards of behaviour that has a positive effect on learning and attitudes in class. Individual guidance during lessons is effective in providing day-to-day support and the learning support assistants ensure that all pupils are fully involved in lessons. Marking, assessment in lessons and their use are satisfactory. Homework is set regularly and is very effective when targeted at extending work done in lessons.
18. Careful analysis of pupils' work, planning to meet their diagnosed needs and a sharing of these needs lead to pupils with special educational needs being well taught. They

learn very effectively in Years 1 and 2 where the special educational needs co-ordinator is in close and regular contact with them. They learn effectively through Years 3 to 6. In all years, careful thought is given to planning appropriate work for these pupils, and learning support staff are used to very good effect. Pupils with statements of special educational needs are taught in accordance with the targets set out in the statements; this helps to ensure their very good progress.

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

19. Over the course of the school year, the curriculum is broad and balanced, and there is a satisfactory range of learning opportunities. The school's curriculum meets statutory requirements and includes all subjects of the National Curriculum; this was also the case at the time of the last inspection. The curriculum is meeting the needs of most pupils in Years 1 and 2 and Years 3 to 6 and contributes well to pupils' spiritual, moral, social and emotional development. Provision for ICT and for aspects of science, both key issues for action at the time of the last inspection, has improved. However, some aspects of the curriculum require review. The policy of teaching some subjects in half-termly blocks, alternating with other subjects, provides adequate coverage, but time is sometimes lost at the start of new topics in revisiting areas previously covered in order to revise skills, for example in geography and music. Although the time allocated for the teaching of music in Years 1 and 2 and Years 3 to 6 is satisfactory, in practice it is a little below this, due to the half-termly blocking system for older pupils. Policies and schemes of work are in place for all subjects and the school is using national planning guidance as the basis for its curricular planning. This provides a sound basis for class teachers' planning. Some teachers use weekly activity sheets to give an overview of work planned. These include space to indicate time allocations for each subject; however, this section is rarely used. This, combined with the under use of small parcels of time, associated with when breaks take place, means that practice across the school is inconsistent, and opportunities for learning can be lost. The school has plans to review the structure of the timetable for the new school year.
20. Children in reception experience a satisfactory curriculum that covers all areas of learning. The focus on children's reading skills is especially effective. Opportunities for writing in sentences or stories are not as extensive and this area of language does not develop as rapidly. A lack of suitable equipment restricts aspects of children's physical development.
21. The National Numeracy Strategy has been implemented satisfactorily and there is a consistency of provision for this throughout the school. Satisfactory links exist between mathematics and other subjects, such as science and geography, which reinforce numeracy skills. Provision for English is through the National Literacy Strategy and the quality and range of provision for English are good. An annual 'book week' highlights the importance of literacy skills, and provides opportunities for whole-school work in all aspects of English. Some very good opportunities allow pupils to practise literacy skills across the curriculum. In an English lesson, Year 6 pupils prepared questions for a visitor to a subsequent history lesson. During this history lesson, pupils were then required to refine and adapt their questions according to the responses received from the visitor and were skilfully guided and supported by the teacher in this, resulting in very good learning. However, pupils are not always given the opportunity to write at length in subjects such as geography, history and science. 'Booster' classes are succeeding in raising the mathematical and English skills of lower attaining pupils in Year 6.

22. The relevance of the curriculum is satisfactory for pupils. Pupils generally have work that matches their learning needs; work is particularly well planned for pupils with special educational needs, but the curricular provision for higher attaining pupils across the school is not always of sufficient breadth or richness. In Year 6, pupils are taught English and mathematics in two class groups set up according to pupils' levels of attainment. This makes it more effective for teachers to prepare activities to meet the learning needs of pupils as the range of attainment levels of pupils in these classes is reduced by such organisation. Pupils in reception and Year 6 are taught French. A specialist tutor provides teaching in conversational French for the Year 6 pupils; reception children are taught in small groups with the support of a teaching assistant and their lessons are based on songs and activities. Swimming lessons for pupils throughout Years 5 and 6 provide the opportunity to learn to swim, improve confidence and water survival skills.
23. A good range of extra-curricular opportunities enhances the school curriculum, and all staff provide at least one after-school club per term. These include dance, rounders and netball, football and cricket teams, tennis coaching, drama, art and design and ICT. There is a steel band, an orchestra, choir and a debating society. The majority of these are open to pupils in the junior classes, with infant pupils now having some provision.
24. The school makes very good provision for pupils' personal, social and health education (PSHE), and a new policy has recently been put in place. This provides for the subject to be taught as a separate area or through other subjects. Thus, from ages five to eleven, pupils build their understanding of human development as part of their work in science. In Years 5 and 6, the school nurse provides support to the school when puberty is discussed as part of a health education programme. Action plans are in place for the development of personal, social and health education, and for citizenship. As part of this, a school council has been created; this meets regularly and is supported by governors. Pupils have the opportunity in classes to discuss matters to be raised at the school council by their representatives, and to receive feedback.
25. The school has appropriate links with the community, the local church and businesses. These links contribute to pupils' learning, for example involvement by Year 6 pupils in a project sponsored by a large scientific foundation. The local area is used to support pupils' work in subjects such as geography, science and history. School contributions to the community include the provision of a computing course, and family learning projects to boost parents' literacy and numeracy skills. St Michael's Church has a close relationship with the school, and pupils are involved in a number of parish events throughout the year.
26. Appropriate arrangements are made for the transfer of pupils into and from the school, with the reception teacher being provided with time to visit the main pre-school settings to meet staff and transfer records. At the age of eleven, pupils have opportunities to visit their new schools. Teachers from the relevant secondary schools are invited in to meet the pupils and teachers, and share information, including that relating to the teaching of Year 6 transition material in English and mathematics. The school has initial teacher training links with Greenwich University and with the local cluster of schools, including one that has been awarded Beacon status.
27. Provision for pupils' personal, spiritual, moral, social and cultural (SMSC) development is very good throughout the school. Particular strengths are in their personal, social, moral and spiritual education. In all lessons, objectives include consideration of SMSC, ensuring that this important aspect of pupils' development permeates the work of the school. A key feature of spiritual development is pupils' enjoyment in being at school,

together with the enriching curriculum and opportunities to marvel at their environment. The Christian faith is consistently enhanced by prayers at the beginning of the day, assemblies and the ways in which aspects of pupils' lives are related to their Christian beliefs. Personal self-esteem is very successfully enhanced through the value placed on pupils' work and effort. The effective links with the church and involvement in Christian festivals and celebrations, together with opportunities to reflect on, for example, the feelings of others, successfully enhance spirituality.

28. The school provides very well for pupils' moral development and this is reflected in the very good behaviour seen and the mature understanding between right and wrong as set out in the behaviour policy. Assemblies support moral development well. They acknowledge positive characteristics, for example where pupils try to be good, and promote Christian values very well. Teachers set positive role models, which reinforce pupils' moral development well. Pupils are encouraged to take an active interest in local and world affairs, to consider difficulties experienced by those less fortunate than themselves and to help others through the work they do for charity. The recent development of the citizenship programme ensures pupils consider moral values in relation to what makes a good citizen. Pupils are encouraged to consider morality in respect of the world we live in, for example care of the environment, and to support this, the school belongs to a local recycling scheme. Care and consideration for others are promoted very well, for example in the high profile given to developing an anti-bullying culture within the school. In physical education, pupils learn respect for rules and the notion of fair play.
29. The provision made for pupils' social development is very good. The very positive relationships within the school and the involvement of parents are strengths of the school. The very friendly and supportive atmosphere during lessons soon helps pupils to develop confidence and ensures they share views and opinions without fear of ridicule. The encouragement given to them to take responsibility from an early stage at the school, for example as class monitors, develops social skills well. Opportunities for taking responsibility increase as they move through the years. In Year 6, pupils have high levels of awareness about those younger than themselves. They help with supervision and in supporting play during wet lunchtimes. They also prepare the hall for assemblies, set up trolleys for lessons and deal with lost property. The school council, although newly formed, contributes well towards pupils' understanding of democracy, for example in discussions during the inspection, the view of the majority was changed through discussion and consideration of the points made by others. The wide range of inter-school sporting activities, high quality of singing and opportunities for performances in local and national events further enhance social development. Confidence in performing for others is encouraged through talent shows, class assemblies, entertaining pensioners and grandparents, performing at the local shopping centre, for the mentally handicapped and at a hospice. In classrooms, there are good opportunities for pupils to share each other's news and they discuss and resolve problems affecting their peers. Good manners and consideration for others are encouraged at all times both in lessons and during lunch breaks.
30. The school makes good provision for pupils' cultural development. There is a wide range of educational visits, for example to the theatre, art galleries and museums. Within lessons, pupils reflect on art from other cultures, for example Aboriginal and Aztec art. They reflect on the use of language in other countries and are taught a growing awareness of the different cultures within this country. In lessons, cultural awareness is promoted well, for example the celebration of differences seen in Year 1 science during the week of inspection. During 'book week', pupils experienced African storytelling and the school promoted understanding of Judaism through a day about

Shabbat. Year 3 pupils visit Judaism and Hindu websites to find out about these cultures. This leads to class discussions, for example about food in Hinduism. The multicultural week held by the school promoted understanding well and included an anti-racism festival, together with high quality entertainment by the school's steel band. The recent history of, and changes to, pupils' own culture are taught well, for example through work done about life during World War Two.

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL CARE FOR ITS PUPILS?

