

## **INSPECTION REPORT**

### **BROMPTON-WESTBROOK PRIMARY SCHOOL**

Gillingham, Kent

LEA area: Medway

Unique reference number: 118561

Headteacher: Mrs J Heyes

Lead inspector: Mrs S D Morgan

Dates of inspection: 29<sup>th</sup> March – 1<sup>st</sup> April 2004

Inspection number: 255629

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:             | Community                                       |
| Age range of pupils:         | 4-11  |
| Gender of pupils:            | Mixed   |
| Number on roll:              | 335   |
| School address:              | Kings Bastion<br>Brompton<br>Gillingham<br>Kent |
| Postcode:                    | ME7 5DQ   |
| Telephone number:            | 01634 844152                                    |
| Fax number:                  | 01634 831762                                    |
| Appropriate authority:       | The governing body                              |
| Name of chair of governors:  | Mrs Linda Jenkins                               |
| Date of previous inspection: | January 2003                                    |

## CHARACTERISTICS OF THE SCHOOL

Brompton-Westbrook is a large primary school. It has 278 pupils in Years 1 to 6 and 57 children in the reception year. There are more boys than girls in almost all year groups. Just over 80 per cent of pupils are white British other pupils come from a range of ethnic groups. The proportion of pupils who speak English as an additional language is higher than in most schools, and just over four per cent are at an early stage of learning English. A significant proportion of pupils come from families who serve in the armed forces, and pupil mobility is very high. Over 50 per cent of pupils either joined or left the school in the last academic year. The area the school serves suffers significant social deprivation. The attainment of pupils on entry to the Reception year is well below average. The proportion of pupils who have special educational needs, at just above 26 per cent, is above the national average. Just over one percent of pupils have a statement of special educational need, which is in line with the national average. Pupils' needs mostly relate to social, emotional and behavioural difficulties and a small number have a physical disability.

A significant number of staff changes have occurred during the last two years, although the situation is now more stable. The school is part of an Education Action Zone (EAZ), and is involved in initiatives such as the Children's Fund. It gained the Schools Achievement Award in 2001, the Healthy Schools Award in 2003 and Investors in People status in 2004.

## INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

| Members of the inspection team |                |                | Subject responsibilities  |
|--------------------------------|----------------|----------------|---|
| 1355                           | Mrs S D Morgan | Lead inspector | Science, art and design, design and technology, physical education                              |
| 9569                           | Mrs J Leaning  | Lay inspector  |   |
| 30244                          | Mr R Tapley    | Team inspector | The Foundation Stage, mathematics   |
| 16492                          | Mr B Lever     | Team inspector | Special educational needs, information and communication technology, music, religious education |
| 23487                          | Mrs P Kitley   | Team inspector | English, geography, history, English as an additional language                                  |

The inspection contractor was:

**e-Qualitas Limited**

Langshaw  
Pastens Road  
Limpsfield Chart  
Oxted  
Surrey  
RH8 0RE

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## **REPORT CONTENTS**

|  | Page      |
|--|-----------|
| <b>PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT</b>   | <b>6</b>  |
| <b>PART B: COMMENTARY ON THE MAIN INSPECTION FINDINGS</b>                          |           |
| <b>STANDARDS ACHIEVED BY PUPILS</b>  | <b>8</b>  |
| Standards achieved in areas of learning, subjects and courses                      |           |
| Pupils' attitudes, values and other personal qualities                             |           |
| <b>QUALITY OF EDUCATION PROVIDED BY THE SCHOOL</b>                                 | <b>11</b> |
| Teaching and learning  |           |
| The curriculum   |           |
| Care, guidance and support   |           |
| Partnership with parents, other schools and the community                          |           |
| <b>LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT</b>   | <b>16</b> |
| <b>PART C: THE QUALITY OF EDUCATION IN AREAS OF LEARNING, SUBJECTS AND COURSES</b> | <b>19</b> |
| <b>AREAS OF LEARNING IN THE FOUNDATION STAGE</b>                                   |           |
| <b>SUBJECTS IN KEY STAGES 1 AND 2</b>  |           |
| <b>PART D: SUMMARY OF THE MAIN INSPECTION JUDGEMENTS</b>                           | <b>30</b> |

## PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

### OVERALL EVALUATION

**Brompton-Westbrook is a good and improving school.** The leadership and management of the school are very good. This has enabled the school to improve significantly over the last two years. Pupils' achievements are now satisfactory and standards are improving. The quality of teaching is good with some strong features. Pupils are valued and supported very well. The school is providing good value for money.

The school's main strengths and weaknesses are

- The outstanding vision and high aspirations of the headteacher have led to rapid improvement
- Teaching is good overall, and very good in the Reception classes where pupils achieve very well
- Standards have shown improvement recently but remain below average
- Despite the best efforts of the school too many pupils do not attend school regularly and this slows down their learning
- The school takes excellent care of its pupils and values and acts upon their views
- Older pupils have not achieved well enough in information and communication technology (ICT)
- The school meets the needs of pupils with special educational needs and those learning English as an additional language very well

**The school has improved significantly since its last inspection.** Weaknesses that were holding the school back have been dealt with effectively and strengths built upon. The quality of teaching has improved and this has led to pupils learning well in lessons and a recent improvement in standards. The school community shares a strong commitment to further improvement.

### STANDARDS ACHIEVED

| Results in National Curriculum tests at the end of Year 6, compared with: | all schools |      |      | similar schools |
|---|-------------|------|------|-----------------|
|   | 2001        | 2002 | 2003 | 2003            |
| English   | E           | E    | E    | D               |
| mathematics   | E           | E    | E    | D               |
| science   | E           | E    | E    | E               |

*Key: A - well above average; B – above average; C – average; D – below average; E – well below average  
Similar schools are those whose pupils attained similarly at the end of Year 2.*

**Pupils' achievements are satisfactory.** Children's attainment when they start the Reception year is well below average. In the reception classes they achieve very well because teaching is very well planned and organised. It provides a wide range of interesting learning experiences which meet children's needs very effectively. The school has a high level of pupil mobility. In 2002-2003 over half of the pupils on the school roll either moved into or out of the school. School data shows that of those pupils who leave in any one year around 50 per cent have been at the school for less than a year. These factors coupled with a history of underachievement in the school have had a significant negative impact on national test results. In the 2003 national assessments for pupils at the end of Year 2, results in reading and writing were well below average. In mathematics they were below average. Current attainment in Years 1 to 6, although below average, shows improvement. Pupils are now achieving satisfactorily, although the written skills of many are weak. Inspection evidence indicates that those who attend regularly and whose education has not been disrupted by frequent moves between schools are achieving well. This is because work is now well planned to ensure that pupils receive consistent teaching which covers National Curriculum requirements. Problems caused by staffing difficulties have been dealt with successfully and the quality of teaching has improved. Older pupils are not achieving as well as they should in ICT because they have had too few opportunities to apply their skills and knowledge to support their learning across the curriculum.

**Pupils' attitudes, values, behaviour and other personal qualities are good.** They are supported by the good provision for their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. Attendance is well below the national average. Most pupils attend school regularly and on time but a significant number do not and this limits their learning.

## **QUALITY OF EDUCATION**

**The quality of education provided by the school is good.**

**The quality of teaching and learning is good**, with a number of strengths. The school has been through a period of significant staff change. The situation has been managed very well and is now much more stable. Teaching is very good in the Reception classes. It is very well planned and the management of children is very good. Activities are varied and interesting and enable children to make very good learning gains. In Years 1 to 6 teachers work very hard to engage pupils' interest and plan a range of activities to maintain pupils' motivation and concentration. Pupils with challenging behaviour are managed very well. Particular emphasis is placed on developing pupils' speaking and listening skills. Oral work is used very effectively, in lessons, to extend pupils skills, knowledge and understanding. Throughout the school the work of teaching assistants makes a significant contribution to pupils' learning. The quality of assessment and the use of information to plan future work is good overall.

The curriculum provides a satisfactory range of activities and good opportunities for enrichment. The school takes excellent care of pupils. It involves them very well in its work by asking for and acting on their views on ways of improving school life. The school's partnership with parents is good, as are its links with other schools. It has very good links with the community.

