

# INSPECTION REPORT

## **BURHAM CHURCH OF ENGLAND PRIMARY SCHOOL**

Rochester

LEA area: Kent

Unique reference number: 118620

Headteacher: Mrs J C Hawke

Lead inspector: Rosalind Johns  
22745

Dates of inspection: 13<sup>th</sup> to 15<sup>th</sup> October 2003

Inspection number: 255660

Inspection carried out under section 10 of the School Inspections Act 1996

## **INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL**

Type of school:	Infant and Junior
School category:	Voluntary Controlled
Age range of pupils:	4 to 11 years
Gender of pupils:	Mixed
Number on roll;	176
School address:	Bell Lane Burham Nr. Rochester Kent
Postcode:	ME1 3SY
Telephone number:	01634 861691
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Appropriate authority:	Governing body, Burham CEP School
Name of chair of governors:	Mrs E Smith
Date of previous inspection:	June 1999

## **CHARACTERISTICS OF THE SCHOOL**

Burham Church of England Primary School is a smaller than average primary school in a village near Rochester. Burham is a stable, established community with a strong identity and most pupils come from the village. There are ten more boys than girls on roll with the imbalance in Year 2 and Year 6. Six pupils are from minority ethnic backgrounds but there are no pupils who are at an early stage of learning to speak English. Forty-one pupils have special educational needs (SEN) which is broadly average. One pupil has a statement of SEN. The main group of pupils with SEN has profound and multiple learning difficulties. In the last year, eight pupils joined and 12 left other than at normal times. This is a higher than average rate of turnover. Pupils' attainment on entry varies but it usually fluctuates between average and above average. The school was awarded the Basic Skills Quality Mark in 2003.

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## INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

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9977	Fran Luke	Lay inspector	
15271	Judith Howell	Team inspector	Science, art, geography, history, Foundation Stage
18-83	Brian Farley	Team inspector	Mathematics, information and communication technology, design and technology, physical education, special educational needs

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## PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

### OVERALL EVALUATION

#### **Burham Church of England Primary School provides a sound education for its pupils.**

Teaching and learning are satisfactory overall so that pupils make sound progress. However, in Year 6, teaching is good and enables the oldest pupils to achieve well. Pupils with special educational needs (SEN) make satisfactory progress. Leadership and management are satisfactory and are providing clear direction for the work and development of the school. The school gives satisfactory value for money.

The school's main strengths and weaknesses are:

- In Year 6, pupils reach above average standards in English, mathematics and science because they are encouraged to have high expectations of their own performance.
- The quality of teaching and learning is too variable so that pupils make uneven progress.
- Standards in art in Years 1 and 2 and in music across the school are below average.
- Pupils' very good behaviour and attitudes to work are firmly rooted in the school's good provision for their personal development.
- Good systems for ensuring pupils' personal welfare and their involvement in the life of the school enable them to be secure and confident learners.
- Pupils' progress through the school is tracked very carefully but teachers' marking does not give them enough guidance on how to improve their work.
- The school has a caring, friendly ethos but, across the curriculum, there is not enough spiritual dimension to pupils' learning.

There has been a satisfactory improvement since the school was inspected in 1999. Key issues such as supporting planning with high quality schemes of work and improving assessment have been addressed well. Better systems for checking the quality of teaching have been put in place and there was no unsatisfactory teaching in this inspection. However, these systems are not carried out rigorously enough. Standards in Year 6 are broadly the same as those reported previously.

### STANDARDS ACHIEVED

Results in National Curriculum tests at the end of Year 6, compared with:	all schools			Similar schools
	2001	2002	2003	2003
English	C	D	B	A
Mathematics	C	C	A	A
Science	B	D	B	B

*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.*

**Achievement is good.** It is good in Year 6 and satisfactory in Reception and Years 1 to 5. Children in Reception are on course to exceed the goals they are expected to reach by the end of the year in personal, social and emotional development and communication and language skills. They are likely to reach these goals in their other areas of learning. In Year 2, standards are above average in reading and average in writing and mathematics. The strong teaching in Year 6 enables pupils to reach the above average standards in English, mathematics and science seen during the inspection. Apart from art in Years 1 and 2 and music across the school, standards in other subjects are average.

**Pupils' personal qualities including their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development are good.** Pupils' attitudes to learning and their behaviour are very good and they quickly become

absorbed in the tasks set for them. Attendance is good and pupils are ready for a prompt start to lessons.

**The quality of education provided by the school is satisfactory. The overall quality of teaching is satisfactory.** Teaching in Year 6 is good and pupils' confidence and enjoyment of learning are clearly visible as a result of sharp, well-informed teaching. Across the school, lessons are well organised and structured and teachers use resources imaginatively to hold pupils' interest. However, in many lessons, there is no sense of urgency in teaching. Pupils are quick to pick this up and relax into a leisurely pace of working. A good range of activities outside lessons broadens pupils' experience effectively. Good levels of care give them the security and stability to become confident learners. Pupils also feel they have a say in the running of the school. Good links with other schools and colleges mean that the school can draw on outside resources and expertise to help pupils.

**Leadership and management are satisfactory.** The headteacher and senior staff ensure that there is a clear focus on improvement and a real sense of teamwork among staff. There are some sound systems in place to bring about improvement but they are not being carried out sharply or quickly enough. The school improvement plan clearly reflects the school's own priorities. Subject leaders especially in English, mathematics and science have an important role in checking standards and teaching and in developing their subjects. Governors support the headteacher, staff and pupils well and use their interests and skills to help the school. However, they do not pay enough formal visits to the classroom to give them a clearer view of the school's strengths and needs.

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

Parents are generally satisfied with most aspects of school life but some felt that the quality of teaching was inconsistent between classes and that the school does not canvass their opinions enough.

The vast majority of pupils said that they enjoyed being at the school and many commented that there was nothing they wanted to change. They were happy that there were adults to turn to if they were worried and also felt that teachers listened to their ideas.

#### **IMPROVEMENTS NEEDED**

The most important things the school should do to improve are:

- Improve the quality of teaching and learning so that pupils make consistently good progress as they move through the school.
- Raise standards in art in Years 1 and 2 and in music across the school.
- Improve the quality of teachers' marking so that it gives clear guidance to pupils about how they can improve their work.
- Raise pupils' spiritual awareness by encouraging the development of curiosity and imagination across the curriculum.

## **PART B: COMMENTARY ON THE INSPECTION FINDINGS**

### **STANDARDS ACHIEVED BY PUPILS**

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

Overall, achievement is good. It is the same for the more able and those from minority ethnic groups. It is satisfactory across the school for pupils with SEN and the gifted and talented. Overall, standards are average although they are above average in English, mathematics and science in Year 6.

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

- Children in the Foundation Stage are reaching above average standards in their personal, social and emotional development and in communication and language skills.
- Achievement in Year 6 is good.
- Standards in reading and speaking and listening are above average across the school.
- Standards are below average in art in Years 1 and 2 and in music across the school.

#### **Commentary**

1. Children reach the expected standards by the end of Reception in their mathematical development, physical and creative development. In their personal, social and emotional development and in their communication and language skills, they achieve well because of the teaching and exceed the goals they are expected to reach by the end of the year. Most children attain the learning goals in literacy. There was not enough available evidence gathered to make a judgement about children's knowledge and understanding. Overall, achievement is satisfactory in Reception, because children make steady progress throughout the year to reach the standards of which they are capable.

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

Standards in:	School results	National results
reading	17.5 (16.7)	15.9 (15.8)
writing	15.2 (13.5)	14.8 (14.4)
mathematics	17.8 (16.8)	16.4 (16.5)

*There were 34 pupils in the year group. Figures in brackets are for the previous year*

2. Standards in the end of Year 2 national tests in 2003 were well above average in reading and mathematics and above average in writing compared with all schools. Compared with similar schools with a similar proportion of free school meals, standards were above average in reading and mathematics and below average in writing.
3. The findings of the inspection are that in Year 2, standards are above average in reading and speaking and listening and average in writing and mathematics. These are lower than the results of the 2003 tests because of fluctuations in the nature of the school's intake. Average standards were found in science, history, physical education (PE), religious education (RE) and personal, social and health education (PSHE). Standards were below average in art and music. There was not enough evidence gathered to make definitive judgements about standards and achievement in ICT, design and technology, and geography. Achievement is good in reading and speaking and listening and satisfactory in all other subjects where judgements were made except art and music where it is unsatisfactory. These findings are similar to those of the previous inspection. Standards are still below average in art because pupils' skills in sketching are not developed enough and much of their work lacks individual flair and imagination. Weaknesses in music are a whole school issue.