31. The school cares very well for its pupils. Arrangements to provide for the health, safety and welfare of pupils are very good. Throughout the school, relationships are very positive and support pupils in developing as confident learners in a safe and secure environment. Pupils interviewed during the inspection say they happily confide in their teachers, or other members of staff, if they have a problem. The nurseries and playgroups that children attend before joining the reception class are visited to ensure that good quality information about their backgrounds, friendship groups and any special educational needs are known well in advance. In addition, the close relationships that the school develops with parents through links with the church ensure staff know individual children and their families very well indeed. This enables them to help children to settle in happily when they start at the school. There is a suitably trained and experienced person with designated responsibility for child protection. Procedures to be used in the event of concern are included in the induction of all new staff and there are special arrangements to ensure that supply and temporary staff are aware of these. Child protection is a topic that is included regularly in the programme of professional development, ensuring staff keep up to date with what is required. The PSHE programme includes aspects of personal safety, ensuring pupils are aware of potential dangers, for example those related to strangers, safety on the roads and railways and what to do in the event of fire. There is good support from the police liaison officer, school nurse, road safety officer, railway police and local fire officers.
32. There is an effective health and safety policy that is unambiguous and meets the needs of the school well. The governors regularly review safety matters and ensure suitable priority is given to reviewing procedures and overseeing repairs and renewals as required. The school has recently updated its risk assessment procedures and these include arrangements to ensure the safety of pupils when they go out of school on trips and visits. Good attention is given by teachers in lessons to ensuring that pupils are aware of safe practices and follow these. Suitable arrangements ensure that staff new to the school, or those providing temporary cover, are aware of safety procedures. Pupils are supervised well at break and lunchtimes and have very positive relationships with lunchtime assistants who know them and quickly recognise when there is a problem. Fire procedures are practised with sufficient frequency to ensure that both staff and pupils are familiar about what to do in the event of an emergency. Equipment and appliances used by the school are tested regularly in accordance with statutory requirements. There are suitable arrangements to deal with first-aid emergencies, and staff are vigilant in following up how they happened.
33. Procedures for monitoring and promoting regular attendance are good overall. Registration arrangements, including those for the very few pupils who are late, meet statutory requirements and provide an accurate record of those present in the school. Registers are kept centrally in the reception office at all times to ensure their accessibility in the event of an emergency. Reasons for absence are always required and, when parents have not given these by 10.00 am on the first day of absence, the school telephones home to ensure all is well. The school works very well with the education welfare officer and ensures that the use of time available from this resource

is used to best effect by following up all absences before making a referral. Although annual progress reports to parents inform them about the number of absences their children have had, they do not make clear the standards expected or the impact of poor attendance on their children's progress.

34. The very high expectations for good behaviour are clearly communicated to, and understood by, pupils. This leads to very high standards being seen throughout the school. Classroom management routines are very effective, although methods used vary a little between teachers as a result of the many recent changes in staff. The system of awards that acknowledges achievement in all aspects of pupils' lives at school is highly valued and motivates well. On the rare occasions that behaviour causes concern, the school seeks to involve parents at an early stage to discuss ways forward. The very successful promotion of good behaviour and care for others has resulted in the achievement of consistently high standards over a considerable period. There has been no need to consider exclusion for many years. Should the need arise in the future, the school has in place very well-considered procedures and includes parents and pupils in finding and agreeing a way forward. There are suitable arrangements to deal with the rare incidents of bullying and an anti-bullying culture is promoted well through PHSE, 'circle time' discussions and during assemblies.
35. There are very good arrangements for the personal support and guidance of pupils. The PSHE programme contributes very effectively to personal development, covering a broad range of topics including health, relationships, drugs awareness and personal safety. This, together with the newly incorporated citizenship skills, ensures pupils have a growing understanding of issues affecting their lives and impacting on the wider community. 'Circle time' is used well to enable pupils to discuss and solve problems. Teachers know individual pupils well and make effective assessments of their personal development in the annual written reports to parents about their children's progress. Assemblies are planned very well to provide thought-provoking topics and offer effective guidance about issues both within and beyond the school community.
36. At the time of the last inspection, the school's procedures for assessing pupils' attainment and progress were good; this remains the case. A wide range of data is collected, which is used to track pupils' progress, especially in English and mathematics. Assessment in reception and science is good; for pupils with special educational needs it is excellent. In other areas, relevant assessment data is collected, but is not always used well, especially in identifying how to challenge more able pupils. In reception, children's attainment is assessed shortly after they start school and these records are systematically updated as children make progress. Assessment is effectively built into many of the reception class activities and the classroom assistant makes a positive contribution to the process. Information is used well to plan work and organise groups of pupils.
37. The results of annual tests in reading, writing and mathematics are recorded in a grid format that is beginning to provide a detailed picture of the progress that pupils make over time; the school also uses a progress calculator software package to predict the expected levels which pupils should reach at ages ten and eleven. Throughout the school, this assessment information is now being used to set end-of-year levels that pupils are expected to achieve on the basis of their prior attainment. The information from tests is used well to group Year 6 pupils by ability in mathematics and English, and to identify pupils who might benefit from attending 'booster' groups in these subjects. However, across the school, the information from class tests in areas such as mathematics, spelling and reading is not yet sufficiently used to support planning for the next stages of work and this impacts on provision, in particular for the higher attaining

pupils. Although a school policy exists, practice varies from teacher to teacher, particularly with regard to daily and weekly assessments.

38. Careful assessment of their educational and other needs, allied to thorough planning of their work, lead to the special educational needs pupils at St Michael's being very well cared for. Those with higher academic ability have not been considered as having special educational needs and the focus, which pupils who are less able have, is not reflected in provision for the higher achievers. Results of the special educational needs co-ordinator's assessments are used very well to inform the construction of detailed individual education plans, which class teachers and support assistants use effectively.
39. The school has begun to put in place a system of setting written targets for individual pupils but, so far, practice is inconsistent. Good practice in some classes, notably Year 6, encourages pupils to assess their own writing against a set of criteria. Formal assessment procedures, so that teachers can check which pupils are not meeting expectations or which are exceeding them, are not consistently used in all subjects. This means that higher attaining pupils are sometimes set work of insufficient challenge, and the progress they make slows.
40. Policies on assessment and for teaching and learning give clear guidance on marking and target setting. The assessment co-ordinator has prepared action plans for her subject; these include arrangements to develop target-setting procedures further for all pupils through examining best practice in other schools. The local education authority advisers provide support to the school in this. The co-ordinator also leads the work of the school in analysing test papers to identify areas of weakness and, from these, to set appropriate curricular targets for the school.
41. Support for the academic development of pupils is satisfactory. The teacher visits nurseries and playgroups to discuss individual children transferring into reception, but there are inconsistencies in how well academic records are transferred to the school. As a result, staff do not always know what children have achieved before they start at the school. There are examples of very good marking that ensure pupils understand how well they have done and what they need to do to improve. This is not consistent across the school. Awards for achievement and for working hard are valued and motivate well, as does the ongoing acknowledgement of good work in lessons. Pupils are aware that they have group targets but are not always sufficiently familiar with what they are. Pupils with special educational needs know their targets well and the progress they are making towards achieving them. For pupils in Years 5 and 6, there are useful 'booster' classes that support learning well. There are some additional activities provided outside of lessons for pupils who are gifted and talented, for example a drama and language event held with cluster schools that included extension work for these pupils. Arrangements at the time of transfer to secondary school ensure that academic records are transferred, including those for pupils with special educational needs. This ensures members of staff in secondary schools have the necessary information to plan effectively for pupils' needs.

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL WORK IN PARTNERSHIP WITH PARENTS?

42. The school has a very good relationship with the parents and seeks to involve them at all levels in the education of their children. Those parents expressing a view prior to the inspection have very good levels of satisfaction with what the school provides and achieves. Almost all say that their children like coming to school, they are taught well, expected to work hard and that they make good progress. They value the support given to their children's personal development that helps them to become mature and responsible. The very large majority are supportive of the way the school is led and managed and feel comfortable about approaching staff should they need to discuss concerns. They feel well informed about their children's progress. Inspection evidence confirms these positive views. There are conflicting views from parents about homework, with some feeling that their children have too much and others too little. Inspectors found that, although satisfactory overall, the amount of homework given to older pupils does not increase sufficiently by the time they are in Year 6 to prepare them for expectations at secondary school. Some parents would like to see a greater range of activities outside of lessons. Opportunities provided have, until recently, been principally sport orientated but have been extended and are good overall. The school is currently exploring opportunities to extend the range of activities offered further when the planned extension to the school makes the hall available at lunchtimes.
43. The effectiveness of the school's partnership with parents, particularly through the information provided, is very good. The governors' annual report and school prospectus provide well-presented information about expectations, provision and achievements and future goals, although more detail is required about the national comparisons for testing at the end of Years 2 and 6. In addition to their annual report, the governors provide for parents a very useful newsletter each term that ensures they are kept up to date and have the necessary information to comment on proposals that may affect them and their children. The views of parents are regularly taken into account. The home/school agreement sets clear foundations for an effective working partnership and ensures that expectations are made clear to all. Teachers are accessible in the playground at the end of the day and parents value this opportunity to raise concerns on an informal basis. There is a 'parent partnership' reading scheme for those wishing to help their children at home, and guidance is given at regular coffee mornings; attendance at these is good. The school provides parents with key dates for their diaries and information about what topics their children will be doing at the beginning of each term. There are curricular workshops that include advice about how to help children at home, for example with mathematics, literacy and homework. Attendance at these events is not high. There are very good opportunities for parents to get to know the school and its staff prior to their children starting in reception. For those whose children are about to transfer to secondary school, there are effective arrangements in place to ensure they have all the necessary information to help them to make informed decisions. Similarly, very good links exist with parents of children who have special educational needs. They are fully involved in the review processes.
44. Annual progress reports provide an effective evaluation of what pupils know, understand and can do, together with the progress they have made in English, mathematics and science. Standards of reporting are particularly high in English, where the evaluation leads naturally to areas for development that are clearly expressed so that parents understand what their children must do to improve. In addition, numeracy and literacy targets are set separately towards the end of the reports. In other subjects, there is usually good information about attitudes to school, behaviour and work covered, providing useful but less detailed information. Although the required information about absences is published in reports as required, parents are not suitably informed about

the impact of poor attendance on how well their children learn. There are effective formal opportunities for parents to meet with their children's teachers in the autumn term to discuss how they have settled in to their new class, and in the spring to review the progress they are making. Although parents are advised they may make an appointment to discuss annual progress reports, these are not issued until less than one week before the end of term. This reduces opportunities for making an appointment before the long summer break, after which most children have new class teachers. Results of testing at the end of Years 2 and 6 are suitably communicated to individual parents, together with information about the standards expected for children at those ages. The school ensures that parents of children with special educational needs receive all the required information. They are always invited to annual reviews of progress, to be involved in discussions about target setting and they receive copies of their children's individual education plans.