## **LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT**

**Overall, leadership and management of the school are very good.** The headteacher provides excellent leadership and is supported well by other key staff and governors. They have been successful in bringing about improvement in many aspects of the school's work. Teaching is good and standards show improvement.

## **PARENTS' AND PUPILS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL**

Most parents are supportive of the school and pleased with what it does for their children. They are appreciative and supportive of the school's efforts to raise standards of behaviour and academic performance. Set against this is a very small minority who are generally unhappy with many aspects of the school. Inspectors found that the school works hard to involve all parents in its life and with their children's work. Discussions with pupils and their responses to questionnaires reveal high levels of satisfaction with the school and with their teachers.

## **IMPROVEMENTS NEEDED**

The most important things the school should do to improve are

- Continue to raise standards, particularly of pupils' written work
- Raise standards in ICT, particularly those of older pupils, by ensuring the quality and range of resources are improved (as planned) and pupils use and apply their ICT skills in other subjects
- Improve pupils' attendance throughout the school

## PART B: COMMENTARY ON THE INSPECTION FINDINGS

### STANDARDS ACHIEVED BY PUPILS

#### Standards achieved in areas of learning, subjects and courses

A large proportion of pupils who attend Brompton–Westbrook come from families who serve in the armed forces, and pupil mobility is very high. In 2002-2003 over half of the pupils on the school roll either moved into or out of the school. School data shows that of those pupils who leave in any one year around 50 per cent have been at the school for less than a year. These factors coupled with a history of underachievement in the school have had a significant negative impact on national test results.

The very good leadership and management of the school have brought about an improvement in standards. Pupils' achievements show improvement from recent test results and are now **satisfactory** overall. Children in the Reception classes achieve very well. Achievement in Years 1 to 6 is satisfactory. Current standards are below average. Pupils who have special needs achieve well as do those who are learning English as an additional language.

#### Main strengths and weaknesses

- Standards have shown improvement but remain below average. Results in national tests at the end of Year 6 were well below average and require further improvement
- Children achieve very well in the Reception classes
- Pupils who have special educational needs and those who are learning English as an additional language achieve well
- The achievement of too many pupils is hampered by their erratic attendance
- Older pupils do not achieve well enough in ICT

#### Commentary

##### Key Stage 1

##### *Standards in national tests at the end of Year 2 – average point scores in 2003*

| Standards in: | School results | National results |
|---------------|----------------|------------------|
| reading       | 13.7 (14.1)    | 15.9 (15.8)      |
| writing       | 12.4 (12.0 )   | 14.8 (14.4)      |
| mathematics   | 15.8 (14.1)    | 16.4 (16.5 )     |

*There were 42 pupils in the year group. Figures in brackets are for the previous year.*

1. In the 2003 national assessments for pupils at the end of Year 2 results in reading and writing were well below average. In mathematics they were below average. Making valid comparisons with similar schools (that is, schools with a similar proportion of pupils known to be eligible for free school meals) is unreliable as pupil mobility during the year is very high. Based on teacher assessments, attainment in science was well below average. Improvement has been below the national trend.

##### Key Stage 2

##### *Standards in national tests at the end of Year 6 – average point scores in 2003*

| Standards in: | School results | National results |
|---------------|----------------|------------------|
| English       | 24.4 (23.8 )   | 27.0 (27.0)      |
| mathematics   | 24.2 (24.2 )   | 27.0 (26.7 )     |
| science       | 25.6 (25.7 )   | 28.8 (28.3)      |

*There were 50 pupils in the year group. Figures in brackets are for the previous year.*



2. Results in Year 6 national tests in English, mathematics and science have been well below average in recent years and improvement has been below the national trend. Overall, results in 2003 were well below average when compared to those nationally. Comparing the Year 6 2003 results with those of the same year group when they were in Year 2 shows that pupils did not achieve as well as they should and indicates previous underachievement. The school's own analysis of pupils' progress during the year 2002-2003 shows that pupils made satisfactory progress during this period. The performance of boys and girls was similar. The school did not meet the challenging target it set for English and mathematics tests in 2003.
3. Pupils are now achieving satisfactorily in Years 1 to 6. Current attainment, although below average, shows improvement. Inspection evidence indicates that those who attend regularly and whose education has not been disrupted by frequent moves between schools are achieving well. This is because work is now well planned to ensure that pupils receive consistent teaching which covers National Curriculum requirements. Problems caused by staffing difficulties have been dealt with successfully and the quality of teaching has improved.
4. Pupils speaking and listening skills are developed very well throughout the curriculum. Particular emphasis is placed on extending pupils' skills, knowledge and understanding through oral work during lessons. However, many pupils find difficulty in retaining information over longer periods and this combined with weak literacy skills means that they do not perform as well as might be expected in written tests and they find recording their work difficult. Pupils use their mathematical skills satisfactorily in other areas of the curriculum. However, their use is not planned systematically to ensure that it makes a strong contribution to extending their attainment. Older pupils do not achieve as well as they should in ICT. This is because pupils have had too few opportunities to use ICT to support their learning across the curriculum due to a lack of suitable resources.
5. The skills that children have when they enter the Reception classes are well below average. Children get a very good start to school and they achieve very well because adults create a very positive environment in which learning is planned very well and their successes are celebrated. Their progress is monitored carefully so that teaching provides the right challenges. However, by the end of the reception year many of the children will not reach the expected standards in English and mathematics because almost all children start school with very low levels of attainment in their language, mathematical and social skills. Children who start school in the spring term do not have sufficient time to develop their skills to the expected level. Due to the very good teaching and excellent resources provided for the children their social and physical development are at the expected levels by the time they join Year 1.
6. The school makes very good provision for those who do not start their education at Brompton-Westbrook and works hard to ensure that they attain the standards they should. Evidence gathered during the inspection shows that throughout the school work is well planned to meet the needs of pupils of differing levels of attainment. Pupils with special educational needs make good progress against specific targets and goals. They do well when receiving extra support and receive teaching appropriately matched to their needs. They are fully included in all school activities and are achieving well. In lessons teachers plan work carefully so that higher-attaining pupils are fully challenged. Additional provision is also made, for example in art, for those who are identified as having particular talent and they achieve well.
7. The achievement of pupils with English as an additional language is good. The number of pupils who join the school speaking another home language is higher than is found nationally. Many make good progress with language acquisition because lessons begin with carefully structured speaking and listening activities and pupils have talking partners to help them discuss ideas during class discussions.

## Pupils' attitudes, values and other personal qualities

Pupils' attitudes, values, behaviour and other personal qualities are **good**. They are supported by the good provision for their spiritual, moral, social and cultural, (including multi-cultural) development. Most pupils attend school regularly and on time but a significant number do not and attendance is **unsatisfactory** overall. It is well below the national average.

## Main strengths and weaknesses

- Pupils are very clear about their enjoyment of school and of their lessons, they are confident that the school council gives all pupils a "voice"
- Despite the school's good efforts to track, monitor and encourage regular attendance: this is still unsatisfactory
- In discussion pupils are open, polite, interested and friendly
- Behaviour, in class and around the school is good, helped by the strong ethos and by adults who are good role models

## Commentary

8. Pupils enjoy school, settle quickly to their work, listen carefully and concentrate well on their tasks. They are polite and courteous and this creates an atmosphere where they can develop their individual strengths and their self-esteem. Pupils say that their teachers are kind and helpful. The school values each child and there is a strong emphasis on respect; relationships are also good. The school works hard to ensure that pupils have a 'voice' and pupils say that things have happened as a result of the school council, which is highly valued.

9. The school's procedures for monitoring and promoting regular attendance are efficient: staff work extremely hard to encourage pupils to attend school regularly and on time. However, a number of parents do not ensure their children attend school on a regular basis. Attendance overall is well below the national average and is unsatisfactory. Pupils' failure to attend school regularly significantly affects their learning. Unauthorised absence is below the national average; it is satisfactory.

## Attendance

### Attendance in the latest complete reporting year (%)

| Authorised absence |     |
|--------------------|-----|
| School data        | 6.8 |
| National data      | 5.4 |

| Unauthorised absence |     |
|----------------------|-----|
| School data          | 0.1 |
| National data        | 0.4 |

*The table gives the percentage of half days (sessions) missed through absence for the latest complete reporting year.*

10. In the year up to February 2003 there had been 18 exclusions. This was as a result of a policy of non-acceptance of unsatisfactory behaviour. This policy has been successful and there have been no exclusions since then: this represents very good improvement.