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

Standards in:	School results	National results
English	28.3 (26.2)	27 (27)
Mathematics	28.4 (26.8)	27 (26.7)
Science	29.3 (27.6)	28.8 (28.3)

*There were 26 pupils in the year group. Figures in brackets are for the previous year*

4. In Year 6 in the 2003 national tests, standards were well above average in mathematics and above average in English and science compared with all schools. Compared with similar schools whose pupils obtained comparable results at the end of Year 2 standards were well above average in English and mathematics and above average in science. Trends in the school's results have fluctuated depending on the nature of the year group. In this inspection, standards in the current Year 6 are above average in English, mathematics and science. These findings are lower than the results of the 2003 national tests at the end of Year 6 because there are a higher proportion of pupils with SEN than in the previous year group. Standards are average in all other subjects except music where they are below average. There was not enough evidence gathered to make a definite judgement about standards and achievement in geography and PSHE in Year 6. These judgements are very close to those made by the previous inspection when standards in music were also below average across the school. Overall, in Years 3 to 6, achievement is good in English, mathematics and science and satisfactory in all other subjects inspected except music where it is unsatisfactory.
5. Pupils' rate of progress is accelerated in Year 6 where topics are taught rigorously and where pupils accept the teacher's high expectations and rise to the challenge. This was also noted at the last inspection and was reported as the main factor why pupils reached above average standards in key subjects by the time they left the school. This is still the case. Standards in speaking and listening are higher in all years than at the last inspection because pupils are now careful and responsive listeners. They are encouraged by teachers to offer ideas freely within the supportive atmosphere of the classroom. In reading, standards have improved because pupils have a good range of strategies to draw on and the school has had a focus on reading comprehension. In ICT in Year 6, standards were above average in the last inspection and are now average. This is because the good teaching in Year 6 in ICT has not had sufficient time to make an impact at this early stage in the year. Standards are still below average in music and achievement unsatisfactory across the school. The school does not have a specialist music teacher and units in the scheme of work are not being taught with self-confidence or in enough depth to develop pupils' musical skills or understanding satisfactorily. Pupils' literacy and numeracy skills are used satisfactorily to support their learning but, throughout the school, too many demanding worksheets do little to improve skills and result in superficial coverage. The use of ICT in other subjects is satisfactory. During the inspection, no differences were noted between the achievement of boys and girls although there is a gender imbalance in Year 2 and Year 6.

### **Pupils' attitudes, values and other personal qualities**

Pupils' attitudes and behaviour are very good. Their attendance and punctuality are good. Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- Pupils show a high level of interest in their school.
- Pupils are willing to take on additional responsibilities
- Pupils behave very well in lessons and around the school.

- Relationships between pupils, and between pupils and adults, are very good and there is high degree of racial harmony.
- Pupils have high levels of confidence and self esteem
- Pupils have a good awareness of right and wrong and show respect for others' feelings and beliefs.
- Daily worship provides a sound basis for pupils' spiritual awareness.
- There is insufficient planning for pupils' spiritual development in subjects.
- Pupils' moral and social attitudes are a particular strength.
- Some aspects of cultural education are unsatisfactory, particularly music and art.

## Commentary

Attendance at the school is above the national average and is, therefore, good. The majority of pupils are eager to come to school and punctuality is good.

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

Authorised absence		Unauthorised absence	
School data:	4.9	School data:	0
National data:	5.4	National data:	0.5

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

6. Behaviour is very good throughout the school, in lessons, around the school and on the playground. Pupils are all aware of the school rules and fully understand the difference between right and wrong. Good racial harmony is evident in every class. The pre-inspection parents' meeting and questionnaire showed that the vast majority of parents felt that behaviour was good and that bullying was not a problem. Pupils have positive views of the school. They are particularly keen about the use of "Count me In" which they said ensured they always had friends to play with at lunch and break times. All pupils show an eager desire to learn and there is a high level of attendance at after school clubs. There were no exclusions in the school year before the inspection.

## Exclusions

### **Ethnic background of pupils**

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

Categories used in the Annual School Census	No of pupils on roll	Number of fixed period exclusions	Number of permanent exclusions
White – British	166	0	0
White – any other White background	4	0	0
Mixed – White and Black Caribbean	1	0	0
Mixed – White and Asian	1	0	0
No ethnic group recorded	4	0	0

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

7. Pupils show good levels of confidence and self esteem. In interviews, they were confident, articulate and very positive about the school. There are good opportunities for pupils to take on additional responsibility around the school, through membership of the School Council and at other times, for example, in Year 6 by helping with equipment in assembly and taking round the registers.

Older children are encouraged to sit with the younger ones at lunchtimes. Pupils respond well to these opportunities.

8. Pupils have a good level of respect for the feelings and values of others. They are encouraged to think of others by raising money for a large number of charities throughout the school year. Relationships between pupils and with all the staff are very good. Pupils get on well together; they play well on the playground and, in lessons, they work together well.

9. Collective worship provides pupils with a sound basis for spiritual awareness. However, opportunities for them to explore values, principles and beliefs about the world in which they live are not planned into the wider curriculum. This means that they have insufficient opportunities to look at basic truth-seeking questions or to explore feelings that arise in subjects such as science, art or music. The previous inspection noted a similar state of affairs. Good moral and social values are promoted through worship and the school's code of behaviour. Pupils respond very well to this. They know right from wrong, and have well-developed attitudes to caring for one another. Pupils have some understanding of the cultural and faith traditions of Britain. This has improved since the previous inspection. However, their achievement in art and music is unsatisfactory and, therefore, these subjects provide few opportunities for cultural development within the school.

**QUALITY OF EDUCATION PROVIDED BY THE SCHOOL**

The quality of education provided by the school is satisfactory. The strongest features are the activities provided for pupils outside the classroom, the levels of care for pupils' welfare, the way the school takes pupils' views into account, and links with other schools and colleges. Areas needing improvement are teaching and learning in some year groups, using assessment carefully to adapt planning, the marking of pupils' work and seeking the views of parents.

**Teaching and learning**

The quality of teaching and learning is satisfactory. Assessment is good in the Foundation Stage, English, mathematics and science and satisfactory in other subjects.

**Summary of teaching observed during the inspection in 32 lessons**

Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
0 (0%)	2 (6%)	9 (28%)	21(66%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)

*The table gives teacher*

*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.*

**Main strengths and weaknesses**

- Teaching and learning are good in Year 6 and satisfactory in Reception and Years 1 to 5.
- Teachers' positive management of pupils encourages them to be confident.
- Teachers are good at asking questions that make pupils think and try things out for themselves.
- The teacher for SEN provides good teaching in withdrawal groups.
- Many lessons lack pace and energy.
- Teachers do not always give high and clear expectations for pupils' work.
- Assessment information is good in English, mathematics and science but it is not being used sharply enough to give the right level of challenge for pupils.
- In class, teachers usually recognise and help pupils when they have problems with learning but the marking of pupils' work is too variable.