45. The involvement of parents and the interest that most take in their children's learning have a very good impact on the work of the school. There is a successful and thriving parent and teacher association that is very active in organising both social and fund-raising events. Through these, they make a significant contribution to learning by the purchase of materials and equipment for the school. The interest they take in their children's work, both through their attendance at consultations with teachers about progress and in the encouragement they give to their children at home, supports learning well. Many provide active support on a regular basis in classrooms, such that the school has provided a parents' room for break times. The recent redecoration of the school was organised by parents and has done much to improve the learning environment. Support was also forthcoming with the networking of computers in classrooms and this has had a significant impact on opportunities for pupils to extend their ICT skills and to work independently.

HOW WELL IS THE SCHOOL LED AND MANAGED?

46. The leadership and management of the school are good overall, with the headteacher and governing body of St Michael's providing very good leadership and management. The large staff turnover means that key individuals, such as the many new co-ordinators, have not had chance to have a significant impact to date. The headteacher sets a clear educational direction for the school and secures commitment from staff in maintaining a broad range of educational activities for pupils. He and the governing body have carefully managed numerous staff changes and variations in areas of responsibility held by staff to ensure a continuing commitment to raising standards. The high quality observed at the last inspection has been maintained.
47. The school's overt Christian ethos underlines its aims and values. It is committed to high quality relationships between all groups of pupils, and relationships are indeed very good. Despite the occasions when there is a lack of challenge for more able pupils, the school is fully inclusive in nature. There is a welcoming environment for all pupils and other members of the school community, and a sense of pride in being a member of St Michael's family is engendered.
48. Delegation to staff with responsibilities is satisfactory. Some are new to the school and others, whilst not new to school, are new to the co-ordinator's role. They are committed to improvement in their areas of responsibility and have monitored planning, led staff training and provided curricular audits to inform school development planning. Some co-ordinators are aware of the need to develop the use of assessment to inform planning but this is not yet fully developed. The relatively high pupil:teacher ratio means that co-ordinators have had limited time to monitor lessons and this leads to some

inconsistencies within classes. The very good teaching seen in many subjects within the school is inconsistently spread and co-ordinators need time to develop the very good practice in some classes in a systematic manner throughout the school.

49. The school's special educational needs co-ordinator provides very good leadership in her area of responsibility. She has excellent methods of assessing pupils' attainment and achievement and, through diagnostic testing of a high quality, planning work to match pupils' needs. She effectively monitors learning outcomes and uses information to produce future plans and learning targets. As a result, pupils with special educational needs make very good progress overall. Although new to the school this year, the reception teacher manages the Foundation Stage well. She has completed an appropriate action plan to improve provision further, such as the need to extend opportunities for children's physical development.
50. The governing body is very effective and supportive; its roles are clearly defined and it has appropriate committees in place, which meet regularly and are well informed. Governors are committed to the success of the school and fully aware of its strengths and weaknesses. The governing body fulfils its statutory duty well. Individual governors bring a good range of expertise to their role.
51. The governing body is fully involved in shaping the educational direction of the school and works well with the headteacher to determine educational priorities. It plays an active part in developing the school improvement plan and has a very good strategic overview of the school. Governors, with the headteacher and staff of the school, have ensured that the requirements of the last report have been fulfilled. The governing body has a very good understanding of the strengths and weaknesses of the school and is committed to taking its share of responsibility for improvement.
52. The school has good systems for monitoring and evaluating performance. The headteacher monitors teachers and is aware of areas for development for individual staff. The assessment information which the school collects has insufficient impact on the quality of teaching, as it is not effectively used to inform planning on a day-to-day basis. The school has an effective system of performance management. A particularly good fixture is the introduction of whole-school goals ensuring each teacher has a commitment to school priorities as well as their own individual development needs. This ensures a shared commitment to school improvement.
53. The school has good systems for the induction of new staff and complies with the requirements for newly qualified teacher monitoring. Teachers and other staff quickly feel part of the school family. Systems for the rigorous monitoring of teaching by staff other than the headteacher, to ensure school policies are fully implemented and to monitor the quality of teaching throughout the school, are not, however, fully developed.
54. The strategies of the governing body and headteacher for budget construction and monitoring are very good. Educational priorities are determined and then costed. Costs clearly relate to school-identified educational priorities. Evaluation of the impact of spending takes place. The bursar controls and administers the budget in an excellent manner, keeping a watchful eye on spending and keeping the headteacher and finance committee fully informed as to levels of spending. She also monitors budgets for co-ordinators and enables them to spend efficiently. The latest audit report has been fully considered by the governing body. Specific grants are allocated and spent appropriately. The school's bursar monitors this spending excellently and provides detailed and full information to the headteacher and governing body.

55. The management of the school makes very good use of technology. The governors communicate with each other and the school by e-mail. Policies, important information and other items are very efficiently distributed and disseminated. The school does not as yet use technology to analyse attendance data.
56. The governing body has an excellent grasp of the principles of best value. Governors have visited and communicated with other schools to compare costs of possible purchases; they challenge the educational value of items thoroughly and consult widely and appropriately regarding purchases. They ensure the best price is obtained, and not always the cheapest, but with consideration of best value for the school and the educational development of its pupils in mind. St Michael's East Wickham CE VA Primary School is effective and provides good value for money.
57. The school has sufficient, suitably-qualified teachers to meet curricular needs. Recent high levels of staff turnover have resulted largely from promotion and retirement. The school has taken full advantage of this opportunity to re-assess the roles of individuals and the expertise needed when recruiting new staff. This has resulted in a good match between the allocation of subject responsibility and individual expertise and experience. Limited resources mean that co-ordinators have few opportunities to monitor work in the subjects for which they are responsible and to ensure that good practice is shared and built upon. The school ensures that subject co-ordinators have suitable opportunities for professional development; these opportunities do not always extend to other members of staff who teach subjects outside their specialism. There is a suitable number of learning support assistants who are well qualified and provide support of a high standard. This makes a positive impact on the quality of provision, particularly for pupils with special educational needs. There are sufficient administrative and other support staff; they are suitably experienced and qualified and provide a high level of professional support that ensures the smooth running of the school.
58. Good accommodation ensures the needs of the curriculum are met and provides a pleasant learning environment. The school makes effective use of its buildings and grounds, which are maintained well. All but three classrooms are of a good size and the school has plans to extend these. The playground has a rubberised surface that helps to ensure pupils receive little hurt from their various bumps and spills. It also has a useful netball court. The playing field is of good size and enables both cricket and football to be practised with ease. The outside area for children in reception is too small to meet their needs. The school hall is large enough to accommodate the whole school community and is used well for assemblies and other occasions when there is a need for all to gather together. It provides good accommodation for physical education and music practice. The extent to which it can be used for these purposes is currently limited because of its role as a dining room. There are plans for a new dining room and kitchen that will facilitate better use of the hall, both for lessons and for additional extra-curricular activities at lunchtimes. There are good facilities for storage, office accommodation and other administrative space. The school has made imaginative use of space available for the library and ICT room, both of which provide good accommodation. The recent increase in learning support assistants has resulted in pressure for space in the staff room and there are plans to extend this to meet the current needs of the school. The parents' room is valued and used well by the many parents who help out in the school on a regular basis.
59. There are adequate resources overall to support the curriculum and the range of pupils. In ICT, there is good provision and, with the exception of reception, all classrooms are networked and provided with sufficient computers and software to meet day-to-day needs. In design and technology, there is a good range of tools, although at the time of

the inspection, consumables were depleted. Provision is also good in art and design, where there is a wealth of materials. There are sufficient materials and equipment in mathematics and physical education. Although resources in science are satisfactory overall, there is a need for computer software to enhance some aspects of pupils' work. The library is suitably stocked overall, although some books are a little worn and others are not freely accessible to the large majority of pupils, for example the complete works of Shakespeare and Thomas Hardy. There is a shortage of resources for children in reception, where the lack of wheeled vehicles and climbing equipment impacts adversely on their physical development.

WHAT SHOULD THE SCHOOL DO TO IMPROVE FURTHER?

60. As identified in the school's current improvement plan, standards of attainment in writing, including spelling, are not high enough. More able pupils are not consistently challenged to ensure that they achieve high levels. The outdoor area for children in reception does not provide sufficient opportunities to extend their physical development.

61. In order to improve standards further, the headteacher, staff and governors should:

a) Improve the quality of pupils' writing, including their spelling, by:

- extending opportunities for children in the reception class to develop and practise their writing skills;
- the systematic teaching of spelling and word-sound skills;
- reducing the number of worksheets in some areas, which limit the development of extended writing;
- limiting the use of word processing for higher attaining pupils which diminishes their opportunities for extended writing;
- making greater use of assessment to diagnose areas for improvement to inform planning;
- making greater use of ICT to support pupils' language development rather than merely for word processing.