## Exclusions

### Ethnic background of pupils

| Categories used in the Annual School Census |
|---|
| White – British                             |
| No ethnic group recorded                    |

### Exclusions in the last school year

| No of pupils on roll | Number of fixed period exclusions | Number of permanent exclusions |
|----------------------|-----------------------------------|--------------------------------|
| 257                  | 16                                | 0                              |
| 3                    | 2                                 | 0                              |

*The table gives the number of exclusions, which may be different from the number of pupils excluded.*

11. Both discussions with pupils and their responses to questionnaires reveal high levels of satisfaction with the school and with their teachers. In class pupils handle resources with care, they respect the school premises and there is no evidence of litter or graffiti on this large open site. Many children who joined the school after the reception year say that they are welcomed and that the 'rookie club' (which they join on entering the school) ensures that they are supported and not left out. Pupils are confident when they speak and listen carefully when it is someone else's turn and this has a positive effect on their achievement.

12. Provision for spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is planned through assemblies and across the curriculum, some lessons offer good opportunities for reflection with a good spiritual element. Social, moral, personal education and citizenship is taught across the school, in lessons and through "circle time" and make a good contribution to pupils' development. Visits and visitors support the curriculum well. Awareness of their own cultural heritage is raised through music, art and dance and the experience of children new to the school is shared. The multi cultural dimension has been celebrated through events such as Chinese New Year, a UNICEF day, and Diwali. As a result provision for pupils' cultural development is good.

13. Pupils from a wide range of cultures and backgrounds play together very happily and no one is left out. The school's strong moral code is supported by a clear behaviour policy, which is applied consistently across the school.

14. Adults are good role models and give pupils a clear idea of right and wrong and pupils' behaviour is good. Almost all pupils appreciate the system of rewards and understand the consequences if they do not behave well. Pupils say that this is a 'telling school' and are confident that if bullying occurs it is dealt with promptly and effectively. They understand that all children should be treated equally and there is no evidence of racism. Pupils have raised funds for those less fortunate through charity events such as 'children in need'.

## **QUALITY OF EDUCATION PROVIDED BY THE SCHOOL**

The quality of education provided by the school is **good**. Teaching and learning are good with some strong features.

### **Teaching and learning**

The quality of teaching has improved since the time of the previous inspection. Teaching was good in Years 1 to 6 and very good in the Reception classes. No unsatisfactory lessons were observed. The quality of assessment of pupils' work is good overall.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- Teachers plan lessons carefully to meet the needs of all pupils
- Teachers work very hard to engage pupils' interest and successfully employ a range of methods to manage the challenging behaviour of some pupils
- The work of teaching assistants makes a positive contribution to pupils' learning, particularly those pupils with special educational needs
- Assessment systems are good
- Many pupils find difficulty in retaining knowledge and skills learned in previous lessons
- The erratic attendance of a number of pupils coupled with their weak literacy skills limits their learning

## Commentary

### Summary of teaching observed during the inspection in 41 lessons

| Excellent | Very good | Good     | Satisfactory | Unsatisfactory | Poor  | Very Poor |
|-----------|-----------|----------|--------------|----------------|-------|-----------|
| 0(0 %)    | 12 (29 %) | 24(59 %) | 5(12 %)      | 0(0%)          | 0(0%) | 0(0%)     |

*The table gives the number of lessons observed in each of the seven categories used to make judgements about lessons; figures in brackets show percentages where 30 or more lessons are seen.*

15. Much work has been done to improve the quality of teaching during a period when the school has undergone a significant number of staff changes. The school has worked hard to recruit appropriate staff and teachers are given very good guidance and support by senior staff. At the meeting for parents held prior to the inspection a small number of parents expressed concerns about the changes of staff and classes being taught by more than one teacher. The inspection team found that the school had taken effective measures to minimise the impact of these factors on pupils learning.

16. A particular strength in teaching is very good planning. This ensures that work is matched well to pupils' needs and pupils in mixed age classes receive a curriculum which builds on work previously covered. The Year 5 -6 mixed age classes are taught in sets for English, mathematics and science. Year 6 pupils are taught together and this ensures that teachers can cover the work for national tests.

17. Teaching in the Reception classes is very good and meets the needs of the children very well. Teachers and support staff work very well together. Adults create a very positive learning environment where good learning routines are established and success is celebrated. Work is very well planned and interesting. Staff are very aware of the capabilities of the children in each area of learning, due to careful and regular assessments of what they have learned. Activities reinforce previously learned skills and knowledge and this helps children to learn effectively. Children are enthusiastic and time is used to the full. Due to the very good teaching children's social and physical development are particularly good.

18. Teachers use a very good variety of teaching methods to engage pupils' interest. The activities to be completed, together with what is to be learnt are shared at the start of each lesson. Teachers are particularly skilful at developing pupils' knowledge and understanding through discussion and very carefully structured questions. These are features common to all lessons and are of particular benefit to those pupils who have weaker written skills. Teachers check pupils' recall of previously completed work at the start and end of lessons and go over aspects that have not been understood. This helps pupils' learning significantly, as many find the retention and recall of information difficult.

19. Teachers break the lessons into short learning sections. This helps maintain pupils' interest and concentration. Pupils are given timescales for the completion of tasks to ensure that time is used effectively. Good use is made of practical activities to help pupils understand new ideas. For example, the making of bread in science as part of work on micro organisms to show pupils the effect of sugar and heat on yeast.

20. Good relationships support pupils' learning well. When pupils put forward ideas these are valued and teachers use praise very effectively to build pupils' self-esteem and confidence. Pupils encourage each other, for example at the end of a Year 3-4 mathematics lesson pupils broke into spontaneous applause when a group of lower-attaining pupils explained the work they had been doing. Teachers insist on high standards of behaviour in all lessons and manage pupils' behaviour very well. The behaviour of those pupils with emotional and behavioural difficulties is dealt with very effectively. All staff are calm and consistent in their approach. Pupils are clear about what is expected and this ensures that learning is not disrupted. Many pupils find it difficult to work independently and work much more productively when working under the direct supervision of an

adult. Teachers encourage pupils to think for themselves and try to resolve problems they encounter but many find this very difficult.

21. Overall, the teaching of English is good. Teachers have worked hard to implement a consistent approach to the teaching of basic skills to improve pupils' standards in writing. Although work is well sequenced to help pupils plan for independent writing, the majority of pupils find it difficult to write fluently or with confidence. Teachers have a clear understanding about what is being taught, activities are interesting and capture pupils' imagination and there are very good relations between adults and children. In mathematics teaching is good, lessons start at a good pace with oral and mental work. Teachers are alert to developing the pupils reasoning skills. Despite the good teaching seen many pupils find difficulty in retaining facts and this means that more time has to be given during the lessons to consolidating what has been learnt. This limits the amount of progress pupils make overall. The teaching of ICT is sound overall. All teachers are now competent in the areas covered and further training is planned for using new software and hardware.

22. Teaching and learning for pupils with English as an additional language is effectively supported by teaching assistants and specialist teachers from Medway Language Achievement Service (MLAS). Support is clearly recorded through daily plans and evaluations and each child has half termly targets and monitoring of attainment. The clearly developed steps and targets have improved support across the school. Visiting specialist teachers work alongside pupils in class so that teachers can build good practice into their planning.

23. Teachers use appropriate methods, which enable pupils identified with special educational needs to learn effectively. Teachers are aware of the targets set out in individual education plans and plan against these for lessons. Teaching assistants provide good support, which helps pupils to achieve well in learning basic skills and managing their behaviour. They are well briefed about what is to be covered and have a good working relationship with teachers which enables them to make a significant contribution to pupils' learning.

24. The assessment of children's attainment is very good in the Reception classes. In the rest of the school good systems are now in place to analyse the results of national tests and other assessments to check that pupils are making appropriate progress. The information is used effectively to predict the standard that pupils should achieve at various points as they move through the school. It is also used to identify areas that require improvement and set targets for pupils. The quality of marking is satisfactory overall. However, it varies and is better in English than in mathematics. The best marking has notes which clearly indicate how pupils can improve whilst less effective marking takes the form of ticks.