## Commentary

10. Teaching and learning have improved since the previous inspection in that no unsatisfactory teaching was found. However, there was less good or better teaching in this inspection. Teaching has common strengths including the support and encouragement of pupils, the imaginative use of resources and firm guidelines for pupils' response and behaviour. Ninety-six per cent of pupils in their questionnaire stated that they mostly found lessons interesting and fun and a similar number knew that they had to work hard. Chief among teachers' skills is their successful and consistent management of pupils' behaviour. Pupils are active and responsive learners and this springs from the value that teachers place on their contributions so that they try even harder. It also means that pupils are not afraid to ask questions, learn from mistakes and say when they do not understand. In a PSHE lesson for younger pupils, when pupils were discussing targets for the future, they were able to share their thoughts about what they were not good at under the sensitive guidance of the teacher. Teachers are also good at asking probing questions which make pupils think carefully and make best use of earlier learning. In a Year 5 literacy lesson, the teacher's thought provoking questions about the impact of different characters in a story meant that pupils covered a lot in a short time.
11. Overall, teaching and learning are satisfactory in the Reception class. There are a number of good features that contribute to the children's learning. The teamwork between the teacher and teaching assistants is effective and ensures that each day's activities are well organised and run smoothly. The teacher plans activities that provide opportunities for children to work and play both collaboratively and independently. However, there are instances, such as during the designated 'Child Initiated Activity' time, when insufficient time is given to interaction with children and opportunities to extend their learning are lost. The teaching of social skills is especially good and the children enter Year 1 with a good understanding of how to behave and a growing awareness of others' needs as well as their own. Ongoing assessment procedures are good but the use of assessment to plan the next stage in children's learning is satisfactory.
12. Teaching and learning are good in Year 6 because the teacher finds interesting and imaginative ways of involving pupils in their learning. Lessons are demanding and motivating and this makes pupils believe that they can succeed in their work. Key ideas are presented in lively ways and the pace never flags. In a lesson on interpreting data, pupils were fired with enthusiasm and took their learning very seriously.
13. The part-time teacher for pupils with special educational needs is effectively deployed. She provides a good level of diagnostic, administrative and teaching support.
14. A major weakness is the pace of teaching. Sometimes, there is no sense of urgency and pupils are quick to pick this up so that time and momentum are lost. Pupils relax into a gentle rate of working and do not cover as much ground as they could in lessons. Teachers also do not give high and clearly expressed expectations for the quality and quantity of pupils' work so that they are not really sure of the standards they are aiming for. This lack of rigour means that vital learning is lost.
15. The school has improved assessment procedures significantly since the last inspection, when it was identified as a key issue for action. Assessment information in English, mathematics and science is now good. However, teachers do not always use the information they gain from assessments of pupils' work to change what or how they will teach in future lessons. This means that not all lessons are planned at exactly the right starting level, or include the right type of work to challenge pupils at their own level of ability. Nearly all pupils said that they got help when stuck and that teachers showed them how to improve their work. However, the marking of pupils' work is variable in quality and, in general, is limited to ticks or praise rather than being helpful in showing pupils how to do better. Although pupils are becoming more involved in assessing their own work, and are beginning to understand what they need to do to improve, it is an area recognised by the school for further improvement. Homework which was an area of concern for some parents is judged to be satisfactory across the school.

## The curriculum

Curricular provision is satisfactory across the school. Pupils' learning outside of the school day and the development of their interests are good. The accommodation and resources of the school provide satisfactory support to meet the needs of the curriculum and are good in the Foundation Stage.

### Main strengths and weaknesses

- Literacy and numeracy are taught well at the top of the school and make a good contribution to the standards reached by the time pupils leave.
- The current focus to improve the curriculum for problem solving in mathematics is appropriate.
- Information and communication technology in Years 1 and 2 is limited in the range of work produced.
- Regular review of the curriculum ensures that areas for development are appropriate.
- Target setting and review for pupils with SEN are insufficiently developed.
- Information is missing from the governors' Annual Report to parents.
- Good range of provision outside of the school day to enhance pupils' learning.
- The work of the teacher for SEN and the deployment of teaching assistants has a positive effect upon pupils' achievements.
- The developing use of information and communication technology ensures that the resources are well used in a range of subjects.

### Commentary

16. The curriculum for literacy and numeracy has had a positive effect upon standards and particularly at the top of the school. Because there has been a focus on the identification of what needs to be developed in the curriculum, the school has correctly recognized the need to improve pupils' problem-solving skills in mathematics. In Years 1 and 2, there is a narrow use of information and communication technology. Little evidence was seen of its use in other subjects and in activities such as gathering information, programming a robot device or producing images.
17. The school keeps the curriculum under review. For example, it has effectively developed resources, learning provision and the training of staff in information and communication technology. This means that, when appropriate, pupils can use the equipment in subjects such as history or mathematics to research or compile information and present it effectively. All subjects now have programmes of work, an improvement since the previous inspection.
18. Pupils with SEN and their parents, in partnership with the school, are not involved as much as they should be in setting learning targets. Neither are they sufficiently consulted in the process of review. The governors do not give information about the success of their policy in their Annual Report to parents. Good use is made of a part-time teacher for pupils with SEN. She provides invaluable diagnostic and teaching support. Pupils with SEN are well supported by assistants who work in close collaboration with teachers.
19. A good range of visitors and visits are arranged to enhance pupils' learning and knowledge of the world. For example, they have made visits to places such as Hever Castle for their work in history and the Isle of Grain nature reserve to learn about wild life. An Indian dance group has helped older pupils to appreciate the wider aspects of British culture and younger pupils have had the benefit of attending the Chatham Music festival. A good range of sporting activities has provided further enrichment. However, pupils in Years 1 and 2 have few opportunities to take part in appropriate extra-curricular activities.
20. The curriculum for children in Reception is satisfactory and incorporates all areas of learning into broad topics based around the scientific aspect of learning. It is planned well and provides

children with a suitable variety of activities. The accommodation and resources are well suited to the demands of the curriculum.

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

The provision for pupils' care, welfare, health and safety is good. The provision of support, advice and guidance based on monitoring of pupils' achievement is satisfactory. The involvement of pupils through seeking and acting on their views is good.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- There are good procedures for health and safety, child protection and first aid.
- Adults know pupils well and provide good levels of care and advice.
- Pupils are happy that they have a say in the running of the school.
- Pupils with special educational needs are not identified early enough.

### **Commentary**

21. The school has good health and safety procedures in place. Regular health and safety checks are carried out, the outcomes of which are reported to governors and any issues identified are prioritised. Regular checks are made to grounds, buildings and equipment. The headteacher is the nominated officer for child protection procedures and she has attended appropriate training courses. Other staff are kept informed of the procedures and of the need to inform the headteacher should they have any concerns. Arrangements for the administration of first aid and for the care of children who are unwell are good.
22. All adults who work in the school form close and trusting relationships with the pupils. They know them well and provide good role models for behaviour. Pupils spoken to confirm that they feel safe and secure in the school and that there is always an adult available should they need support or advice. Parents are also happy that pupils are well cared for and feel secure. There are good procedures for the school to take account of pupils' views through the School Council. In conversation with pupils, they confirmed that they were happy that their views were taken into account through the Council, and that their representatives sought their views and reported back to them after meetings.
23. Before the inspection, a number of parents expressed the view that children with SEN are not identified soon enough. Although the procedures are established to do so, they are not always applied with sufficient rigour. This is sometimes because too long is given for pupils to settle in.
24. There are satisfactory induction arrangements for children when they start school. These procedures include opportunities for parents and children to visit the school twice in the term before they start and an informative 'Starting School' pack. There are good procedures for monitoring the children's achievements on a day-to-day basis.

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

The school's links with parents are satisfactory. There are good links with other schools. There are sound links with the local community.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- Good links with other schools and colleges.
- Parents are not involved enough in setting and reviewing their children's targets.

### **Commentary**

25. Parents and carers have satisfactory views of the school. The school works with parents, and encourages them to support the school through the PTA and to help their children with homework. The PTA is supportive of the school and raises significant funds each year.
26. The school provides a regular newsletter for parents, which informs them of what is happening in school. In addition, class information sheets are sent out termly to advise parents what

is happening in their children's class and how they can help their children at home. The notice board inside the school entrance also contains information for parents. The pre-inspection questionnaire showed that a number of parents did not feel the school sought their views. The school recognises that it has not sent out regular questionnaires to seek parents' wider views, but has recently sent out a letter seeking parents' views about school uniform.