(Para refs: 1, 4, 5, 6, 16, 17, 20, 21, 37, 67, 69, 70, 82, 86, 91)

b) Increasing the proportion of pupils that achieve high standards in their work by:

- making greater use of assessment to identify pupils who are ready for more challenging work;
- planning in more detail how more able pupils can be moved on at a faster pace so that their attainment rises;
- limiting the extent to which word processing is used as an extension task for these pupils.

(Para refs: 1, 2, 5, 6, 8, 17, 22, 36, 37, 39, 52, 88, 89, 91, 96, 97, 99, 100, 105, 106, 107, 119, 129)

Improve the outdoor opportunities for reception children by:

- planning in greater detail how the outside environment can be used to promote physical development;
- as the school's finances permit, increasing the range of resources to promote physical development, including climbing apparatus, ride-on toys and tricycles.

(Para refs: 4, 20, 49, 59, 64, 76, 77, 78)

In addition, the following minor area should be considered for inclusion in the governors' action plan.

- Continue to develop the role of subject co-ordinators so that they monitor and evaluate teaching, learning and pupils' attainment in their subjects more consistently.

(Para refs: 46, 48, 57, 116, 121, 125, 130)

PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS

Summary of the sources of evidence for the inspection

Number of lessons observed	50
Number of discussions with staff, governors, other adults and pupils	33

Summary of teaching observed during the inspection

	Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
Number	0	14	22	14	0	0	0
Percentage	0	28	44	28	0	0	0

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

Information about the school's pupils

Pupils on the school's roll	Nursery	YR – Y6
Number of pupils on the school's roll (FTE for part-time pupils)	N/A	207
Number of full-time pupils known to be eligible for free school meals	N/A	9

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Special educational needs	Nursery	YR – Y6
Number of pupils with statements of special educational needs	N/A	6
Number of pupils on the school's special educational needs register	N/A	32

English as an additional language	No of pupils
Number of pupils with English as an additional language	10

Pupil mobility in the last school year	No of pupils
Pupils who joined the school other than at the usual time of first admission	8
Pupils who left the school other than at the usual time of leaving	7

Attendance

Authorised absence

	%
School data	5.1

Unauthorised absence

	%
School data	0.0

National comparative data	5.4
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National comparative data	0.5
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Both tables give the percentage of half days (sessions) missed through absence for the latest complete reporting year.

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

Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 1 for the latest reporting year	Year	Boys	Girls	Total
	2002	15	14	29

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		Reading	Writing	Mathematics
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	14	15	15
	Girls	13	13	14
	Total	27	28	29
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	93 (100)	97 (100)	100 (100)
	National	84 (84)	86 (86)	90 (91)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	14	15	15
	Girls	14	14	14
	Total	28	29	29
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	97 (100)	100 (100)	100 (100)
	National	85 (85)	89 (89)	89 (89)

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

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

Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 2 for the latest reporting year	Year	Boys	Girls	Total
	2002	14	17	31

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys	10	7	11
	Girls	11	10	15
	Total	21	17	267
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	68 (93)	55 (77)	84 (100)
	National	75 (75)	73 (71)	86 (87)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	10	8	12
	Girls	11	11	15
	Total	21	19	27
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	68 (97)	61 (90)	87 (100)
	National	73 (72)	74 (74)	82 (82)

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

Ethnic background of pupils

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

Exclusions in the last school year

No of pupils on roll	Number of fixed period exclusions	Number of permanent exclusions
172	0	0
0	0	0
3	0	0
1	0	0
0	0	0
6	0	0
0	0	0
10	0	0
0	0	0
0	0	0
0	0	0
2	0	0
7	0	0
1	0	0
0	0	0
0	0	0
5	0	0

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

Teachers and classes

Qualified teachers and classes: YR – Y6

Total number of qualified teachers (FTE)	9.4
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	22.0
Average class size	29.6

Education support staff: YR – Y6

Total number of education support staff	10
Total aggregate hours worked per week	143

Qualified teachers and support staff: nursery

Total number of qualified teachers (FTE)	N/A
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	N/A
Total number of education support staff	N/A
Total aggregate hours worked per week	N/A
Number of pupils per FTE adult	N/A

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Financial information

Financial year	2002/2003
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	£
Total income	538,521
Total expenditure	524,003
Expenditure per pupil	2,495
Balance brought forward from previous year	4,562
Balance carried forward to next year	19,080

Recruitment of teachers

Number of teachers who left the school during the last two years	6
Number of teachers appointed to the school during the last two years	6
Total number of vacant teaching posts (FTE)	0
Number of vacancies filled by teachers on temporary contract of a term or more (FTE)	0.6
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	207
Number of questionnaires returned	80

Percentage of responses in each category

	Strongly agree	Tend to agree	Tend to disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know
My child likes school.	65	31	4	0	0
My child is making good progress in school.	59	39	3	0	0
Behaviour in the school is good.	53	40	6	1	0
My child gets the right amount of work to do at home.	34	44	20	1	1
The teaching is good.	51	46	1	0	1
I am kept well informed about how my child is getting on.	39	54	6	0	1
I would feel comfortable about approaching the school with questions or a problem.	59	38	4	0	0
The school expects my child to work hard and achieve his or her best	70	29	1	0	0
The school works closely with parents.	55	40	3	0	3
The school is well led and managed.	60	36	3	0	1
The school is helping my child become mature and responsible.	59	40	1	0	0
The school provides an interesting range of activities outside lessons.	36	45	16	0	3

PART D: THE STANDARDS AND QUALITY OF TEACHING IN AREAS OF THE CURRICULUM, SUBJECTS AND COURSES

62. There are places for 30 children in the school's reception class. Children who are five years old during the academic year start reception full time in September. Although varying considerably within the class and from year to year, when children start school their attainment is below average overall. This is not as high as previously reported. The school has made good progress since the last inspection, maintaining the strengths identified then.
63. Provision for children in the Foundation Stage is satisfactory, with strengths in personal, social and emotional development and reading. Teaching is mostly good, and never less than satisfactory. The curriculum is well planned so that children gain relevant and worthwhile experiences in all the areas of learning. Detailed assessments of each child's progress are completed and used effectively to guide the organisation of groups and planning to meet children's needs. A few children have been identified as having special educational needs, including a boy who has a statement of special educational needs. These children are supported well and make good progress. Children make a good start to their education and are prepared well for starting in Year 1.
64. The school has developed very good links with parents and children before they start school. Visits help them to know the school well before they start. Opportunities are now being developed for closer links with the pre-school groups that children attend before starting school. The reception teacher manages the provision well. The reception classroom is a good size. The outdoor area is rather small. It allows for a range of activities, such as sand and water use and role-play, but there is insufficient space and equipment for developing physical skills.

Personal, social and emotional development

65. Children make good progress in this area of learning. The good atmosphere created in reception and the interesting environment provided ensure that children quickly learn how to behave in school. Owing to the emphasis given by the teacher, children are polite and courteous to each other, to adults who care for them and to visitors. They have learnt to say 'please' and 'thank you' appropriately. The teacher and other adults assist effectively in developing children's independence. There are appropriate opportunities to select their own activities, which they do confidently. By the end of reception, children sustain a good level of concentration. They are encouraged to share resources and work with other children, but some find this aspect of co-operation difficult. Lessons are organised so that children generally move from one activity to another calmly and sensibly.
66. Teaching and learning are good. Adults have a good relationship with children and ensure that all are fully involved in the activities provided. The staff provide good opportunities for children to learn through play and develop their social skills. Children with special educational needs are supported and well integrated into the class. Children benefit from taking part in regular assemblies. Relationships between adults and children, and between children, are generally very good and underpin the progress made. In this area of learning, most children are on course to meet, or exceed, the early learning goals by the end of reception.

Communication, language and literacy

67. Many children come to school with below average attainment in language skills. Good provision in this area of learning means that, by the end of reception, children exceed the expectations in reading and meet them in speaking and listening. Writing skills are not so well developed. The brief weekly session of French successfully extends children's opportunities to develop their communication skills. Children are encouraged to listen carefully to a variety of stories and instructions. The quiet atmosphere effectively supports children's listening skills and they make good progress in this aspect of learning. The teacher and other adults encourage children to speak clearly, asking for words to be repeated if necessary. Overall, children make good progress in developing their speaking and listening skills and will reach the early learning goals by the start of Year 1.
68. Children make a very good start in their reading skills. They enjoy listening to stories and playing games that develop the idea that words have meaning, such as matching French words with relevant pictures. Every child has a reading diary and book-bag. They take them home regularly and the useful support given by parents makes a significant contribution to the very good progress children make in this area of learning. Children soon learn that words are read from left to right, and that the pages turn from right to left. Teachers introduce children to letter sounds and this helps them to begin to sound out words. Average and above average children read simple text confidently, and understand and explain what they have read. Most children will achieve the early learning goals by the end of reception, and about half will exceed them.
69. Children make much less progress in developing their early writing skills. Few opportunities are organised to encourage children to write or make marks during activities around the classroom. The focus of writing activities is mainly on accurate letter formation, and about three-quarters of children form individual letters correctly. They also understand aspects of punctuation, such as capital letters. Most children in reception hold their pencil correctly and can copy their own name or write it from memory. Opportunities for children to write in sentences to share their ideas, thoughts and experiences are not extensive enough. As a result, few children are on course to reach the early learning goals in writing by the start of Year 1.
70. Teaching and learning are good overall, and very good for reading and the development of speaking and listening. It is less effective for the teaching of writing. The organisation of lessons in the summer term prepares children well for more structured literacy sessions in Year 1. The teacher and other adults are good role models in the way they speak. Explanations are clear and this helps children to develop confidence in speaking themselves. Focused teaching of sounds and the use of books are given a high priority and this successfully enables children to develop their reading skills.