## **The curriculum**

The curriculum is **satisfactory** overall and is planned to cover all subjects sufficiently. It is very good in the Foundation Stage. Good opportunities are provided for enrichment. The quality and quantity of accommodation and resources at the school are **good** and generally meet the needs of the curriculum well. They are excellent in the Reception classes.

## **Main strengths**

- The school provides very well for children in the Reception classes
- Provision for pupils who have special educational needs is very good
- Very good provision is made for pupils' personal, social and health education
- The school provides a good range of extra activities and support outside the school day

## **Commentary**

25. The curriculum is appropriately planned to provide breadth and continuity in learning. Time allocations are broadly in line with recommendations. Schemes of work are in place for all subjects to guide planning. The numeracy and literacy strategies have been extended and are successful in raising standards in mathematics and English. Good strategies are in place to support these subjects which are leading to rising standards. After very careful preparation the school is about to introduce its new curriculum in September. The group working on the plans was ahead of the

recently published strategy document " Excellence and Enjoyment" and developments are underpinned by the aim to improve pupils' attitudes to school and learning.

26. Overall, the provision for pupils who have special educational needs is very good. Arrangements for using individual education plans are effective in ensuring learning needs are met whilst still enabling pupils to have access to the whole curriculum. The teaching assistants are experienced and skilled. They receive valuable training within and outside school. Accommodation is good. There are shared areas and rooms where pupils can be withdrawn to be taught individually or in groups but most support takes place in classrooms. The "Zoom Room" provides a calm place for pupils experiencing emotional and behavioural difficulties. The building enables disabled access and toilet facilities for the disabled are available. Resources for special educational needs in terms of books and materials are good. The school benefits from very good support from the EAZ and the Children's Fund which helps pupils do well.

27. The curriculum is enhanced by a good number of visits and visitors and a good range of clubs. The number of pupils participating in these activities has been increasing. Pupils make visits locally and further afield and these are particularly strong to support learning in history. However, not enough visits are made to help pupils gain an understanding of other religious faiths.

28. The school gives very good support for pupils' personal development. There are times when pupils can support each other and explore feelings (circle time) and can take part in the healthy eating campaign. Visitors come to the school from the Kent Fire Brigade, the Medway Drugs Programme, the British Transport Police and the School Nurse. The provision leads to pupils developing good attitudes and behaviour.

29. The school has a good number of well qualified staff across Years 1 to 6 which leads to good teaching and learning overall. In the Reception classes the match of teachers and support staff to the demands of the curriculum is very good. Accommodation and resources are good overall but are outstanding in the Reception classes.

30. Curriculum support for older pupils who speak English as an additional language is provided by specialist teachers from MLAS. The school is careful to identify pupils' specific strengths in non language based subjects such as mathematics. Although pupils contribute to multi cultural topics, such as the recent UNICEF day, pupils are seldom asked to share stories or read books in their home language.

### **Care, guidance and support**

The school provides **very good** care and support for all its pupils, including excellent attention to the areas of health, safety and child protection.

### **Main strengths**

- Arrangements for safeguarding pupils, including procedures for child protection, are excellent
- Induction arrangements are very good so children settle in quickly and happily
- Support, advice and guidance provided by the school are very good
- The school is very active in seeking and acting upon pupils' views, which builds very strong trust

### **Commentary**

31. The quality of care for pupils has been built on since the last inspection. As a result of an audit of provision, the school has undertaken a rigorous review of its policies and current procedures are comprehensive and effective. The school has built a strong partnership with its EAZ partners and The Children's Fund. It organises regular meetings with the professional agencies involved in caring for vulnerable pupils, and these are valued by managers involved in this provision.

32. The school has very good induction arrangements. The high mobility of pupils has led to training for staff and the school has appointed a pastoral team. All new pupils are members of the "Rookies Club" and have a 'buddy' to help them settle in. The group has its own notice board and

children mark the places they have come from on a large map. The support given by this club is of particular benefit to pupils for whom English is an additional language. The school works very closely with a range of community groups to provide emotional, pastoral and learning support for parents and children and help prevent learning loss associated with pupil mobility. Older pupils are involved in a drama project with the local secondary school to ease transition into Year 7.

33. Teachers and teaching assistants receive training in anger management and therapeutic skills so that pupils are listened to appropriately. Trained pastoral support assistants provide a 'listening ear' service, playground support, craft and environmental activities to develop pupils' self esteem. Pupils involved in the environmental scheme have planted a coppice in the grounds, and tree wardens are responsible for its aftercare.

34. Thorough maintenance ensures that the buildings and equipment are safe. Pupils are looked after well at breaks and lunchtimes. A wide range of clubs and activities is provided by the school, including the provision of a Breakfast Club. Academic and social progress is checked carefully, with pupils involved in celebrating their successes.

35. Pupils' views are taken seriously. They have their own notice board with photos of the school councillors and minutes of meetings. The school has received the Healthy Schools Award and pupils have been involved in evaluating food served at lunchtime. They have also influenced decisions about homework, study habits and break times. Year 6 have recently reviewed school policies to identify areas that need updating. Before writing their report to the governors they had a formal meeting with the headteacher to discuss areas of concern.

36. Assessment arrangements are effective and records are thorough and well maintained. The school uses assessment data from teachers and from a range of tests to help teachers set targets for pupils. Assessments made on entry to school enable early identification of pupils needing extra support.

### **Partnership with parents, other schools and the community**

The school has **good** links with parents and carers. Most parents support their children's learning well and appreciate the regular communication that they receive. The **very strong** and effective links with the community and with the EAZ partnership significantly enhance pupils' learning opportunities. **Good** links are in place with other schools.

### **Main strengths**

- Very good links with outside agencies and the local community
- Communication with parents is good and almost all parents are generally pleased with the school's high expectations
- Many parents now help in school and with visits; they support the good Parent Teacher and Friends Association (PTFA), which raises substantial funds

### **Commentary**

37. Links with the local community are very good. The school is a partner with the local EAZ, this and the Medway Business partnership attract extra funds and give additional educational support to teachers and to the school. Through the partnership, Lloyds have become business partners with the school and among other activities, staff from the company support reading. Pupils visit the local art gallery weekly and regular art workshops are held in the school. Local visitors, including the Red Cross, the vicar and a local Christian charity come into school regularly to do assemblies. Other agencies such as the school nurse, the fire brigade and the police are also involved. Parents and friends are invited into special assemblies and to the school's productions. These very good links add significantly to pupils' overall experience.

38. Good links with a local special school include regular visits. The good links with the main secondary school to which most pupils transfer, include joint drama productions, other projects and

teachers' visits and include meetings, taster days and the passing on of information. However, links with the other local secondary schools (there are about 14) are satisfactory. Pupils starting school in the Reception classes are visited at home and at their playgroup and are invited into school; parents have meetings and an opportunity to phase in their child's admission; these links are good.

39. The MLAS supports parents whose first language is not English when their children join the school and for consultation meetings. The school is thorough in its evaluation of the needs of parents as well as their children. A recent audit has identified the need to have access to a German speaking support assistant to liaise with the military families where a parent has moved from Germany and who may need settling into the local community and way of life.

40. Parents of pupils with special educational needs are encouraged to be involved in identifying their children's needs and providing support. They are well informed and are generally supportive and speak highly of the help their children receive.

41. There are very positive links with outside support agencies and these are particularly strong with the educational psychologist, educational welfare and the EAZ speech therapist. The school reports very good support from the EAZ and the Children's Fund.

42. Parents say that links have noticeably improved since the new headteacher came and they speak highly of the way in which their children are cared for. Children understand what is expected of them and like coming to school. Parents receive weekly newsletters; information about what their children will be learning and a written report each term, as well as parents' consultation evenings. Annual reports are detailed and contain good information, including some guidance on what the child should do to improve. The school prospectus and the governors' annual report to parents are clear and informative and contain the required information. The school has made very good efforts to involve parents more fully in their children's learning. More parents now support their children at home and many more are willing to help in school and with visits. The PTFA provide substantial funds, which supplement the school's provision well.

43. A very small minority of parents say that the school does not seek their views and that they do not receive enough information about their children's progress. Inspection evidence shows that communication is good and that the school also makes good efforts to find out about parents' concerns.

## LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

Leadership and management are **very good** overall. The headteacher provides excellent leadership. The leadership of senior staff is good, as is the governance of the school.

### Main strengths

- The inspirational leadership provided by the headteacher
- The strong sense of teamwork shown by staff within the school
- The very good leadership and management of the Foundation Stage
- The governors have a good understanding of the school strengths and areas for development
- The very good management of the school which is leading to improving standards and achievement

### Commentary

44. The headteacher provides outstanding leadership. She has a very clear view of what needs to be done to improve the work of the school. She has excellent vision. Her aim is to develop a curriculum firmly based on the pupils' needs. It must be both exciting and challenging and firmly based on the raising of standards. Her philosophy of 'tough love', in a caring environment is based on very high expectations and these are made clear to staff, pupils and parents. The ethos that pupils should enjoy their learning is apparent throughout the school. The pupils love school and, combined



with the good relationships, are the main reasons why the school is such a happy place. As a result standards in pupils' behaviour have improved significantly since the last inspection. The headteacher has been successful in involving the governing body more fully in school development and, since the last inspection, has ensured that the school improvement plan has a more rigorous focus upon the raising of standards and a more clear, long term view.

45. The headteacher is well supported by all staff. A very good working partnership with the deputy headteacher, who is a key player in curriculum development, enables developments to be implemented successfully. The strong sense of teamwork, where teachers, teaching assistants and ancillary staff work together means that the school has many areas of strength. The commitment of all staff to do their best for pupils whatever their needs contributes strongly to the good ethos. Subject co-ordinators monitor performance in their subjects well and deal with any areas for development. For example, the school identified pupils' difficulties in working accurately on mathematical investigations. As a result more investigational games were purchased and these were sent home for pupils to play with their parents, and standards improved.

46. Leadership and management of the Foundation Stage is very good. Since the appointment of the co-ordinator there have been major developments in provision. This is raising standards in the Reception classes. The excellent adventure playground and play areas provide a safe and stimulating learning environment. Very good induction procedures for children entering the Reception classes mean that children start school in a confident manner and fit easily to the school's routines. As a result provision for the Foundation Stage is very good.

47. Management of special educational needs and provision for pupils who are learning English as an additional language are very good. Very good relations with support staff and visiting specialists enhance the provision. Clear distinctions are made between different kinds of support, particularly for English as an additional language and special educational needs. The school monitors and evaluates its provision regularly and includes targets to improve its quality in its improvement plan.

48. The governors are effective. They play a strong role in the development of the school, share their expertise effectively and fulfil their statutory duties. Through their curriculum responsibilities, visits to the school when they talk to teachers and pupils about their work, they develop a good awareness of the school's strengths and its areas for development. The chair of governors has a good understanding of this role and provides a firm steer to the working of the governing body. Since the last inspection they have developed an appropriate race equality policy.

49. Management is very good. Very good analysis is made of statistical data and national test results. For example, due to the high mobility factor of pupils the school has recently analysed test results in English and mathematics, which show that pupils who join the school in the Reception classes make better progress than those pupils admitted later. Governors and the senior management team constantly review the progress of initiatives in the school improvement plan. Staff, including teaching assistants are given good opportunities for professional development and this is linked effectively to arrangements for checking on and improving their performance. Finances are managed well. The headteacher and governing body apply the principles of best value to good effect. Consultation procedures are well developed, and include pupils and parents when considering the future development of the school.

50. The very good induction procedures ensure that staff who are new to the school are supported well. A rigorous system is in place which caters for the needs of newly qualified teachers. An induction tutor supports these teachers in their professional development and enables them to teach successfully. This helps to explain why this is an effective school, in which standards and teaching and learning are improving.

51. The qualities of teaching, pupils' interest in their learning, an imaginative curriculum are key factors that are raising standards. The mobility of pupils together with very low standards of pupils on entry to the school is a constant challenge to the teachers, but this is being managed well.

## Financial information

### *Financial information for the year April 2002 to March 2003*

| Income and expenditure (£) |         |
|----------------------------|---------|
| Total income               | 893,470 |
| Total expenditure          | 904,446 |
| Expenditure per pupil      | 2,408   |

| Balances (£)                        |        |
|-------------------------------------|--------|
| Balance from previous year          | 23,657 |
| Balance carried forward to the next | 12,681 |

## **PART C: THE QUALITY OF EDUCATION IN AREAS OF LEARNING, SUBJECTS AND COURSES**

### **AREAS OF LEARNING IN THE FOUNDATION STAGE**

Provision for children in the Reception classes (Foundation Stage) is very good which is an improvement since the last inspection. Children get a very good start to school because adults create a very positive environment in which children's successes are celebrated, learning is very well planned and interesting, and progress is monitored carefully so that teaching provides the right challenges. For example, a very effective science lesson included a very good range of activities, which caught the children's interests and helped them learn a lot about the types of creatures that lived under leaves. During a nature walk children collected insects they discovered in the school grounds. The next day the teachers had put the insects in an aquarium so that the children could look at them carefully and describe their shape and the way they moved. As many of the children start school with very poor observational skills they were able to repeat examining the insects started the previous day, which reinforced their knowledge and helped them learn. It is this kind of practical activity that helps the children to achieve well in all aspects of learning. By the end of the reception year many of the children will not reach the expected standards in English and maths because almost all children start school with very low levels of attainment in their language, mathematical and social skills. Children who start school in the spring term do not have enough time to develop their skills to the expected level. Due to the very good teaching and excellent resources provided for the children their social and physical development are at the expected levels by the time they join Year 1. Leadership and management are very good.

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

Provision in personal, social and emotional development is **very good**.

### **Main strengths**

- Pupils are given many opportunities to develop their independence
- A strong focus is placed on developing children's social skills

### **Commentary**

52. A significant number of children have very weak personal and social skills when they join the Reception classes. They make very good progress owing to the very good quality of teaching in this area of learning, very good relationships and the secure environment. Pupils are given many opportunities to develop their independence and to support each other when at school. Routines are quickly established. For example, at the start of each day the children will find their name tag and place it on the board to show that they are in school, many will remind each other if they forget to do this. Children play happily alongside each other but a significant number do not play together at the beginning of the day. The quality of teaching is very good. The balance of adult directed and child-initiated activities encourages the children to concentrate and persevere, as a result the children are confident and develop very good relationships with both the staff and each other. The children's personal and social development is strongly promoted in all areas of learning, so they achieve very well.

## **Communication, language and literacy**

Provision in communication, language and literacy is **very good**.

### **Main strengths**

- Early reading skills are taught very well
- Pupils achieve very well

### **Commentary**

53. Many children start school with very limited language skills. Some respond to a question with a frown and others use one word answers. Teachers and teaching assistants are very alert to providing opportunities to help children to expand on what they say, by giving them examples of how to use sentences and more complex structures in their answers. For example, a teacher encouraged a child to explain what he had done over the weekend, the child said “train”, the teacher replied “you went on a train yesterday” and the child replied, “I went on a train”. Early reading skills are taught very well. In a very well planned lesson to introduce a new sound and its letter formation, the teacher used a wide variety of approaches to help all children learn. She reminded them how they had learnt other letter sounds which gave the children confidence in repeating what they knew. She then asked them to identify objects in pictures that began with the letter ‘f’ and ‘g’. The children were then asked to find objects in the classroom beginning with these letters. Photographs were taken using the digital camera. The children remembered this activity and talked about it at the end of the day. Children with special educational needs and English as an additional language achieve very well because teachers and teaching assistants are alert to teaching them through play. For example, a pupil learning English as an additional language was playing at having breakfast and eating an egg. The teacher asked him what he was eating and he said “a egg”, the teacher replied was it a scrambled or fried egg. The pupil replied, “a scrambled egg”. Children are making very good progress and achieving very well considering their abilities but by the time they join Year 1 some still have skills that are below the level expected for their age.

## **Mathematical development**

Provision in mathematical development is **very good**.