27. There are opportunities for parents to meet staff formally and informally to discuss their children's progress. In their responses to the pre-inspection questionnaire, a small, but significant number of parents said that they did not feel they were kept well informed about their children progress. The inspectors' view is that written annual reports for parents are detailed. They inform parents what their children, know, understand and can do, and give areas for development. However, they do not give information about what their children have achieved in relation to national expectations. Parents have the opportunity to respond to the reports, but pupils do not.
28. Pupils with SEN and their parents, in partnership with the school, are not involved as much as they should be in setting learning targets. Neither are they sufficiently consulted in the termly process of reviewing the progress of their children.
29. There are good links with the local pre-school group, but not with the wider pre school groups. There are also good links with other schools in the area for sporting activities. The newly created cluster groups of schools are beginning to work together with curriculum links. There are appropriate taster days and discussion with staff at the local secondary schools before pupils transfer, which enable pupils to adjust to the changes more readily. There are links with a local special school in supporting individual children and staff have gone to the school for specific training.
30. The school has sound links with the local community. There are links with the Parish Council and the local church and church council. The Vicar and the Methodist Minister come into school on a regular basis to take assembly. The local community are supportive of the school for fund raising events such as the Garden Party.

## **LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT**

The leadership and management of the school are satisfactory. The leadership of the headteacher and other key staff is satisfactory. The effectiveness of management is satisfactory. The school's governance is satisfactory.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- The headteacher has a clear vision for the future of the school and has built up a strong team spirit among staff.
- Key staff support the headteacher effectively.
- The school is building up an accurate and objective picture of its own performance.
- Good systems are in place for checking the quality of teaching and learning but they are not carried out rigorously enough.
- The pace of change and improvement is not rapid enough.
- The SEN coordinator has insufficient regular release time.
- Information is missing from the governors' Annual Report to parents

### **Commentary**

31. The strongest feature of the headteacher's leadership is her effectiveness in maintaining a stable staff team who share her vision of continual development by building on strengths and adapting to change. It has resulted in a strong team spirit and a conviction that pupils' needs come first. This means that all groups of pupils in the school are included fully in its life and work. This sense of purpose is also evident in the senior management team whose skills complement each other and where roles and responsibilities are clearly defined. The responsibilities of subject leaders

are currently being developed with a strong emphasis on their role as middle managers. Subject leaders in English, mathematics and science, in particular, have good opportunities for classroom observations and monitoring to give them a broad overview of their subjects. There are no significant aids or barriers to raising achievement in the school.

32. Since the previous inspection, the school has adopted a much more self-critical approach which helps it to keep abreast of issues as they arise or develop. Information about the school's performance is gained through the analysis of data, careful tracking of pupils' progress and scrutiny of their responses in national and internal tests. This means that areas of weakness are highlighted and strategies put in place to address them. However, this information is not always used precisely enough so that planning can be altered, teaching styles adapted and work sharply focused to challenge pupils at their own level.
33. The school has made a satisfactory improvement from the previous inspection in the key issue for action to improve the monitoring of teaching. The monitoring of teaching and learning by the headteacher, senior staff and key subject leaders is now well developed with a regular programme of observation and feedback. Arrangements for Performance Management are also interwoven with these systems. The way in which individual objectives have been linked to priorities in the school development plan and to teachers' professional needs means that it has been central to the work of the school. However, the monitoring of teaching and learning is not rigorous enough to confront problems decisively and to put robust procedures in place to address them. For example, teachers' lack of skills and confidence in art and music were noted at the last inspection. All these factors relating to the review and use of assessment information and teaching and learning mean that the quality of teaching and learning and pupils' achievement are not improving at a fast enough rate.
34. The Foundation Stage co-ordinator provides satisfactory leadership. The provision is satisfactorily managed and everything runs smoothly. Effective teamwork between the Reception teacher and the teaching assistants contributes well to the children's learning. The special educational needs coordinator does not have an adequate programme of regular release from the classroom to carry out her management duties. This means that some of these are shared with the part-time teacher and that the monitoring of the teaching of pupils with SEN is not carried out.
35. Efficient financial planning and administration ensure that spending is focused on priorities in the school development plan and is carefully monitored through the year. The financial reserves are above those recommended but have been earmarked for refurbishing the new library and classroom and for replacing computers. The school explores many options before committing itself to major items of expenditure but does not have effective systems for gauging the impact of this expenditure on raising standards.
36. Governors are active in the school, work closely with the headteacher and staff and are confident in supporting and challenging the work of the school. They bring a range of interests and expertise and committees make a sound contribution to the management of the school. They are involved in debating issues around the school development plan but are not always as closely involved in the earliest stages of development planning. The governors do not give information about the success of their policy in their Annual Report to parents. There is no structured programme of classroom visits to enable them to get a clearer overview of the school's strengths and needs.

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

Income and expenditure (£)		Balances (£)	
Total income	496170	Balance from previous year	33405
Total expenditure	485566	Balance carried forward to the next	10604
Expenditure per pupil	2759		

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

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

The overall provision for children in the Foundation Stage is **satisfactory**.

37. At the time of the inspection, children in the Reception year had only been attending school for four weeks. There are sound arrangements for introducing children to school. This means that most are happy to leave their parents and quickly get used to the school routines. The quality of teaching is satisfactory overall and, as a result, most children make sound progress in the Reception class. By the time they go into Year 1, most of them are on line to reach the nationally expected goals for children in their mathematical development, physical and creative development. This represents satisfactory achievement given the average starting point of many. In their personal, social and emotional development and in developing their communication and language skills, they achieve well and exceed the goals they are expected to reach by the end of the year. In literacy, most children achieve the expected standard. The curriculum both indoors and outdoors provides a wide range of activities that are imaginative and well matched to the children's needs. The provision is soundly managed, and the children's progress is carefully monitored. All adults manage children well and the good care and support given to the children ensure that the needs of all are well met. There were no issues identified for the provision of children in the Foundation Stage in the previous inspection.

#### **Personal, Social and Emotional Development**

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

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

- The children achieve well because the good teaching ensures they are encouraged to make independent choices and take responsibility for themselves at an early age.
- The children reach standards above that expected for their age.

38. Good emphasis is given to children's development in this area. Children are given effective help to establish boundaries for acceptable behaviour through the good interaction with staff. Relationships between adults and children are very good, and this helps to promote children's self-esteem and confidence. Children show respect for each other's needs and views and this is promoted well through encouraging children to think about sharing. Children behave very well and respond willingly to requests to stop their activities and be ready to listen. They are also encouraged to make independent choices, which they do confidently, and most remain focused on their chosen activity. Personal and social development is well promoted in all areas of learning and the well-established routines and caring nature of the provision allow all children to feel secure and to grow in confidence.

#### **Communication, Language and Literacy**

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

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

- Teaching and learning are good.
- Children's communication and language skills are well developed.

39. Most children make good progress in developing new skills. The teaching and curriculum for speaking, listening, reading and writing are good. Many children are confident speakers and these

skills are developed well, with many opportunities for them to talk. The children are encouraged to build on their good vocabulary by explaining their ideas both about stories and while at play. There was good teaching of phonics as the teacher used a variety of methods to help children learn and remember sounds. For instance, they drew the letter 'g' in sand and applied their knowledge of the sound to matching words. All children listen to stories with interest and attention and many know about books and how to use them. All children are encouraged to take books home to share with their parents and the teacher provides useful comments to help parents support their children. The sampling of work from children now in Year 1 showed good achievement, with a number of children successfully using their knowledge of letter sounds to write a simple sentence.

### **Mathematical development**

Provision in mathematical development is **satisfactory**.

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

- Adults question children well to support their learning.
- Children's good language skills mean that their use and understanding of mathematical vocabulary are good.

40. Teaching and learning are satisfactory. Children are encouraged to count by playing games and by singing a variety of number songs. They develop their ideas through practical experiences, such as building with bricks and using play materials to count out and add on one more. The direct teaching of mathematics, when working with children in small groups is often imaginative and takes full account of children's knowledge and understanding. Adults question the children while they are engaged in these activities, always trying to draw out and encourage mathematical understanding. Children showed that they were able to count and recognise numbers up to ten. Aspects of mathematics that demand the use of language, for example, describing quantity and position, are good.