Mathematical development

71. Children's understanding of mathematical concepts is below the expected level when they begin in reception. A good range of activities and games encourages children to develop successfully their knowledge and understanding of numbers and other areas of mathematics so that they achieve well in this area of learning. The majority of reception children will meet the early learning goals by the end of the school year.
72. Children are given a wide range of opportunities to count to ten or beyond, and above average children add and subtract single digits correctly. The teacher uses opportunities to ask children to count during activities such as calling the register. Good use is made of the sand and water trays to develop children's vocabulary and concepts

of capacity and volume. Books and games are used successfully to support children's understanding of shape and space. Reception children name flat shapes such as circle, triangle and rectangle. As part of activities linked to the story of 'Goldilocks and the Three Bears', children are encouraged to use mathematical vocabulary, such as big and little, to describe sizes. All children, including those who are lower attaining, have grasped the idea of differing sizes.

73. Teaching and learning are good, and prepare children well for more structured numeracy lessons in Year 1. Lessons are well organised and include practical activities and opportunities to co-operate. Activities are organised well to meet children's differing needs. Work is planned carefully, and this ensures that children experience a wide range of stimulating activities to develop their mathematical knowledge effectively.

Knowledge and understanding of the world

74. Children's knowledge of the world around them is about average when they start school. The good provision and teaching mean that the majority are on course to meet the early learning goals by the end of the school year. Children develop their knowledge of different localities by being introduced to various countries, through the journeys of Barnaby Bear or in their French lessons. Children have opportunities to grow and care for plants. They recognise that plants are living things that grow, and that they need, for instance, water and warmth to grow well. In a good lesson, children explored differences in human features, such as eye, hair and skin colour. They also understood that some features, such as length of hair, could be changed. In history, children know about the life of Florence Nightingale and some of the conditions in which she had to work. Technological awareness is developed through using 'drag and drop' programs, such as to illustrate the story of 'Goldilocks and the Three Bears'. Above average children successfully introduced text before printing their pictures. By the end of reception, children handle the computer mouse with care and precision.
75. Teaching and learning are good because of the range of well-organised activities that engages children's interest and provides a stimulating learning environment. The teacher plans the range of activities well and adults give good support to children. The opportunity to take half the children to the ICT suite while the remainder have a French lesson ensures good use of resources.

Physical development

76. Reception children have access to a small area of the playground, but this is inadequate for the development of physical skills associated with climbing and riding toys. Resources in this area are also inadequate. Children have regular lessons in either the school hall or on the field.
77. Owing to the lack of resources, there were no opportunities for children to use a range of wheeled vehicles and develop associated physical skills. On the field, children handled 'shinty' sticks and used them to strike and pass a ball. The size of the sticks made it difficult for them to be handled satisfactorily and children found difficulty in striking the ball consistently. Reception children handle construction toys, pencils and paintbrushes carefully and manipulate them with appropriate skill.
78. Teaching and learning are satisfactory, and limited by the range of resources available. During lessons on the field, the teacher paid good attention to improving the way children carried the stick or used it to strike a ball. Satisfactory progress is made but

most children will not meet the early learning goals in all aspects of physical development by the start of Year 1.

Creative development

79. The attainment of children as they start school is close to the average, and the good progress they make means that most will reach the early learning goal by the end of reception.
80. Teaching and learning are good. A wide range of well-organised activities engages the interests of all children and successfully covers art, design, music and imaginative play. In art activities, the adults guide children well to develop their skills. As a result, they have made useful attempts at colour mixing and produced pictures to illustrate the life of Florence Nightingale. They stick coloured paper effectively to produce 'rainbow fish'. The role-play areas capture children's imagination, whether it be acting out 'Goldilocks and the Three Bears' or serving in the greengrocer's shop. In French, children sang Frère Jacques enthusiastically.

ENGLISH

81. By the end of Years 2 and 6, standards in English are average; this is not as high as previously reported. Progression in reading remains a strength in the school. Teaching was previously described as good, and this remains the case, with better teaching in Years 1 and 2.
82. In the past, the school has achieved good standards, but they were below average by the end of Year 6 in 2002. Since the last inspection, the school has effectively implemented the National Literacy Strategy. Attempts at improving English have resulted in better attainment in Year 6. Standards in writing at the end of Years 2 and 6 are below average. The school recognises this. Standards in reading and listening skills on the other hand are above average by the end of Year 2. By Year 6, standards are average, but lower than this in writing and spelling. As children enter reception with below average attainment, pupils' achievement in the subject by the end of Year 2 is good and is presently satisfactory by Year 6.
83. Factors contributing to the fall in standards in 2002 include a large changeover in staffing and the difficulty of recruiting permanent members of staff. Pupils with special educational needs make very good progress, especially those on the reading recovery programme, who are very effectively taught and supported. Other lower attaining pupils identified receive good help from learning assistants in the classroom. The special educational needs co-ordinator, support assistants and teachers work effectively together in producing individual programmes for these pupils, especially in Years 1 and 2, and this results in their very good progress. By Year 6, the school is grouping pupils according to their attainment. They are well supported and the organisation has a positive effect on raising standards. Boys tend to do less well than girls, in line with the national picture. The reverse is the case in Year 2 this year.
84. Attainment in listening is above average and for speaking it is average. Pupils listen to instructions and questions attentively and respond well. They are very good at listening in assemblies. Pupils listen well to each other when working in pairs and in groups. However, some pupils were more reluctant to answer questions and were not always given the opportunity to answer. Older pupils speak during assemblies through a regular Bible reading. The school has a strength in drama productions, which enhances the opportunities for speaking for some pupils.

85. Attainment in reading by the end of Year 2 is average. However, whilst the attainment of boys is above average in reading, that of girls is below. Above average pupils read fluently and have a good understanding of what they have read. Lower attaining pupils do not have sufficient opportunities to develop their reading skills, although regular guided reading sessions are included in literacy lessons. An exception is those pupils with special educational needs whose reading skills are very carefully assessed and appropriate plans made to ensure their progress. Pupils' reading records, completed during guided reading activities, provide good information about reading skills and include individual and group targets. Useful home/school reading diaries record the books read and response made. Pupils in Years 1 and 2 enjoy reading and choose to read for pleasure. They know the difference between fiction and non-fiction titles. As pupils move through Years 3 and 4, they become familiar with using library indexes to retrieve information, together with context and index pages of books. By Year 4, pupils make steady progress and enjoy reading, including poetry. Reading continues to be accurate and they use the school library at a set period to change books. By Year 6, pupils use the school library, effectively using the retrieval system to obtain information. Standards in reading are above average by Year 6. Pupils are independent readers, fluent and read with expression; they discuss favourite books, notably Harry Potter.
86. Attainment in writing by the end of Years 2 and 6 is below average. By Year 2, many pupils cannot form their letters correctly and most do not join the letters. Attainment in spelling is below that expected and word level work is not used effectively to teach spelling skills. Timing of some lessons gives some pupils more opportunity for speaking and listening than developing extended writing skills. This is the case when writing skills are necessary to support other subjects throughout the school. By Year 2, pupils use the main aspects of punctuation, such as capital letters, full stops and question marks correctly. Inspection evidence indicates that there is improved achievement by Year 5; there are good examples of extended writing evident. However, pupils have few opportunities to plan and draft their work or to extend and modify the vocabulary used. Whilst ICT is used effectively to word process, pupils do not compare hard copies of different drafts. Through Years 3 to 6, use of punctuation is satisfactory but spelling continues to be weak. The practice in some classes of using the computer to replicate work sheet tasks, or to import text, is leading to pupils having too few opportunities to extend their writing and to draft, revise and improve their work.
87. Teaching in Years 1 and 2 is very good overall and good in Years 3 to 6. Better teaching is leading to improved learning and better progress. Teachers exhibit very good questioning skills and preparation, and planning was good during the time of inspection. The subject makes a satisfactory contribution across the other subjects. No unsatisfactory teaching was seen.
88. Attainment by Year 6 is improving. The school expects over 80 per cent of pupils to obtain the expected Level 4 or higher in the 2003 tests. All work seen suggests this is a realistic assessment of pupils' current work. Lessons observed in Years 5 and 6 were never less than good, and sometimes very good. In Years 3 and 4, lessons were never less than satisfactory. All lessons were clearly planned with objectives shared with pupils. On occasions, sessions at the end of lessons did not reinforce objectives set at the beginning. Whilst teachers assess pupils' work both formally and informally, the use of the information to raise pupils' achievements by focused planning is not effective. The exception is for special educational needs pupils where careful assessment does inform teachers' planning and leads to the raising of achievement. Whilst teachers are making good use of ICT to help pupils develop word processing skills, they do not consistently use it to support pupils' language development, such as that associated

with spelling or grammar. ICT was effectively used in Year 1 to support pupils' knowledge of initial sounds, rhyming works and spelling techniques, but the absence of this area of ICT use in the rest of the school reduces pupils' opportunities.

89. Teachers work in close partnership with their learning support assistants in class, and pupils with special educational needs are well taught. In Year 6, pupils are effectively grouped according to their attainment in separate classes. The practice in some classes of all groups having the same or similar work reduces learning opportunities for some pupils, especially the more able. An area for improvement in some lessons is matching tasks more closely to pupils' needs. Lessons throughout the school are not always carefully evaluated on a daily or weekly basis to ensure that planning for future work takes full account of pupils' responses. Marking is consistently carried out and characterised by positive comments. The best marking evaluates the work and sets future learning targets but this is not consistent. Homework is used to further learning and is regularly set.
90. The response of pupils to the subject is good overall and sometimes very good. Where the response is very good, it is the result of very good and relevant teaching. This was evident in a very good Year 6 lesson where pupils were preparing interview questions for a visit of an evacuee at the afternoon history lesson. Pupils were engaged and their written responses were good as they could see the relevance of the task.
91. The headteacher regularly monitors teaching in English. The co-ordinator has only managed English for this academic year. He is very aware of the subject's strengths and weaknesses, and has already made a good start to raising standards as evident in good work now seen in Year 5, and the improvement in Year 6. Whilst assessment of year groups is effective in assisting target setting, he recognises that using assessment to ensure consistency in teaching and to plan challenging tasks for more able pupils is a priority for development, as is the continuing need to develop achievement in the writing skills of pupils. His work with the local education authority's literacy consultant has had a very positive effect in raising standards but has yet to be fully felt throughout the school. He is knowledgeable and well placed to effect improvements in pupils' standards. Resources are satisfactory. The library has a wide range of books, both fiction and non-fiction. Software is available to support the development of language, and pupils have good access to ICT.