### **Main strength**

- Basic number skills are taught very well

### **Commentary**

54. Very good emphasis is given to developing mathematical language and knowledge of numbers. Many opportunities are taken for counting in activities during the day. For example, each morning the children count together the number present and the number of pupils who have not come to school. Some very good teaching of the basic number skills was observed. For example, the teacher asked the children to show how many fingers on each hand made five, as a result the children showed many different ways of making five. Three fingers on one hand and two fingers on the other. The children were then asked to find as many ways as possible and so learnt how to combine two groups of numbers together to make a total amount. The teachers use the other areas of learning very well to teach numeracy. For example, the children were asked to estimate the number of snails in the aquarium during a science lesson. Children in the Reception classes know basic shapes but some find it hard to describe them, owing to weak language skills. Some know the names, but others indicate by drawing the shape in the air. Children are making very good progress and achieving very well considering their abilities. By the time children join in Year 1, standards are below what is expected for children of this age.

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

Provision in knowledge and understanding of the world is **very good**.

### **Main strength**

- Adults are well deployed to support children's learning

### **Commentary**

55. A wide variety of activities help children learn about the natural world. For example, children collect insects and leaves from the school grounds on a nature walk and study them in more depth back in the classroom. They are given opportunities to choose insects to photograph with the digital camera so as to record information from their visit to show parents after school. During play they select the correct tools to paint the model boat and build tall towers using wooden blocks. Children are introduced to simple programmes on the computer and are beginning to use the mouse with increasing confidence to control programmes with the help of an adult. The higher-attaining pupils are able to use "spray" and "fill" to colour in areas of a butterfly's wings. In all these activities adults encourage children's ability to look closely and discuss what they find out. Overall, children achieve very well in relation to their varying starting points. However, many children find it difficult to concentrate for longer periods so as to remember what has been learnt. As a result much work has to be repeated so as to improve skills and many will not reach the expected standard in this area of learning.

## **Physical development**

Provision in physical development is **very good**.

### **Main strengths**

- Surroundings, both indoor, in the school hall and outside are spacious
- Children develop skills in catching and throwing well

### **Commentary**

56. Children have excellent opportunities within and outside the Reception classes to develop their co-ordination. The excellent range of outdoor equipment is very well used to climb, balance and slide. The bridge to the playhouse is used to crawl into rooms and there are spaces below for children to run and hide. Large wheeled toys and barrows are handled competently and children handle balls and small equipment to develop their manipulative skills. In a physical education lesson, children made very good progress in catching activities as the teacher gave them different objects to catch, starting with a silk scarf and then continuing with heavier balls and rubber rings. As a result all children achieved a high standard of throwing and catching. The children's abilities to control tools such as scissors and pencils develop well through drawing making and constructing. The very good teaching and excellent resources enable almost all children reach the expected standard in this area of learning and they achieve very well.

## **Creative development**

Provision in creative development is **very good**.

### **Main strength**

- Very well equipped play areas support children's learning very effectively

### **Commentary**

57. The many activities for creative play support other areas of learning. For example, the imaginative play in the office involves manipulative skills as children fold their letters to fit into an envelope. Adults are used very well to support pupils learning in play. For example, a teaching assistant controlled a rather boisterous situation in the playhouse well by suggesting two children went to sleep. While they were sleeping she suggested the others surprised them by tidying up the kitchen. When the other children woke up they thanked their friends and took them off to the seaside for a treat. Work on display shows the range of children's art work, collages of 'The hungry Caterpillar', the children's own free painting, paint and glitter butterflies related to work in science and maths. The children enjoyed singing a range of well-known songs and counting songs during the maths lessons. Children's very good achievements in their creative development results in most of them reaching standards that are just below expectations for their age.

## **SUBJECTS IN KEY STAGES 1 and 2**

### **ENGLISH**

Provision in English is **good**.

#### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- Consistently good teaching is leading to an improvement in standards
- The use of speaking and listening is improving pupils' language skills and confidence
- Work is well matched to the needs of individuals and groups
- Leadership and management is focused on raising standards and meeting with success
- A history of weak literacy skills still shows in the range and quality of independent writing

#### **Commentary**

58. Results in national tests have been well below average at the end of Year 2 and Year 6. This is due to a range of factors. Most pupils enter school with well below average language skills. The school has a higher proportion of pupils with special educational needs, or who speak English as a second language, and a smaller proportion of higher-attaining pupils. A high level of pupil mobility, and poor attendance affects the progress of a significant number of lower-attaining pupils. The initiatives put in place following the last inspection are having an impact on pupils' learning and the gap between standards in reading and writing has narrowed. Current standards are below average, and this represents satisfactory achievement.

59. Teachers and teaching assistants have received training in a range of activities to help improve pupils' spoken language. Different levels of questions are used to make sure that all pupils are challenged and involved. Teachers expect pupils to provide answers and this is used well to deepen pupils' understanding. Pupils are encouraged to talk to each other and to think before taking part in class discussions. This is particularly effective for pupils with special educational needs, or for whom English is an additional language. Drama activities and puppets are being used to help both speaking and writing. Younger pupils build links from shared reading texts to their own writing because their ideas are developed into sentences and they use new words imaginatively in stories. "Hot seating", where pupils speak to the whole class, helps older pupils to communicate confidently in different situations. Year 6 pupils phrased questions formally and spoke clearly when they staged a formal meeting with the headteacher. As a result of the priority given to this aspect of their work, pupils' speaking and listening skills have improved since the last inspection.

60. Teachers have worked hard to implement a consistent approach to the teaching of basic skills to improve pupils' standards in writing. The curriculum has been adapted to provide a relevant context for writing tasks, which is important for pupils who have limited experiences outside school. Although work is well sequenced to help pupils plan for independent writing, the majority of pupils find it difficult to write fluently or with confidence. Pupils with special educational needs and those for whom English is an additional language are well supported and make progress in line with others in their year. Extra resources funded by the EAZ have been used well to introduce guided reading sessions for all pupils and have helped to raise standards. Pupils enjoy reading and have developed satisfactory research skills through subjects such as history. The addition of a new library and ICT suite this term will improve provision for these aspects of the curriculum.

61. The overall quality of teaching and learning is good. Teachers have a clear understanding about what is being taught, activities are interesting and capture pupils' imagination and there are very good relations between adults and children. In the best lessons, pupils are involved in assessing how well they have achieved in the final part of the lesson. This enables teachers to monitor learning and correct any misunderstandings.

62. Teachers are diligent in their use of assessment, and work is now well matched to the needs of different groups of pupils. The quality of handwriting and presentation of work has improved. Marking in books is positive and rewards effort. It shows that writing is valued and pupils are involved in self evaluation of their work. Information gained from these assessments is used to create

relevant targets that are reviewed twice a term. Leadership and management of the subject are very good. Staff have developed a strong team ethos, and they have worked effectively with representatives from the various agencies, such as the EAZ, to raise standards in the subject. The co-ordinator is an excellent role model and her commitment and enthusiasm have led to good improvement in literacy since the last inspection.

### **Language and literacy across the curriculum**

63. Although language and literacy skills are below average, the strategies for developing pupils' literacy skills through other subjects are satisfactory and improving. A focus on providing more speaking and listening opportunities is evident in all lessons. This is helping to improve pupils' confidence in using more formal language modelled by teachers. Pupils write playscripts for puppets they make in design and technology. Annotated diagrams and lists order procedures required to design playground equipment. Drama and role play are used well to reinforce pupils' understanding of moral issues. They read the Bible, poetry and stories from other cultures in religious education. At Christmas they wrote and performed their own version of the nativity story.

## **MATHEMATICS**

Provision in mathematics is **good**.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- The school is continuing to raise standards since the last inspection
- Higher-attaining pupils and pupils with special educational needs achieve well
- Despite good teaching pupils learning is hindered by poor skills of retention
- The subject is led and managed well
- The marking of pupils' work is inconsistent
- Pupils' mathematical skills are not developed thoroughly enough in other subjects

### **Commentary**

64. Results in the national tests at the end of Year 2 have been consistently well below the national average between 2000 and 2002. The 2003 results have risen to below average but when compared to similar schools they are average. Results at the end of Year 6 have been well below the national averages and when compared to similar schools. The very high turnover of pupils together with the very low attainment of pupils on entry to the school has affected standards in the past.