### **Knowledge and Understanding of the World.**

Provision for developing children's knowledge and understanding of the world is **satisfactory**.

41. It was not possible to make an overall judgement of standards in this wide area of learning, but the planning and photographs seen of the children at work showed that they were given a suitable range of experiences to explore and observe real life. For example, children have had the opportunity to use the local park as part of their 'push and pull' science work and visit a farm where they were able to touch the pigs and horses. The construction work is purposeful and children use a variety of commercial kits and large building bricks to explore and create models. The outdoor area provides a stimulating environment that ensures the children's natural curiosity and enthusiasm are captured and enriched. They are using computers, but, in general, need help in using the machines purposefully as opposed to simply showing interest and exploring. Children's awareness of religious and cultural traditions is appropriately enhanced through special events such as the celebration of festivals. However, there are few resources that represent cultures other than their own.

### **PHYSICAL DEVELOPMENT**

Provision in physical development is **satisfactory**.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- The children can use the wheeled toys with increasing skill and control.
- Their fine control, such as holding pencils and scissors, is weaker.

42. Teaching and learning are satisfactory. However, children achieve well in developing physical control, mobility and awareness of space indoors and outdoors. Good learning in this aspect is particularly due to the wide range of physical activities provided for children to experience on a daily basis. As result, the children are reaching standards close to what is expected. Many children were seen to use the tricycles and scooters confidently to steer round a track. Although the designated outdoor area for children was used well during the time of the inspection, there is no covered area and this restricts its use when the weather is bad. In a lesson in the hall, children were seen to throw beanbags with increasing accuracy into a hoop. The teacher provides children with a suitable range of experiences to help develop their finer manipulative skills, such as completing jigsaws and cutting and sticking a variety of materials. Nevertheless, hand-eye co-ordination is sometimes weaker for a number of children, which affects their ability to use pencils and scissors.

### **Creative development**

Provision in creative development is **satisfactory**.

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

- The range of well-planned creative role-play activities provided that capture the imagination of all children.
- Access to a wide range of different media is limited.
- Insufficient time is given to intervention with children during the 'Child Initiated Activity' time.

43. Teaching and learning are satisfactory and children are reaching standards close to what is expected in terms of their creative role-play. The activities on offer allow children to explore and use their imagination to the full. For instance, when playing in the 'castle', children took on the roles of knights and princesses with great pleasure and enthusiasm. However, at times, such as the afternoon sessions of 'Child initiated activities', there was insufficient attention given to engaging the children in conversation and extending their thoughts and ideas. The evidence provided of children's art work was limited and showed few examples of their exploring colour or using a variety of materials in art. Children learn a wide range of songs by heart and particularly enjoy participating in action songs.

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

### **ENGLISH**

#### **English**

Provision in English is **satisfactory**.

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

- In Year 6, standards in English are above average and pupils are developing a good feel for language.
- Across the school, pupils are careful listeners and are confident and adventurous in speaking.
- Pupils read with confidence, fluency and accuracy.
- Older pupils are encouraged to experiment with words and text.
- At the top of the school, pupils have good research and referencing skills.
- Pupils are not encouraged enough to use their voices expressively in reading.
- They are reluctant to talk about books and the characters they encounter in their reading.
- Work is not always matched to pupils' abilities.
- Teachers do not make clear their expectations of pupils' work.
- Overuse of worksheets limits pupils' scope and imagination as writers.

### **Commentary**

44. Across the school, standards in speaking and listening are above average and pupils achieve well. Many younger pupils are confident, clear communicators who like giving their views in discussion and answer questions thoughtfully. However, some of them need more help from the teacher to develop simple and appropriate responses. In a Year 2 RE lesson, pupils listened closely to each other's ideas and were keen to suggest questions to ask the vicar on their forthcoming visit to the church. In Year 6, some pupils use language in a considered and balanced way, ask questions to develop ideas and make perceptive comments. A few find it harder to express clear opinions and elaborate on ideas. Pupils of all ages are accurate and responsive listeners which helps them to absorb new learning, apply it to their work and make best use of their time.
45. Reading skills are above average in Year 2 and Year 6 and pupils achieve well. Most younger pupils use their knowledge of sounds and word building techniques well and confidently tackle more difficult words. In Year 6, pupils read very competently and fluently and enjoy the twists and turns of the plot and the interplay of characters. They are beginning to identify features of style and to illustrate their views. Although teachers make good use of texts in the literacy hour to encourage pupils to extend their ideas about language and context, pupils are reluctant to talk about other stories they have enjoyed and to identify favourite books and characters. Pupils in Year 6 do not readily consider wider themes in their reading and predict how the story may develop. In general, teachers are aware of the importance of intonation and inflection in their reading to engage pupils' interest. However, they do not always insist that pupils should use their voices expressively to bring the text alive. As a result, pupils do not realise how their voices can convey emotion or build up a sense of drama. Older pupils are good at locating and using information from books and other sources.
46. In writing, standards are average in Year 2 and pupils achieve satisfactorily. In Year 6, pupils are reaching above average standards and are achieving well. Pupils in Year 2 are developing a sound awareness of the structure of a story and write simple instructions. Some fill their stories with lively images but others use simple words and phrases. They have a sound understanding of simple punctuation and spelling but some do not have control over the size and shape of letters. In Year 6, pupils make good use of the knowledge gained studying texts to improve their own work. They successfully adapt styles of writing and enjoy experimenting with language. This has resulted in inventive and thoughtful work such as their creative work based on Keats and Blake. Most have a good grasp of spelling, punctuation and grammar rules but their presentation is variable.
47. Overall, the quality of teaching and learning in English is satisfactory. It is good in Years 5 and 6. Teachers' calm and efficient management of pupils sets the tone well. They are also good at asking questions which make pupils think about what they are going to write and how to frame their ideas. In a Year 5 lesson, the teacher's perceptive questioning helped pupils to give thoughtful answers about the motives of characters in some well-known stories. Some teachers give pupils plenty of opportunities for exploring the richness of language and encourage them to be bold and innovative in their choice of words. In a Year 6 lesson, the teacher challenged his pupils to be creative in their use of vocabulary as they described the appearance of a skull. Teachers generally provide tasks for pupils of different abilities but they are not always sharply defined or imaginative enough to challenge pupils at their own level. Expectations of the quality or amount of work are not always made clear so that pupils are not sure what they are aiming for and important opportunities for learning are missed. Some teachers move the lesson along quickly but, in other classes, there is a lack of vitality so that pupils, who are usually keen and responsive, become too relaxed and their output is not good enough.
48. The leadership and management of the subject are satisfactory. The subject leader has a sound overview of the subject through classroom observations and looking at teachers' planning and pupils' books. Assessment is good but pupils' targets have been earmarked for development. The subject has made a good improvement since the last inspection as standards have risen in speaking and listening and reading. Judgements about teaching and learning are similar in both inspections with teaching and learning gathering momentum at the top of the school.

## Language and literacy across the curriculum

49. The development of language and literacy across the curriculum is satisfactory. For example, in PE pupils use log books to evaluate their performance and, in history, they research life as a Roman in their newspaper reports. However, there is a general over use of undemanding worksheets which do little to develop pupils' writing skills or broaden their experiences of the purposes of writing.

## MATHEMATICS

Provision in mathematics is **satisfactory**.

### Main strengths and weaknesses

- Standards are above average in Year 6 and average in Year 2.
- Teaching more effective at the top of the school.
- Lack of pace and challenge in lessons for pupils to achieve well in Years 1 to 4.
- Teachers' expectations for pupils to produce work of good quality are too low in Years 1 to 4.
- Worksheets are used too much in Years 1 and 2.
- In Years 1 and 2, the organisation of lessons leads to some slow pace.
- Except in Year 6, marking does not give enough guidance to pupils on how to improve their work.
- Good leadership, management and assessment procedures have made a positive contribution to the standards of work achieved by older pupils.