MATHEMATICS

92. Most pupils attain the standards expected for their age in numeracy and other areas of mathematics. Pupils with special educational needs are supported well and make very good progress. However, standards are not always as high as they could be with respect to the more able pupils across the school.
93. Pupils' attainment in the National Curriculum tests at the end of Year 6 has declined since 1999, when results were significantly above the national average. Attainment fell to well below the national average in 2002. These results were well below those for schools of a similar type. They were below the school's target, and did not reflect the prior attainment of this group of pupils. Teacher assessment indicates that this year's results will show a considerable improvement in attainment at Year 6, and the school's targets will be reached. Lessons observed during the inspection confirm this view. There has been no significant difference in the performance of boys and girls at Year 6 over the past three years.

94. Attainment at the end of Year 2 in 2002 was well above the national average, with all pupils achieving at, and over half of pupils attaining above, the expected level for their age. Results have been above the national average since 1999; this year's results show that, again, all pupils are achieving at the expected level; however, the proportion attaining the higher level has dropped. Boys have performed significantly better than girls, reversing previous trends.
95. The previous inspection found teaching to be generally satisfactory and sometimes good, with some unsatisfactory teaching in Year 1. Some higher achieving pupils were not making sufficient progress by Year 6. As a result of several improvements, satisfactory progress has been made in the subject since the last report. Teaching is now good, with very good teaching in Years 2 and 6. Year 6 pupils are taught in groups with pupils of similar mathematical ability for part of the week. This has been particularly effective with the lower attaining pupils, who are making good progress. However, across the school, not enough is expected of the more able pupils. Since the last report, the school has effectively implemented the National Numeracy Strategy; all teachers have received additional training in the subject and are confident in teaching mathematics.
96. The teaching in Years 1 and 2 is consistently good and often very good; this enables pupils to make good progress and achieve standards in line with national expectations. Attainment by pupils in the lessons seen during the inspection was often above average. There is an appropriate emphasis on numeracy and this makes a significant contribution to pupils' understanding. Year 1 pupils count forward and backwards to 20 with confidence, and count in twos and tens. They distinguish between straight and turning movements and recognise angles as measures of turn. Year 2 pupils use addition and subtraction facts to 20, and explain their strategies and predict outcomes when presented with a number problem. They sequence numbers up to 100, and recognise odd and even numbers. Most choose the appropriate methods for addition and subtraction problems, for example in using money, and they know that subtraction is the inverse of addition. They know the properties of two-dimensional shapes, and some of those of three-dimensional shapes. They use standard units of measure for length. Overall, standards of numeracy by the end of Year 2 are average. However, not enough is demanded of the more able pupils, and they do not always make enough progress in lessons. Pupils with special educational needs receive very good support in class and make good progress, attaining national expectations by the age of seven. A key factor in this progress is the work of the teaching assistants who are knowledgeable and sensitive to the individual needs of the pupils, and who play a full part in the planning and delivery of teaching for identified groups of pupils.
97. The pace of learning slows in Year 3; tasks set for pupils are not always sufficiently challenging, or built on evidence of past attainment. Good and very good teaching in Years 4 to 6 enables most pupils to make satisfactory progress overall and achieve appropriate standards in relation to national expectations, but the more able pupils are not always challenged and extended in their mathematical thinking. Pupils in Year 4 round numbers to the nearest 1000, order positive and negative decimal numbers and work confidently with doubling and halving, using a range of strategies to check the reasonableness of the result. Year 5 pupils demonstrate a good range of approaches to solving number problems, represent data in a variety of ways, such as bar charts and frequency tables, and find the perimeter of simple and more complex shapes. By the end of Year 6, most pupils add, multiply and divide fractions, and draw angles to the nearest degree. They use their mathematics in real-life situations, for example estimating quantities of stock to be ordered, checking their results and calculating total costs. Year 6 pupils in the lower ability group have made good progress over the year.

Pupils of all ages confidently use ICT as an integral part of mathematics, for example in Year 1 to give instructions to make right and left turns, in Year 4 to calculate doubles using a random number generator, and in Year 6 to use spreadsheets to organise information or to find sums and averages.

98. Throughout the school, pupils' attitudes to mathematics are good, or very good, and mathematics makes a significant contribution to their social and emotional development. Nearly all pupils apply themselves well to mathematical tasks and maintain concentration and motivation throughout lessons, even when they are over-long, especially in Years 1 and 2. Pupils enjoy participating in mental mathematics activities at the start of lessons and then quickly settle to class and group activities. Behaviour is good in both whole-class and group activities. Where appropriate, pupils co-operate well when working. The pace of working is good, and sometimes very good.
99. Teaching of mathematics is good. All teaching was at least satisfactory and a quarter was very good. The best lessons were characterised by very secure teacher subject knowledge, brisk pace and well-organised classrooms designed to promote pupils' independence. Other features included very good use of resources, including the effective deployment of well-prepared teaching assistants, high expectations of pupils in their learning and behaviour and the ends of sessions were used well to consolidate and assess pupils' learning. In Year 6, the use of ability grouping has enabled the lower ability pupils to make good progress, and the two teachers plan carefully to ensure that all pupils have equality of access to the curriculum. However, planning across the school for the more able pupils is too often expressed in terms of extension activities, with these pupils being required to perform the same tasks as their peers before progressing on to more demanding work.
100. The use of assessment, both formal and informal, is satisfactory overall. Pupils' work is marked regularly. In the best practice, teachers not only make positive and encouraging comments, but also indicate what the next steps should be to secure further progress. This contributes effectively to pupils' learning. All teachers keep satisfactory records in their monitoring of pupils' progress, and a comprehensive procedure for tracking pupils' progress has been put into place. Individual pupil targets are affixed to pupils' mathematics books in Year 4; these are expressed in clear language and help the pupils to understand what they need to do to improve. However, the targets are not reviewed frequently, and their use is not consistent across the school. Planning of lessons is satisfactory, based on the National Numeracy Strategy, with the inclusion of a range of appropriate activities that meet the learning needs of most pupils. However, the wide range of assessment information available is not used sufficiently to plan work that challenges and extends the higher attaining pupils' mathematical thinking and moves them on more quickly. Good examples of this approach already exist across the school, with respect to the work of pupils with special educational needs. All lessons have well-defined learning objectives, which are usually made clear to pupils. In the best lessons seen, teachers referred back frequently to the learning objectives, using them to refocus the pupils and to ensure that they were clear about the tasks set and the teachers' expectations.
101. The school is committed to involving parents in the work of their children, and homework is regularly set for pupils of all ages. Weekly homework diaries feature space for parents' comments, and older pupils use homework books for mathematics. These are regularly marked, with positive and useful teacher comments. Pupils use mathematics in other areas of the curriculum and this contributes effectively towards learning. Pupils use time-lines in history to represent events chronologically, and in

science, they draw graphs, pie charts and record measurements of height and temperature.

102. Management of the subject is satisfactory. The recently appointed co-ordinator has carried out a comprehensive audit and has started to monitor teaching. As a result, she has a good understanding of the strengths and weaknesses in mathematics. Effective analysis of assessment data, including tests at the end of topics and at the end of Years 4 and 5, enables additional focus to be placed on those pupils needing extra support to raise their levels of attainment. This contributes to the good progress they make. The co-ordinator has plans to develop the use of target setting, and to support teachers in providing for the needs of more able pupils. Resources for teaching mathematics are satisfactory and these are used effectively to promote learning. Effective use is made of ICT to support teaching and learning; this area has developed significantly since the last inspection.

SCIENCE

103. In 2002, at the end of Year 6, attainment recorded in National Curriculum tests was below the national average and the results of similar schools. Since 1998, attainment in the National Curriculum tests increased until 2000, and has since declined. Over the last four years, there has been no significant difference in the results of boys and girls. No significant difference is evident this year. In 2002, teacher assessments at the end of Year 2 indicated that all pupils achieved the level expected, but none higher than this.
104. The previous inspection found that attainment was about average by Years 2 and 6. The school has made satisfactory progress in science, maintaining broadly average results. Pupils continue to make satisfactory progress. The development of pupils' scientific skills is improving, but this has not yet resulted in many opportunities for the oldest pupils to design their own experiments in order to answer questions they have raised. The attainment of pupils currently in Years 2 and 6 is about average. Throughout the school, teaching is improving and the pace of pupils' learning is increasing.
105. During Years 1 and 2, pupils acquire satisfactory knowledge and skills. By Year 2, pupils explain that materials can have their shape changed by the use of various forces. The best work demonstrates good observation and description of the properties of various materials. Pupils draw simple electrical circuits correctly. Less able pupils do not consistently understand the nature of push and pull forces. There is little difference in the work of boys and girls or different groups of pupils. Those with special educational needs are supported well to record their findings, but there is not enough attention given to extending the challenge for more able pupils.
106. Pupils have made at least satisfactory progress in Years 3 to 6, but better teaching now is leading to improved learning. However, insufficient thought is given to challenging more able pupils; too much of the recorded work is similar for all pupils and, in the past, too much colouring in of drawings and pictures has limited the range of work covered and the depth achieved. Satisfactory attention is given to developing pupils' skills, so that, for instance, pupils understand when a test is fair. Results from investigations are recorded accurately. However, too many of the recorded results are the same and pupils do not experience how to design an experiment after having raised a scientific question. The extent to which pupils can collect or use data is limited. Year 6 pupils know about the features of simple food chains and the terms 'producer', 'herbivore', 'carnivore' and 'omnivore'. They record forces, such as friction and up thrust, in Newtons, but even more able pupils are not confident in applying their knowledge to new situations. Throughout Years 3 to 5, pupils have made steady progress in developing

knowledge about materials, erosion and the life-cycle of plants, including seed dispersal. Pupils with special educational needs make good progress because of the effective support given by classroom assistants.