65. Throughout the school, pupils' achievements in mathematics have been unsatisfactory in the past, but have improved considerably during the last year. The school has continued to develop on the improvements seen during the last inspection. Weaknesses in the quality of teaching have been dealt with and work is now better managed to suit pupils' needs. Day-to-day assessment is used effectively to plan subsequent lessons which provide an appropriate degree of challenge. Teaching is more focused on the skills pupils need to develop, such as using and applying their mathematical knowledge in a range of situations. A strong emphasis is placed on developing pupil's problem solving abilities and a great deal of encouragement is given to developing independent work. As a result the higher-attaining pupils in Years 2 and Year 6 are making good progress and achieving the expected standard. Here standards have been maintained since the last inspection. They have risen in other groups, such as pupils with special educational needs, and those who are learning English as an additional language because of the good support seen in classes. To raise standards further the school spends a lot of time on developing pupils' mathematical vocabulary as many pupils find it difficult to express their ideas. A well-developed system is in place to monitor pupils' progress. This shows that pupils who have been admitted in the Reception classes make better progress and achieve more than those admitted later. Overall, standards have risen since the last inspection and pupils' achievement is satisfactory, although standards are still below national expectations.

66. Overall, the quality of teaching and learning is good. Teachers have a good understanding of the national numeracy strategy and lessons start at a good pace with oral and mental work. Due to the good management of behaviour all pupils are able to learn well and most are attentive. Teachers



are alert to developing pupils' reasoning skills. For example, in a very good lesson seen in a Year 2 class, the teacher gave pupils the opportunity to discuss their thinking with a partner before starting their work and as a result all pupils achieved well. Overall, teachers have very good relationships with the pupils. Their support and praise for pupils' achievement in lessons provide additional motivation, and pupils respond by working hard. In a good lesson seen in a Year 5 class, the teacher used the pupils to make a human block graph showing their results, consequently the pupils learnt much about the correct positioning of data on the correct axis of the graph. They thought this was great fun. Despite the good teaching seen many pupils find difficulty in retaining facts. So more time has to be given during the lessons to consolidating what has been learnt. This limits the amount of progress pupils make over a longer period. Teaching assistants are very effective in supporting pupils in their learning because they keep them focused and talk to them about their work. Pupils assess their work regularly at the end of each lesson using simple symbols to show if they are confident with their answers. This gives teachers useful information about each pupil. However, marking is not consistent. It is better in the infants than in the junior classes. The best marking has constructive comments and praise is used appropriately, some simply indicates what is and is not right. This does not help pupils know what they have to do so as to improve.

67. The good leadership and management of the subject have been crucial in the raising of standards. The monitoring of teaching and learning is effective and gives the school a very good understanding of the strengths and weaknesses in the subject. When weaknesses are identified prompt action is taken to raise standards. A numeracy club for parents who have difficulties with mathematics shows the supportive home links that further develops pupils' numeracy skills.

### **Mathematics across the curriculum**

68. The use and development of mathematical skills in other subjects is not planned systematically so that it makes a strong contribution to extending pupils' ability. There were a few good examples seen, as in a Year 6 class, where a teacher had displayed a poster from the 'Sagrada Familia Cathedral in Barcelona on magic squares with the question, " why do you think the magic number is significant to Christians?" Insufficient use is made of ICT in mathematics.

## **SCIENCE**

Provision In science is **good**.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- Teaching is good and work is well matched to pupils' needs
- Standards have shown improvement although they remain below average
- The subject is well led and managed
- Too little use is made of ICT to support pupils' learning
- The unsatisfactory attendance of too many pupils affects their learning

### **Commentary**

69. The most recent results in national tests at the end of Year 6 have shown some improvement. This is mainly due to two factors. Firstly, the curriculum is now planned more systematically to cover National Curriculum requirements. Secondly, staffing difficulties, which have had an adverse affect on pupils' achievement, have now been resolved.

70. In 2003, both the results of teacher assessments at the end of Year 2 and national tests at the end of Year 6 were well below average. The performance of girls and boys was similar.

71. Current standards in Years 2 and 6 show improvement but are below average. Overall, pupils are achieving satisfactorily, although the achievement of different groups varies. The school carries out regular assessments and analysis of the results. These clearly show that the progress of those pupils who start their education at the school, and attend regularly, achieve well. However, those who have their education disrupted either by erratic attendance or by frequent changes of school make more limited progress.

72. Overall, the quality of teaching is good. Teachers have good subject knowledge and work is well planned to meet pupils' differing needs. They manage pupils very well and have a good range of strategies, which are used throughout the school, to ensure that pupils behave appropriately. Classroom assistants know pupils very well and provide very good support. Particular strengths in teaching include very good questioning techniques and use of specialist vocabulary. New work is skilfully introduced through discussion and reinforced by practical activities. For example, in Year 2 pupils felt their pulse at the start of a lesson and then increased their heart rate by running round the playground. They then discussed the effects of exercise on their body. In Year 6, pupils were looking at micro organisms and made bread as part of their investigative work on yeast. In Year 6, classes are taught by specialist staff and this is having a positive impact on standards. Teachers also place considerable emphasis on the good presentation of written work and diagrams.

73. Pupils' learn well during discussions. Teachers expect pupils to explain their reasoning and use scientific vocabulary and this deepens their understanding. However, the ability of many pupils to retain and recall information over longer periods is more limited. A significant number of pupils also have weak literacy skills and find recording information difficult. These factors have a negative impact on their learning and particularly on test results.

74. Work in pupils' books shows that there is now satisfactory coverage of the National Curriculum. Regular opportunities are provided for pupils to plan and carry out investigative work, which is an improvement. However, due to past underachievement older pupils understanding of some aspects of the curriculum, for example electricity is limited. Some use is made of ICT, for example pupils in Year 5 researched and presented work on the planets. However, the school is aware that this is an area that requires further development and plans are in place.

75. The subject is well led and managed. Regular monitoring takes place and there is a clear understanding of areas of strength and those that require improvement. The subject action plan is clear and focused on raising standards. Improvement since the last inspection has been good. Standards show some improvement. The curriculum and teaching have improved, as has the range of investigative work.

## **INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY**

Current provision for ICT is **unsatisfactory**.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- Management is good and is preparing well for planned developments
- There are weaknesses in some aspects of the subject
- The use of ICT across the curriculum is limited
- Present resources are inadequate

### **Commentary**

76. The subject is in a state of considerable change. At the end of the inspection, work will start on providing a new computer suite with modern systems and new hardware and software. The school is introducing new planning for the subject in September which will ensure full coverage of the National Curriculum.

77. At present standards are in line with expectations in Year 2 but below those expected in Year 6. By the time pupils leave the school pupils handle and communicate information and text appropriately but the elements of control and monitoring external events are limited by a lack of opportunity and equipment. Although pupils are now making steady progress and achieving soundly in lessons, the oldest pupils have not achieved well enough because their previous experiences have been limited. In Year 3 pupils are showing above average skills in redrafting work and using the features of software to check spellings.

78. Teaching and learning are satisfactory overall. All teachers are now competent in the areas covered and further training is planned for using new software and hardware. The new curriculum

will ensure that ICT skills are taught and used in other subjects and become an integral part of pupils' learning.

79. Management of the subject is now good. The new co-ordinator has a clear view of what needs to be done when the new suite is completed. The number of computers is presently below the recommended level but the shortcomings will soon be dealt with.

### **Information and communication technology across the curriculum**

80. Currently there is limited use of computers in other subjects but this is planned for in the new arrangements. Some use of CD ROMs and the internet for research into topics takes place, together with some data handling in mathematics. The use of text and graphics supports work in most subjects.

## **HUMANITIES**

Work was sampled in **history**, but no lessons were seen. It is therefore not possible to form an overall judgement about provision in this subject. There is every indication from pupils' work that standards are broadly average. However, the below average literacy skills of some average and lower-attaining pupils mean that recording information is a weaker element in the work seen. The use of one topic book for work in a range of subjects is a barrier for pupils because it is difficult for them to make historical links between new knowledge and prior learning.

### **Geography**

Provision in geography is **satisfactory**.