### Commentary

50. The overall provision for mathematics and numeracy is satisfactory, but good at the top of the school. Standards are above average in Year 6; this is directly related to the quality of teaching. In Year 6, pupils use a range of strategies to solve problems. Most of them use skills of mental computation well and apply their mathematical knowledge to new learning. For example, how to work out the mean and median in data handling. In Year 2, pupils readily talk about what they do. However, they find it difficult to explain the related mathematical principles. They know, for example, that objects can be measured, but do not understand the need for precision. Pupils' achievement, which takes account of their capabilities, is good in Year 5 and Year 6 and satisfactory in other classes.

51. The quality of teaching and learning is good in Year 5 and Year 6 and satisfactory in other classes. Teaching in Year 6 was effective because of the appropriateness of the strategies used, particularly questioning that challenged pupils to develop their understanding of important principles. Ideas were clearly presented by the teacher. Good use was also made of information and communication technology to present key ideas to pupils. A good pace was maintained so that pupils were consistently engaged in their work. Expectations of what pupils should achieve were high and they responded by making good gains in knowledge and understanding.

52. Teaching was less effective in lessons where the pace was too slow so that pupils adopted a relaxed rate of working. Also where teachers did not have high enough expectations for pupils to produce work of good quality, they did not know what was expected of them and were not challenged at their own level. The transition from one activity to another was not always well managed in some lessons and time was lost. In Years 1 and 2, there is too much reliance on worksheets. This inhibits the development of pupils' problem solving skills and their understanding of the need for precision in the layout of their work. Marking of pupils' work does not give them enough guidance about how to improve their work, except in Year 6.

53. Leadership, management and particularly the assessment of pupils' work, are good and make a significant contribution to the high standards that pupils achieve by Year 6. There has been satisfactory improvement since the previous inspection. No unsatisfactory teaching was seen and lesson planning has improved with the use of the national numeracy strategy. The monitoring of teaching and learning and the use of assessment have all been satisfactorily developed.

## Mathematics across the curriculum

54. This is **satisfactory**. Pupils have used grid references in geography, measured distances and quantities in science, and have used their knowledge of three-dimensional shapes in design and technology.

## SCIENCE

The overall provision in science is **satisfactory**.

### Main strengths and weaknesses

- The standards reached by pupils in Year 6 are above average.
- There are regular opportunities for pupils in Years 3 to 6 to investigate and experiment.
- In Year 6, the teaching of science is very good.
- Pupils enjoy science and behave very well in lessons.
- The standards of work indicated that few pupils in Year 2 are achieving above average standards in investigative science.
- Marking is inconsistent and does not set targets for improvement.
- The use of assessment information to plan pupils' work is weaker.

### Commentary

55. Standards in science in Year 2 are average. This judgement is similar to the findings of the school's last inspection. However, it is lower than the assessments made by teachers at the end of Year 2 in 2003 when standards were judged to be above average. The fall in standards is partly due to the changes in the nature of the school's intake. The satisfactory nature of teaching and learning is judged to be promoting satisfactory achievement in Years 1 and 2.

56. In Year 6, pupils' attainment is above average. This is similar to the judgements made at the time of the school's last inspection. The results of the 2003 tests showed the number of pupils gaining Level 5 and above had risen considerably since the previous year. This is consistent with the very good teaching seen in Year 6 where the high expectations of the teacher have a major impact on pupils' learning. As a result, pupils' achievement is good.

57. The evidence shows that the pupils are taught all elements of the subject as they move through the school. Pupils in Year 1 have a good knowledge of living things, which includes simple classification of animals and work on their senses. Many pupils are developing a scientific vocabulary to explain their work and, by Year 2, can describe the changes in materials. When, for instance, investigating the properties of clay and plasticine, they use their senses and make observations such as, 'the clay looks grey; it smells like seaweed and feels smooth'. However, most of the work set is at average levels, which does not promote high standards. This is particularly the case in investigative work. The evidence that pupils were encouraged to make suggestions or consider ways of improving their work was especially thin. This judgement is supported by the quality of the marking of pupils' work. This was largely praise and virtually never helped them to progress. There was no evidence that the pupils were helped to assess their own work or that they had been set targets for improvement.

58. Of the two lessons seen in Year 4 and Year 6, one was satisfactory and one was very good. The main differences were the very high standard of questioning which got the best out of the pupils and the teacher's enthusiastic approach that strongly influenced the pace of learning. The Year 6 teacher's brisk beginning to the lesson '*We're here to work!*' and lively presentation using information and communication technology to present information to the pupils was a key factor to learning in this lesson. The pupils provided knowledgeable answers to the questions posed by the teacher and described accurately the features of animals, which made them suited to their habitat. The previous work undertaken by the Year 6 pupils showed that they were able to use keys to identify unknown plants and animals. In the lesson where the teaching was satisfactory, pupils had the opportunity to

explore toy cars rolling down ramps and measure the distance they travelled. Although this captured the interest of the pupils, it was largely directed by the teacher and the explanations given to the pupils for recording their results were unclear. As a result, a number of pupils were unsure what was expected of them and they lost time in considering how to present their findings. The analysis of pupils' work in Year 5 showed that pupils had been given the opportunity to carry out a whole investigation to find out if soils have air trapped within them. This work made a good contribution to pupils' numeracy skills.

59. The leadership and management of the subject is satisfactory. The assessment procedures for science are good. Nevertheless, there are also important weaknesses including the use of assessment information in some classes to set work that meets the needs of all pupils.

## **INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY**

Provision in ICT is **good**

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- Achievement is good in Year 6 and satisfactory overall in Years 3 to 6. Insufficient evidence to make a judgement in Years 1 and 2.
- Keyboard and typing skills are underdeveloped.
- Use of information and communication technology in other subjects is developing well.
- Leadership and management are good.

### **Commentary**

60. In Year 6, pupils know how to load, save and develop their work by combining sound, images and text. They have access to the Internet for research and a satisfactory understanding of the use of information and communication technology in the wider world. There was insufficient evidence to make a judgement about teaching and the standards reached by pupils in Year 2. This was because the amount of work produced so far was mostly limited to word-processing. Pupils' standards in Year 6 are broadly comparable to that of other pupils of the same age.

61. Teaching is good in Year 6. Clear instruction, sustained pace and appropriate challenge, all contribute to pupils' desire to learn and to apply their computer skills and knowledge. In the lesson seen, they worked with good concentration to create a 'Power Point' presentation for their work in science. However, the rate of progress was limited because of their underdeveloped keyboard and typing skills. Throughout the school, typing skills are a weaker aspect of pupils' work.

62. Leadership and management are good. This is because the coordinator has a clear and extended plan for the development of the subject. Although the ratio of computers to pupils is close to the national average, it is not always possible for a whole class to work on the equipment without some pupils having to share.

63. There has been satisfactory improvement since the previous inspection. Resources have been improved. They are increasingly used for teaching, for example, interactive whiteboards and data projectors. Thorough assessment procedures, developed by the coordinator, are ready to be trialled in the near future.

### **The use of information and communication technology across the curriculum.**

64. This is **satisfactory**. Pupils produce bar charts in mathematics, use paint programs in art and word-process text in literacy. In science, for example, they create captioned pictures explaining the adaptation of animals to their environment.

## **HUMANITIES**

65. No **geography** lessons were seen. Discussions with pupils in Year 2 showed that they had gained sufficient knowledge and understanding of the subject to talk about the village of Burham and surrounding villages and compare their lives with that of living in a town or city. The work on display completed by pupils in Year 1 show they are learning about their immediate locality and have established an understanding of where they live and that their address is specific to them. The work of pupils in Year 5 showed satisfactory achievement in their study of water as they use maps and atlases to locate the presence of water in their own locality and around the world. By Year 6, pupils acquire a suitable knowledge of rivers and learn to use technical vocabulary such as source, tributary and estuary accurately, and they understand the water cycle. They have gained sufficient geographical skills to use an atlas and provide a four-figure grid reference to identify a location on a map.