107. The quality of teaching is improving and is good overall. It is especially good in Years 1 and 2. In a good lesson in Year 2, enthusiastic teaching and the effective use of resources enabled pupils to understand the importance and dangers of medicines. In Year 1, pupils were enthused to think about and record similarities and differences between humans. In all lessons, relationships with, and the management of, pupils are positive features. Important weaknesses that limit pupils' progress are the extensive use of worksheets that restrict pupils' responses and lack of planning to extend more able pupils.
108. The pupils follow a satisfactory curriculum, which has an improved balance between the development of pupils' knowledge and skills. Suitable links with a local secondary school raise Year 6 pupils' awareness of what to expect when they leave the primary school. The school bases its work on commercial guidance. Literacy, numeracy and ICT are not used as extensively as they could be and not enough thought is given to meeting the needs of the full range of pupils in each class. Systematic and useful assessment procedures are in place; these are being used to review the impact of recent changes to the curriculum. The use of self-assessment is a positive development. Science makes a very good contribution to pupils' personal development. This is helped because teachers' lesson plans consistently identify opportunities to extend pupils' thoughts. They are introduced, for instance, to the beauty of the natural world and the importance of co-operating when working. The co-ordinator was absent during the inspection and a new one will take over in September. Good leadership since the last inspection has improved the organisation of the curriculum and ensured that more attention is given to developing pupils' skills.

ART AND DESIGN

109. Standards in art and design by the end of Years 2 and 6 are above those expected. Current standards represent a good improvement in the school's provision since the last inspection.
110. The school's timetable meant that only one art and design lesson could be seen at the time of the inspection. Displays of work, folders of previous displays and other artwork, talking with pupils, the co-ordinator and other staff indicate that teaching and learning are good. Displays of work relating to many subjects are of a good standard. Pupils in Year 1 had mixed colours to determine, share and observe change when primary colours were mixed. The majority of work available was two-dimensional, but pupils had extended their skills by making suitable collages. Pupils in Year 2 developed their skills by mixing primary colours and were introduced to secondary colours effectively. In a display, aspects of a building that showed perspective were drawn and wax-rubbing techniques used effectively. Good links were made with other subjects in an interesting display of descriptive writing with pictures on the theme 'What is Red?' Year 2 had also produced some good computer-generated pictures and undertaken printing techniques. Through Years 3 to 6, pupils progress in their skills and techniques. In Year 3, there was well-defined sketching of minibeasts in preparation for making model monsters and a very good display of photographs of half faces, where pupils had observed closely and drawn the other half. In Year 5, the Theseus-Minotaur display included well-constructed miniature models, made using a range of materials. Three-dimensional work included pottery with Aztec designs. Artwork extended pupils' knowledge of other cultures, such as Aboriginal design. Good links were made with mathematics in a display of the

parable of the sower using shapes of a tangram. Good use of ICT supports the subject, especially in investigating pattern, shape and design. Although pupils had sketchbooks, they were not used to ensure development or progression of sketching skills, including line, shape or form, although these were developed in other examples of art displayed. The Year 6 displays on book covers were very good and obviously engaged pupils. Although planned for in the programme, there was little evidence of pupils evaluating and comparing the work of famous artists. Although pupils visit art galleries to study this, the area is not well catered for.

111. Pupils' attitudes to the subject are at least satisfactory. Pupils with special educational needs are well supported and integrated into all art and design lessons. The subject makes good use of ICT to support its work.
112. The co-ordinator has a good grasp of the needs of the subject and has, in the past, monitored lessons. Owing to the way in which the subject is taught in blocks, at the time of inspection, the subject was not on every timetable. The co-ordinator assesses work and organises relevant courses for training. Resources for the subject are good and well stored.

DESIGN AND TECHNOLOGY

113. Owing to the structure of the timetable, only two lessons were observed during the inspection. Judgements have been made through scrutiny of pupils planning, displays of completed work, talking with pupils and photographs of past work. Standards achieved by pupils by the end of Years 2 and 6 are above those expected. This represents a good improvement from the last inspection when standards in this subject did not meet expectations. Standards have improved as the school made the subject a recent focus and pupils now regularly design, evaluate, make, re-evaluate and re-make their models.
114. In Years 1 and 2, where no teaching was observed, pupils produce well-made glove puppets and models with moving parts. They explore types of bread and use them to design and make a variety of sandwiches. Pupils through Years 3 to 6 have made many good quality models with moving parts, as evident in photographs, including high quality models of fairground rides. The food packaging on display in the corridor showed examples of good design techniques, as did Year 4's string purses and the Year 5 cam mechanisms. The Aztecs' treasure boxes were well made and demonstrated good links with history. Pupils' construction skills are good; they measure and cut accurately and use a range of joining techniques effectively. The range of materials used is limited. Pupils themselves expressed a wish to have more opportunities for 'cooking'. There were examples of satisfactory needlework samplers.
115. Teaching in the two lessons observed was satisfactory. A positive feature of lessons and pupils' work folders is the attention given to allowing pupils to evaluate their processes and products. Pupils clearly understood the need to evaluate parts of work in progress and assess what worked and what did not. The range of activities provided was suitable but, in lessons seen, the materials and tasks were selected by the class teacher and restricted pupils' ability to choose to generate their own ideas. Pupils with special educational needs were well integrated into lessons. ICT does not currently feature in the programme of work. In one lesson, pupils' response was satisfactory but, as the lesson progressed, some pupils became restless and lacked concentration.
116. The management of design and technology is satisfactory. The co-ordinator is knowledgeable and has completed a policy to supplement the national guidelines. He is new to the role and his influence in developing the subject has yet to be felt in the

school. He is aware of the need to assess pupils' work more carefully, is keen to develop cross-curricular links to support design and technology and has begun to initiate staff training in the subject.

117. Resources for teaching the subject are good, easily accessible and available. There is a good range of tools and wood. The co-ordinator has identified a need for his budget to replace consumables, including items to develop food technology.

GEOGRAPHY

118. The previous inspection report indicated that attainment at the end of Years 2 and 6 was similar to that expected. Teaching and pupils' progress were satisfactory. Limited evidence was available during this inspection, and it was only possible to observe one lesson being taught. Standards remain about average by Years 2 and 6. Pupils' work indicates that teaching and the curriculum are satisfactory.
119. At the end of Year 6, pupils know the vocabulary associated with rivers, such as source, estuary and tributary, and their drawings show that they understand the main features of the water cycle. They record these details well, but there is little difference between the work of the highest and lowest attaining pupils. In Year 5, pupils investigate features of their environment and what changes they could make to improve it. The range of map work available was not sufficiently extensive or challenging. In Years 1 and 2, pupils learn of locations overseas through the journeys of Barnaby Bear and by considering the geographic features of the imaginary Scottish island of Struay.
120. Pupils take care in geography, and present their work well. There is, however, a lack of opportunities for pupils to extend their writing and numeracy skills. On the basis of the limited evidence, teaching of geography is satisfactory. In a good ICT lesson in Year 2, the teacher made good use of the opportunity to extend pupils' geographical knowledge as they researched Whitstable.
121. The curriculum is planned satisfactorily using national guidance. However, as the subject is taught in blocks of time, alternating with history, pupils' skills are often not used or extended for some length of time. Teachers' planning and the support given ensure that pupils with special educational needs make similar progress to other pupils. Geography makes a good contribution to pupils' personal development. In particular, good consideration is given to social and moral issues, such as the care of the environment, and pupils are introduced to other locations in the United Kingdom, such as Whitstable, and overseas. This helps to extend pupils' cultural awareness. The map work available was limited and did not include evidence of the use of advanced co-ordinates, grid references or scale, all of which would also enhance numeracy work. Assessment of pupils' work is satisfactory and based on national guidance. The co-ordinator, who is also responsible for history, took over responsibility less than a year ago and is providing good leadership. She has monitored planning and pupils' work to identify areas that need improvement, so that standards can be improved to match those she has seen in history. Resources are satisfactory, but pupils' work indicates that maps are not used sufficiently.