### **Main strength and weakness**

- The subject leader is knowledgeable and has increased staff confidence
- The use of one topic book for all foundation subjects limits opportunities for pupils to develop a clear understanding of the subject

### **Commentary**

81. Current standards are below average and pupils are achieving satisfactorily.

82. Teaching and learning in lessons seen during the inspection were satisfactory. Pupils have secure knowledge and discuss key points well. They communicate their ideas and findings using appropriate vocabulary. In Year 1, a story was used well to help pupils understand that change might be for the better or worse. They came up with ideas for keeping the world clean and improving the environment. The use of research has increased and the oldest pupils engage in some high quality discussions based on their observations of photographs of Bangalore. A very good feature of this lesson was the way in which the teacher set challenging questions for different groups within the class. However, the weak literacy skills of many pupils limits their ability to record their observations with the same detail they achieve in guided sessions, and only the higher-attaining pupils reach a satisfactory standard in their written work.

83. Leadership and management of the subject are good. The monitoring of teaching and learning is thorough and has identified the need to match work to the different attainment groups more consistently. The subject leader has rewritten the schemes of work to include more practical approaches to learning. She has good subject knowledge and has improved staff confidence so that fewer worksheets are used as a substitute for exploring the subject in more depth and breadth. Pupils' enjoyment of lessons has increased. Levelled questions are used to help teachers assess pupils' progress at the end of each unit. However, the recording of work in other subjects in topic books means that geographical skills are not developed and recorded progressively and limits opportunities for pupils to gain a clear understanding of the subject.

### **Religious education**

The provision for religious education is **satisfactory**.

## Main strengths and weaknesses

- The quality of teaching and learning is good
- The subject is well managed
- There are limited opportunities to extend the curriculum

## Commentary

84. Standards are similar to those found in other schools at the end of Years 2 and 6. They are in line with the expectations of the local syllabus and pupils are making steady progress and achieving satisfactorily.

85. Teaching and learning in the lessons seen were good overall. In a very successful Year 5-6 lesson the teacher showed very good knowledge of the subject. Pupils were led skilfully to understand that there are many different types of books in the Bible and that some of them are believed to be myths. This led to the wider theme of holy books and pupils showed they had remembered previous work on other religions studied and had sound knowledge of the work covered.

86. Although pupils visit the church and have visits from the vicar, there are few links with the other religions. This is recognised by the school and is identified as an area for improvement.

87. Management of the subject is good. The co-ordinator has a clear view of what needs to be done. The subject supports speaking and listening well. There are times for discussion and pupils enjoy role play. This was evident in Year 3-4 lessons where pupils acted the story of Rama and Sita to support their learning about Sikhism.

## CREATIVE, AESTHETIC, PRACTICAL AND PHYSICAL SUBJECTS

Overall judgements about provision in art and design, physical education, music and design and technology cannot be made. One lesson was observed in art and design and two in physical education. Work was sampled in music and design and technology, as it was not possible to observe lessons in these subjects.

## Commentary

88. The Year 3-4 lesson observed in **art and design** was well planned. Pupils were enthusiastic about continuing to make sculptures using modroc. They worked sensibly and safely either in pairs or individually and talked about what they were trying to achieve. A number of adults helped during the practical activities and this led to pupils achieving well.

89. Evidence from pupils' work and display around the school indicates that work is well planned in art and design. A range of skills and techniques are taught using a variety of materials and pupils produce work of satisfactory quality. A particular strength of art provision is the good use which is made of a local gallery. All classes make visits to view exhibitions and use the work displayed as a stimulus for their own art. Good support is also provided for pupils who show particular aptitude for art through visits to the school from local artists. These pupils produce work of very good quality ranging from large scale collages using a range of materials to encaustic art. Pupils also evaluate their work and compare it to that of other artists. Areas that require further development are the use of ICT and three-dimensional work.

90. In **design and technology** pupils' work showed that they design and make artefacts using a range of materials. Recently the school held a design and technology day when pupils in all year groups made puppets. Younger pupils used fairy stories such as Snow White and the Seven Dwarfs and the Little Red Hen as a stimulus for their design work and constructed simple puppets which they then used to perform the story. Older pupils designed and made a wide range of puppets, including shadow puppets. This work was linked well to literacy as they wrote scripts and then performed them using the puppets. Pupils in Year 1 are currently designing and making models of

playground equipment such as slides and swings and pupils in Years 5 and 6 are learning about cams and applying this to the construction of simple moving toys using wood.

91. The lessons seen in **physical education** were well planned and organised. Music was played which created a calm atmosphere when pupils were changing into their kit. Both staff and pupils were dressed appropriately. At the start of lessons the importance of warming up and listening to instructions was emphasised. Teachers discussed particular skills that were to be taught and demonstrated new techniques effectively. Pupils were used to demonstrate to each other and then evaluate their performance.

92. Pupils in Years 3-6 attend a six week swimming course each year and records are kept of their progress. Considerable emphasis has been placed on increasing the numbers of pupils who participate in lessons. This has been achieved by acquiring a range of items of kit which can be borrowed. The range of after school clubs has also increased and includes football, rugby and dance. Participation rates have improved and the school has been able to take part, with some success, in the local schools football league. The school has also entered a team into the Mini Youth Games Rugby tournament and there are plans for participation in an athletics tournament in the summer.

93. The scheme of work gives good guidance and there has been recent staff training. A good action plan has been written with a clear analysis of strengths and areas for improvement. Good assessment procedures are in place which are linked well to the National Curriculum.

94. **Music** is well managed. A good scheme of work is in place, which teachers find very helpful. The focus for future development includes building music into the new curriculum and an emphasis on performing skills. The school reports improving standards in singing and this was evident in assemblies and hymn practice where pupils sang tunefully. Instrumental tuition is available and all pupils in Years 5 and 6 have the opportunity to learn the recorder.

## **PERSONAL, SOCIAL AND HEALTH EDUCATION AND CITIZENSHIP**

95. Two lessons and an assembly were observed that included planned provision in personal, social, health and citizenship education. Throughout the school, the provision is **very well** planned. In all lessons teachers respond appropriately to personal and social issues when they arise. Although many children enter the Reception classes with limited awareness of the feelings and needs of others, the planned programme throughout the school develops their personal and social skills systematically. Emphasis is placed on knowing how to resolve problems and how to co-operate. Discussions are often centred around incidents that have happened in the classroom or playground. This helps pupils develop good attitudes and to understand the school's expectations for how they should behave in a community.

96. The programme deals with the important issues of citizenship and responsibilities such as living in a community, keeping fit and looking after the environment. The school's participation in the Healthy Schools Award initiative provides a range of activities linked to the benefits of healthy eating and exercise. The school has appropriate policies in place relating to sex and drugs education.

## PART D: SUMMARY OF THE MAIN INSPECTION JUDGEMENTS

| <i>Inspection judgement</i>  | <i>Grade</i> |
|--|--------------|
| <b>The overall effectiveness of the school</b>                       | <b>3</b>     |
| How inclusive the school is  | 2            |
| How the school's effectiveness has changed since its last inspection | 3            |
| Value for money provided by the school                               | 3            |
| <b>Overall standards achieved</b>                                    | <b>4</b>     |
| Pupils' achievement  | 4            |
| <b>Pupils' attitudes, values and other personal qualities</b>        | <b>3</b>     |
| Attendance   | 5            |
| Attitudes  | 3            |
| Behaviour, including the extent of exclusions                        | 3            |
| Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development            | 3            |
| <b>The quality of education provided by the school</b>               | <b>3</b>     |
| The quality of teaching  | 3            |
| How well pupils learn  | 3            |
| The quality of assessment  | 3            |
| How well the curriculum meets pupils needs                           | 4            |
| Enrichment of the curriculum, including out-of-school activities     | 3            |
| Accommodation and resources  | 3            |
| Pupils' care, welfare, health and safety                             | 1            |
| Support, advice and guidance for pupils                              | 2            |
| How well the school seeks and acts on pupils' views                  | 2            |
| The effectiveness of the school's links with parents                 | 3            |
| The quality of the school's links with the community                 | 2            |
| The school's links with other schools and colleges                   | 3            |
| <b>The leadership and management of the school</b>                   | <b>2</b>     |
| The governance of the school   | 3            |
| The leadership of the headteacher                                    | 1            |
| The leadership of other key staff                                    | 3            |
| The effectiveness of management                                      | 2            |

*Inspectors make judgements on a scale: excellent (grade 1); very good (2); good (3); satisfactory (4); unsatisfactory (5); poor (6); very poor (7).*