### **History**

Provision in history is **satisfactory**

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

- Good use made of visits to museums and places of historical interest.
- The work provided interests the pupils.
- Good links made with other subjects of the curriculum.
- An over reliance on worksheets for pupils to record their work.
- Marking does not explain how pupils can improve their work.

### **Commentary**

66. By Year 2 and Year 6, pupils' attainment is average. No history lessons were seen in Years 1 and 2, but evidence from a limited sample of pupils' recorded work, teachers' planning and discussions indicates that pupils are able to compare their own experiences with objects and events from the past. They understand and use everyday terms indicating the passage of time, such as 'a long time ago' and find out about the past from a range of sources, such as pictures, postcards and from their parents. By using pictures of seaside holidays from the past to build a simple timeline, they understand the chronology of events. However, the pupils' abilities to use their writing skills are restricted by the over use of mundane worksheets. Pupils in Year 6 demonstrate an increasing depth of knowledge of the Victorian period and a good understanding of the working life of Victorian children. Standards are similar to the previous report and improvement since then is satisfactory.

67. The analysis of work showed that pupils make satisfactory progress. They build appropriately on previous knowledge and understanding of events and changes in the past as they move through the school and are achieving as well as expected.

68. Pupils in Year 3/ 4 have a secure knowledge and understanding of the Roman Conquest. They consider what it was like to be a legionary in the Roman army and use books and material from the Internet to aid their understanding. The visit of a 'Roman soldier' to their class brought history alive, as pupils had the opportunity to become involved in role-play and experience what life was like at the time of the Romans. In Year 5, pupils show an increasing depth of knowledge about the Ancient Greeks. They place events in chronological order against a timeline and learn about what was special about life as an Athenian and how it was different from that of a Spartan. By studying an account of the Battle of Marathon, pupils begin to understand that there are different views of the past and make up their own mind as to which parts of the story are most likely to be true.

69. From samples of pupils' work and in the lessons observed, teaching and learning are satisfactory overall. Teachers make good links with other subjects and, in general, pupils' work is linked closely to literacy. For example, after the visit of the 'Roman soldier', pupils in Year 3/4 produced their own Roman newspaper and designed and made Roman tunics to fit a doll. In Year 6, pupils worked on writing a narrative account of what it felt like being a poor working child in the Victorian period and began to put this into some kind of context by comparing it to their own lives. However, some of pupils' past work showed that at times teachers rely too much on worksheets, which restricts pupils' ability to interpret historical evidence for themselves. Many pupils are confident in applying their knowledge and skills of information and communication technology to their research work in history. The analysis of pupils' work however, showed that teachers' marking was inconsistent and, in general, unhelpful in terms of assisting the pupils to do better.

70. In a lesson observed in Year 6, teaching was good and enabled pupils to learn effectively. The teacher's effective questioning techniques encouraged pupils to reason things out for themselves. The productive use of time and enthusiasm for the subject successfully captured the imagination of the pupils and had a major effect on the pupils' achievements. In this lesson and in the evidence available, pupils' understanding of social and cultural differences is suitably developed through their history work.

71. The school uses the nationally recommended guidelines with planned links to other areas of the curriculum. Visits to places of historical interest, such as Dover Castle, Rochester Museum and the Roman Villa at Penshurst, enrich the curriculum. Leadership and management of the subject are satisfactory. Despite the co-ordinator having other areas to manage, teachers' planning and pupils' work are monitored. There have, however, been no opportunities for classroom observations.

## **Religious education**

Provision in RE is **satisfactory**.

## **Strengths and weaknesses**

- Pupils have thoughtful views about religious issues
- Teachers provide plenty of opportunities for pupils to ask important questions.
- Artefacts broaden pupils' range of experience effectively.
- Pupils appreciate the significance of religious books to believers.
- Lack of challenge for more able pupils.
- Overuse of undemanding worksheets.

## **Commentary**

72. Pupils' attainment in the subject is average in Year 2 and Year 6 and meets the requirements of the locally agreed syllabus. Across the school, achievement is satisfactory. Many of the findings of the inspection reflect those of the previous one so improvement is, therefore, satisfactory.

73. The overall quality of teaching and learning in the three lessons seen was satisfactory. These observations, looking at pupils' books and talking with them showed that pupils have a satisfactory understanding of the basic concepts of world religions such as Judaism, Christianity, Islam and Sikhism. Most teachers have sound confidence and expertise in teaching the subject and encourage pupils to think how the values, beliefs and stories of these religions can relate to their own lives. Teachers also keep a good balance between imparting knowledge and providing opportunities for pupils to ask important questions. In Year 6, groups of pupils have devised their own questions about Jewish traditions and Year 2 pupils preparing for a visit to a church asked questions like 'How did Jesus live?' 'How do you pray?'

74. By their calm, sensitive approach, teachers create a quiet, focused atmosphere where pupils can explore their responses and develop new thoughts and ideas. In a Year 3/4 lesson, pupils

discussed the significance of the festival of Baisakhi and made up questions to ask their Sikh visitor from the gurdwara. Pupils are also beginning to understand how religious books can be a source of inspiration and learning for believers. Year 2 pupils look at the Bible, Year 3 pupils study the Torah and Year 5 pupils read stories from the Qur'an and talk about the messages given to Muslims in this way. Teachers' imaginative use of artefacts also enables pupils to understand how symbolism expresses religious meaning. Year 3/4 pupils were able to appreciate the significance of the 5Ks to Sikhs, Year 3 have made mezuzahs and a rich display of Muslim artefacts in Year 5 reinforces teaching well. There is a degree of challenge in teachers' perceptive questioning but they do not always make enough demands on more able pupils in their written work to enable them to think more deeply about the subject. There are also too many worksheets which require predictable answers, limit pupils' thinking and result in superficial coverage of the topic.

75. The subject is satisfactorily led and managed. The leader checks planning, looks at books and carries out classroom observations once a year.

## **CREATIVE, AESTHETIC, PRACTICAL AND PHYSICAL SUBJECTS**

Only one lesson was seen in design and technology in Years 3 to 6. There was not enough pupils' work available to make a judgement about standards in Years 1 and 2. Two lessons of music were observed, assemblies attended and discussions held with pupils. Two lessons of art were seen and sketchbooks and displays scrutinised. Two physical education lessons were seen, but none in Year 2 or Year 6. Inspectors held discussions with teachers, examined planning, talked to pupils about their work and looked at what they had previously done.

### **Art and Design.**

Provision in art is **satisfactory**.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- Pupils enjoy art.
- Standards in Year 2 are too low.
- Good teaching in Year 6.
- There are not enough opportunities for pupils to experience a wide range of artists' work from different cultures.

### **Commentary.**

76. Pupils' attainment is below average in Year 2. Achievement is unsatisfactory. By Year 6, however, their attainment is broadly average and pupils' achievement is satisfactory. The previous inspection found that standards of attainment were unsatisfactory across the school and that pupils did not make adequate progress in the subject over time. There has, therefore, been a satisfactory improvement since the last inspection because of the improved standards in Year 6. Pupils make a sound start in Year 1 and explore line drawings and use pencils to produce self-portraits from memory and observation. Satisfactory teaching in the Year 2 lesson observed helped pupils to develop their imaginative ideas by exploring ways of creating a simple picture around an image provided by the teacher. However, although they enjoyed their work, the pupils' skills in sketching were insufficiently developed and much of their work was fairly basic and lacked individual flair and imagination. In this lesson, there was very little discussion with pupils on how to improve their sketching skills. However, the work in their sketchbooks, showed that they do have the opportunity to practise and refine their skills. Completed work showed that pupils had been taught the basic skills in painting, printing and clay work.