HISTORY

122. By Year 6, pupils' attainment is above that expected nationally, especially in relation to the depth and range of pupils' knowledge of events in the past. This means that standards have been maintained since the last inspection. Pupils benefit from a range of visits, visitors and activities, which support and extend their learning and their subsequent achievement. Standards are at the expected level at the end of Year 2. Pupils in Years 1 and 2 learn about figures from history such as Guy Fawkes and Florence Nightingale. They learn to describe differences between 'then' and 'now', for example in relation to toys and domestic artefacts.
123. In a Year 3 lesson, pupils investigated changes across the Victorian period through the use of archive material, such as electoral registers and maps. Effective cross-curricular links were made as pupils compared maps of the local area at different points in history, and organised data for later retrieval. Year 4 pupils visited the Diocesan Education Centre and discussed this, linking what they had learned there about the dissolution of the monasteries to their class work on the Tudors. Pupils in Year 5 studied aspects of life in Britain in the Roman period, and reflected on different perspectives on historical events, for example the story of Boudicca. Year 6 pupils participated in an 'evacuation day', which very effectively developed their knowledge and understanding of life in Britain during World War Two. This event was very well organised with much important preliminary work before the visit, which enhanced the quality of the pupils' learning. The subsequent history lesson featured an interview with an evacuee. Pupils asked questions that they had prepared previously as part of their literacy work; this cross-curricular link contributed to a very good history lesson in which pupils reflected on the impact of historical events on individuals and considered their own responses.
124. The quality of teaching and learning is at least satisfactory, with some very good teaching. Teachers have sound subject knowledge and resources are used effectively. Pupils have positive attitudes to the subject and enjoy working co-operatively. Lessons have clear objectives, which are shared with the pupils, and assessment is used to inform future planning. Pupils with special educational needs are well supported. The subject contributes well to the school's provision for spiritual and cultural development.
125. The scheme of work is based on national guidance, and provides satisfactory coverage. However, because the subject is not taught every week, there are reduced opportunities for the development of skills. This is overcome where teachers make effective cross-curricular links while teaching other subjects. A very good assembly extended pupils' knowledge of Victorian history very effectively and helped them reflect on the life of children then. Assessment of pupils' learning is made at the end of each topic. The co-ordinator is new to the school and has drawn up an action plan to develop the subject. She has made a good start in monitoring standards and progress in the subject by examining samples of pupils' work and reviewing teachers' plans.

INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY (ICT)

126. Standards in ICT are in line with national expectations. This represents a significant improvement since the last inspection, when the need to raise standards in the subject was a key issue. An effective training programme has resulted in teachers' increased confidence in their abilities to teach the subject. Major investment in resources has taken place, which includes the creation of an ICT suite, with an interactive whiteboard. An Internet link with broadband connection has also been established. All classrooms also have computers, which are networked and connected to the Internet. Good progress has been made in all aspects of the subject.

127. By the end of Year 2, pupils' attainment is in line with national expectations. Pupils in Year 1 program a moving toy and talk about their work. They use sorting and matching programs and develop good skills of independent working. Pupils in Year 2 develop their word processing skills and show confidence when using computers. They use the mouse and keyboard to operate computer-assisted learning programs, for example inputting numbers correctly in response to mathematical problems presented on screen. Pupils draw and colour pictures on screen using an appropriate program. They make selections from a toolbox and use the mouse to manipulate the cursor around the screen. Pupils select and retrieve information and navigate around a website, for example in gathering information about the town of Whitstable, as part of a good cross-curricular project involving geography, history and ICT.
128. The attainment of pupils by Year 6 is in line with that expected for their age. Pupils have experience of word processing and use different fonts, styles and colours. Pupils in Years 3 and 4 organise and present information in a variety of ways, including bar charts and pie diagrams. In Year 5, they copy and paste with confidence when word processing, and combine shapes and colour fill using the tool button. In Year 6, pupils use spreadsheets to add to, amend and combine information. They experience using sensors in science to monitor changes in temperature and other conditions, and have built a robot from a kit. Pupils have satisfactory skills in data handling and using the computer for research purposes. They access information via the Internet, and many import images into reports and projects.
129. Teaching is satisfactory and sometimes good. As a result of a recent good training programme, teachers have the appropriate subject knowledge and confidence necessary to help pupils develop their ICT skills. In addition to the ICT suite, there is an average of five computers in each classroom and teachers are maximising opportunities for pupils to use these. Sometimes, this means that ICT is used inappropriately, for example when tasks are given to more able pupils in mathematics or English that involve the use of ICT but which could be completed more speedily using other methods. This results in slower progress and less challenge for these pupils. In the best examples seen during the inspection, teachers were confident in the subject and gave pupils clear directions as to how to proceed, checking frequently to make sure that pupils remained on task, with the result that they succeeded well. In these lessons, effective support was given to pupils with special educational needs, time was used well and all pupils made progress. Pupils' attitudes to the subject are very good, and they cooperate well.
130. Management of the subject is good. The recently appointed co-ordinator has been well supported and has produced an effective action plan, which lists the needs and priorities for moving the subject forward. She has begun to monitor the subject by sampling pupils' work. A revised ICT policy, a security policy and a parents' agreement are all in place. Assessment and target setting procedures are being developed by the co-ordinator.
131. The school employs a part-time technician who provides very effective support and enables resources to be used to maximum effect. Many of the monitors have recently been replaced, and the school plans to replace other equipment on a rolling programme. The range of software is appropriate and generally used well. A school website has been created and is regularly updated.

MUSIC

132. At the time of the last inspection, standards of pupils' attainment in music were above national expectations for pupils of all ages. Most pupils now attain the standards expected for their age; some achieve at a higher level. Pupils of all ages enjoy their music-making activities. Timetabling arrangements mean that music is not taught in all classes every week; thus no class music lessons were observed in Years 1 and 2 during the inspection.
133. The specialist tuition provided both by visiting teachers and the school's music co-ordinator is very effective, and the steel band, orchestra and choir enhance the provision for pupils. This enables the more able pupils to achieve well. Pupils who play musical instruments attain particularly good standards in their ability to read and play music. They play confidently in assembly when classes arrive and leave.
134. Singing is tuneful and controlled. In whole-school assemblies, pupils on percussion instruments sometimes accompany the singing and this enhances pupils' enjoyment of the occasion. Opportunities are provided for pupils to listen to and appreciate a wide variety of music. Pupils in Year 5 recorded their feelings in words and pictures while listening to a range of pieces of music. All pupils enjoyed the outdoor performance by the steel band at lunchtime, with all ages dancing and singing together. The music was performed with enthusiasm and skill.
135. Pupils in Years 3 to 6 play accompaniments to singing, demonstrating control and rhythmical accuracy. They select instruments to achieve particular effects. In the lessons seen, however, little opportunity was provided to select, combine and organise these simple ideas into more complex musical structures. Pupils in Year 3 worked in groups to select instruments to accompany the telling of a story. They worked with enthusiasm and concentration and, while only a minority varied the speed and volume of their playing at the start of the lesson, most had made progress and developed their skills by the end. They listened carefully to one another, and made suggestions for improvement. The teaching in class lessons seen was satisfactory. Resources were organised effectively and all pupils were supported to ensure that they made satisfactory progress in developing their skills. Most pupils make satisfactory progress, but it is good for those talented musicians who play individual instruments or make up the steel band, orchestra and choir.
136. Some good examples of cross-curricular links were seen. In Year 4, pupils worked as a class to create a piece of music suitable for the court of King Henry VIII, as part of their work on the Tudors. The lesson was well planned and the teacher introduced an appropriate range of new concepts, building on pupils' prior knowledge. Pupils participated in a group performance of the piece and enjoyed the shared experience. Year 6 pupils created accompaniments to a song from the 1940s, as part of their work on World War Two. They moved on from simple voice effects to accompaniments with instruments, and most thought carefully about the best way to use the instruments to achieve the appropriate effect.
137. Pupils from the school frequently perform at special events. During the week of the inspection, pupils participated in the Leavers' Service at Southwark Cathedral. Concerts and other performances take place within the local community, involving the choir and the band. All pupils from Years 4 to 6 participate in carol singing for local groups, and musical productions are staged at the end of the school year.
138. The co-ordinator is skilled and experienced in his subject. He manages a wide range of resources effectively, making good use of the limited funds available, to enhance provision for pupils. The school policy has recently been revised, and there is an action

plan, which identifies appropriate priorities for development. Music contributes well to pupils' social, emotional and spiritual development, and significantly enhances the life of the school community.

PHYSICAL EDUCATION

139. The previous inspection indicated that attainment was broadly in line with the expected standard in Year 2, but above this by Year 6. Teaching was satisfactory in Years 1 and 2, and good in Years 3 to 6. Pupils' attainment remains similar, despite pupils starting Year 1 with below the expected standard in aspects of physical development. Teaching has improved and is very good overall. As a result, pupils' progress is very good and attitudes are positive. In all lessons observed during the inspection, pupils were covering aspects of the games curriculum.
140. Pupils in Year 2 have broadly average skills in bouncing and catching a ball. Very good teaching, that increased the challenge, helped pupils to improve and extend their skills rapidly. In Year 2, very good teaching ensured pupils made rapid progress in catching and throwing. In a particularly successful lesson, Year 1 pupils discussed and developed their own rules for a game involving throwing a ball through a hoop. Year 4 pupils displayed above average skills in controlling, catching and throwing a ball. Pupils responded very positively to the challenge of using both right and left hands during the exercise. The very good subject knowledge of a specialist cricket coach, supported well by the class teachers, led to very good progress in developing skills of bowling and striking a ball in Years 5 and 6. The lessons were conducted at a rapid pace and much was achieved. In all lessons seen, pupils' interest and involvement, coupled with the pace of lessons, meant that behaviour and attitudes were almost always very good. An occasional weakness is that, although good use is made of pupils to demonstrate particular skills, insufficient use is made of these opportunities to allow pupils to comment on and evaluate each other's performance.
141. The curriculum is organised well so that all areas are developed, with a good allocation of time. Outdoor and adventurous pursuits are developed during a residential trip, although the school has identified that more could be done using the school's grounds. Swimming is available for Years 5 and 6, and most pupils reach the expected standard by the time they leave school. A very good range of extra-curricular activities is available and is supported well by pupils. These activities make a positive contribution to pupils' attainment and lead to considerable sporting success for the school. Assessment of pupils' skills is satisfactory. Although the focus is mainly on the key areas within each topic, talented individuals are encouraged to develop their skills. As a result, the school has a number of representatives at borough events and in other local teams. The subject makes a very good contribution to pupils' personal development because this is planned within every lesson. The importance of working as part of a team, supporting each other and being fair are all emphasised. The co-ordinator leads the subject very well and enthusiastically. His involvement sets a positive example to pupils and staff alike.