77. By Year 6, standards are average and achievement is satisfactory. Pupils' skills in sketching have developed, so that they are beginning to draw more complex shapes, such as chairs and figures. They begin to show action in their work having studied pictures of athletes, sports

personalities, musicians and dancers. The silhouettes produced by pupils link well with this work and show effective multiple copies of the figures in action. In Year 5, pupils work with a variety of media, such as pastels, paints and charcoal to create effective 'still life' pictures of fruit based on the work of Cezanne. This represents an improvement on the judgements made in the school's report, when the work produced by pupils was said to be not of a high enough quality.

78. The quality of teaching and learning is satisfactory. Where teaching was seen to be good in Year 6, the pupils made good progress in their sketching skills and learned how to organise their ideas about movement in human figures. The teacher used a range of skilful techniques to challenge the pupils. As a result of the activities being timed, the pupils quickly became completely engrossed in their work and, by the end of the lesson, were amazed and pleased with the improvements they had made to their sketches.

79. Although pupils' creativity is appropriately developed through using pastels and paint, there was less evidence of their working with a wider variety of materials, such as textiles and three-dimensional artwork. Overall, pupils have insufficient opportunities to learn about the work of artists from cultures other than European. The use of information and communication technology in art and design is satisfactory, with pupils in Year 5 producing some effective colourful shape pictures based on their original designs made by overlapping tissue paper shapes.

80. Leadership and management in the subject are satisfactory. The coordinator has provided each teacher with an 'art box' of materials to help support the teaching of art and design. However, there is still a recognised need to improve shortcomings in some of the teachers' subject knowledge. An 'Arts Week' has gone a long way in helping to raise the profile of art in the school.

## **Design and technology**

Provision in design and technology is **satisfactory**.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- Good teaching in Year 6.
- Analysis of pupils' work indicates design aspects underdeveloped.
- Limited amount of work in most classes.

### **Commentary**

81. Standards in Year 6 are broadly average. In the lesson seen, pupils worked with a variety of materials and investigated different ways of joining them to produce frames for a shelter. They worked with a satisfactory level of accuracy and care. No judgement is made about standards in Year 2 because no teaching was seen neither was there enough work available. Pupils' achievement in Year 6 is broadly comparable to those of the same age.

82. Teaching and learning in Year 6 are good. In the lesson seen, the teaching was imaginative. It captured pupils' interest and motivated them to try various ways of making frames for their shelters. Although pupils' skills were limited because of the lack of specific instruction in earlier years, they worked hard to achieve the learning objectives. The teacher expected good results and the pupils responded well to this challenge. No teaching was seen in Year 2. Pupils' skills in design are underdeveloped. This is mainly because they have not been systematically taught the specific skills necessary and teachers generally do not demand high quality presentation and accuracy. The amount of work produced by pupils throughout the school was very limited and less than might be expected at this stage of the school year.

83. Leadership and management are satisfactory. A stated priority is to improve the quality and appearance of pupils' work. However, the coordinator has a significant number of other responsibilities and has little release time to monitor either teaching or pupils' work.

84. There has been satisfactory improvement since the previous inspection when it was stated that pupils' work was not always of the highest quality.

## Music

Provision in music is **unsatisfactory**.

### Main strengths and weaknesses

- Pupils enjoy playing musical instruments.
- Standards are below average across the school.
- Insufficient improvement since the last inspection.
- Teachers lack confidence in teaching the subject.
- There is little recorded work.
- Leadership and management of the subject are unsatisfactory.
- Pupils do not always control instruments correctly.
- Pupils are not encouraged enough to evaluate and improve their performance.

### Commentary

85. In both Year 2 and Year 6, standards in music are below average and pupils' achievement is unsatisfactory. This represents an unsatisfactory improvement since the previous inspection when standards were mainly unsatisfactory with pupils making little real progress in their musical understanding.

86. In the two lessons seen during the inspection, the quality of teaching and learning was satisfactory. However, teaching and learning are unsatisfactory over time. There is no music specialist and teachers are responsible for teaching music to their class. The existing scheme of work *Music Express* provides teachers with support to develop pupils' musical skills in a structured way as they move through the school. Across the school, there is no recorded work so that pupils do not satisfactorily develop their understanding of graphic or formal notation or musical vocabulary. They do not have enough knowledge of music from other cultures.

87. Teachers lack the confidence and expertise to teach the subject at the required depth or to make the most of opportunities to develop musical ideas. As a result, pupils do not have the confidence or musical language to talk about their own likes or dislikes. Singing in assemblies is tuneful but it lacks enthusiasm and conviction. Teachers do not always emphasise that pupils should listen carefully and use instruments with proper control. In both the lessons seen, some pupils were not playing instruments correctly and noise levels rose unchecked. In the Year 3/4 class, in good links with literacy, pupils were composing their sound poem 'Noises of the World' and had some imaginative ideas for making sounds like tractors and clocks ticking with percussion instruments. However, they were not encouraged to record and evaluate their work so that they could improve it. In Year 1, pupils enjoyed exploring and controlling instruments and could stop and start playing in response to the teacher's traffic lights system. However, the pace of the lesson flagged as the organisation became over complicated.

88. The leadership and management of the subject are unsatisfactory because of the lack of improvement in the subject over a long period. Further staff training has been arranged. Planning is looked at but there are no classroom observations. There is no whole school format to check the development of individual skills in music. There are plans to extend pupils' musical activities such as a choir and pupils have taken part in Christmas productions and the Medway Music festival.

## Physical education

Provision in physical education is **satisfactory**.

## **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- No opportunities to evaluate own or others' performance
- Teaching is satisfactory, but with some weaknesses.
- Long hair not always safely dealt with.
- Pupils' logbooks are a useful enhancement to learning.

## **Commentary**

89. In the two lessons seen, pupils reached average standards and achievement was satisfactory. In a Year 1 gymnastics lesson, pupils explored simple skills, began to show a satisfactory level of coordination and linked their movements together in sequences. In Year 3/4, they showed some basic understanding of game tactics and had appropriate coordination and control. However, in both lessons seen, they had no opportunities to talk about the effects of exercise on their bodies or evaluate their own performance and that of classmates.

90. In a Year 1 lesson, most pupils made satisfactory progress. They understood what to do, but the teacher did not challenge them enough to improve upon their performance. At times, they were noisy and did not listen well. However, they clearly enjoyed the planned activities. The Year 3/4 lesson had an appropriate content, but the pace was too slow. Therefore, pupils did not always engage with enough rigorous physical effort. This was partly because too long was spent explaining what they were to do and not enough time was given for them to do it.

91. Leadership and management are satisfactory. The coordinator has a number of other roles and has too little time to devote to the subject, although some progress has been made in its development. Priorities have been identified, for example, to widen pupils' skills. In the lessons seen, the long hair of some pupils was not always secured to ensure their safety. Pupils in Years 3 to 6 have physical education logbooks. These are particularly useful because they help them to identify what they are to learn and attempt some basic evaluation of their achievement. There has been a satisfactory improvement since the previous inspection, particularly with the use of the logbooks for pupils' self-evaluation.

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

Two lessons of personal, social and health education were seen during the inspection and the written work available was analysed.

### **Personal, social and health education**

Provision in personal, social and health education is **satisfactory**.

### **Commentary**

92. The subject was only recently introduced to the school in its own right. Nevertheless, the school has suitable planning for all aspects of the personal, social, health education and citizenship to be taught discretely and within other subjects, such as science, geography and religious education. In the lessons observed, in Years 1 and 2, teaching, learning and achievement were satisfactory. The pupils considered their own and others' feelings and discussed what they were good at. Pupils in Year 2 also considered how they could improve on something they thought they were not so good at. For example, one pupil considered that by not watching so much television he would be better at tidying up. Links with literacy are established in Year 5, as the pupils considered what they would do and how they would feel if they witnessed different situations, such as an elderly man being attacked or someone begging for money.

93. The success of the school's personal, social and health education programme is demonstrated by the pupils' reaction to its teaching. This is reflected in the very good attitudes and relationships evident in the school. Nevertheless, the provision is to be further improved. To achieve this improvement, the school's arrangements for "circle time", where pupils discuss matters of interest to them, are to be developed further.

## PART D: SUMMARY OF THE MAIN INSPECTION JUDGEMENTS

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

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