

INSPECTION REPORT

FAWKHAM CE VC PRIMARY SCHOOL

Fawkham, Kent

LEA area: Kent

Unique reference number: 118592

Headteacher: Mr Paul Sparkes

Lead inspector: Mrs June Punnett

Dates of inspection: 21 – 22 June 2004

Inspection number: 256107

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:	103
School address:	Valley Road Fawkham Longfield Kent
Postcode:	DA3 8NA
Telephone number:	01474 702312
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Appropriate authority:	The governing body
Name of chair of governors:	Wendy Stiddard
Date of previous inspection:	14 September 1998

CHARACTERISTICS OF THE SCHOOL

Fawkham CE VC Primary School is a smaller than average community school with 103 pupils on roll. Children come from mainly White British backgrounds. There are no pupils who speak English as an additional language. The social and economic circumstances of families that attend the school are similar to those found nationally. The number of pupils who are eligible for free school meals is below average, and the proportion who have special educational needs is above average. These needs range from specific learning difficulties to more complex language needs. When they entered the school, the current Reception children had skills and knowledge that were above average. However, this profile does vary from year to year. The school has Beacon status and has achieved the Investor in People award.

INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Members of the inspection team			Subject responsibilities
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PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

OVERALL EVALUATION

This is an effective school with many strengths. The school provides good value for money. Pupils achieve well because the quality of teaching is good, and the school benefits from good leadership and management. Standards by the end of Year 2 are average in reading, writing, mathematics, science and ICT. By the end of Year 6 standards are average in English, mathematics and ICT, and above average in science. The quality of teaching is good overall.

The school's main strengths and weaknesses:

- Pupils' very good attitudes to work and the quality of relationships within the school promote a good atmosphere in which to learn.
- Standards in writing are not as high as those in reading.
- The use of information and communication technology needs to be developed further in some subjects.
- The headteacher and governors lead the school well.
- Marking does not always tell pupils how to improve their work.
- The school takes very good care of the children.
- The school has very good links with other schools and the community.
- The school's provision for pupils' spiritual, social and moral education is very good.

The school has made good improvements since the last inspection in September 1998. There has been significant improvement in the provision for children in the Reception class. The quality of information provided for parents is better, and school reports give clearer indications of where pupils have strengths and weaknesses in their learning.

STANDARDS ACHIEVED

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

Key: A - well above average; B - above average; C - average; D - below average; E - well below average. E - very low. Similar schools are those with similar percentages of pupils eligible for free school meals*

Pupils' achievements are good. When they joined the school, children in the present Reception class had skills and knowledge above those expected for their age, but this profile varies considerably from year to year. Children make good progress, and achieve well in the Reception class because the teaching is consistently good. By the time they join Year 1, a good proportion of the children are on course to exceed the expected standards in most areas of their learning. Pupils' achievements are satisfactory in Years 1 and 2, and standards judged during the inspection showed average attainment in reading, writing, mathematics and science. In the 2003 national tests, the previous cohort of pupils attained well above average standards in reading and writing, and above-average standards in mathematics. The teacher's assessment of science showed that the percentage of pupils reaching Level 2 or above was very high. In Year 6, in English and mathematics, standards seen in the inspection were average, but those in science were above average. The previous cohort of pupils in the 2003 national tests, attained well below average standards, when compared with all schools. The marked difference between the 2003 test results and standards in the current Year 6 show how a small cohort of pupils can impact on final results in national tests. Literacy and numeracy skills are satisfactorily used across the curriculum. Good

support for pupils who have special educational needs enables them to do as well as other pupils. Pupils use computers satisfactorily and their skills are average by the end of Year 6.

Pupils' personal qualities are developed well and are good overall. Pupils have very positive attitudes to learning and their behaviour is good. Attendance is satisfactory in relation to the national picture. Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is very good overall, and this has a positive impact on their learning.

QUALITY OF EDUCATION

The quality of education provided by the school is good. The quality of teaching is good overall and promotes pupils' learning well. The quality of teaching is satisfactory overall in Years 1 and 2. Examples of very good teaching were seen in Years 3 to 6. The curriculum provides well for pupils' needs and meets all statutory requirements. There is a good range of extra-curricular activities, which contribute to pupils' development. The school cares for its pupils very well. Satisfactory procedures are in place to assess pupils' progress in all subjects. There are effective procedures in place for promoting good behaviour and ensuring pupils' welfare. Teaching assistants make a strong contribution to the quality of teaching and learning in the school. The school's partnership with parents is good. The links with other schools and the local community are very good.

LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

The quality of leadership and management is good. The leadership of the headteacher is good, as is the management of the school. Governors have a good grasp of their responsibilities. They are supportive of the school. All statutory requirements are met. Ambitious targets for improvement are set by the school. The monitoring of the quality of teaching and learning is well organised and is having a positive impact on supporting teachers' professional development and raising standards.

PARENTS' AND PUPILS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

Relationships between the school and parents are good. Parents are very positive, and made no significant criticisms of the school. Pupils talked positively about the school to inspectors and clearly enjoy being there.

IMPROVEMENTS NEEDED

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

- *Raise standards in writing to match those of reading.
- Ensure consistency in marking in all subjects.
- *Develop the use of ICT across the curriculum.

*The school is already acting on these issues.

PART B: COMMENTARY ON THE INSPECTION FINDINGS

STANDARDS ACHIEVED BY PUPILS

Standards achieved in areas of learning, subjects and courses

Pupils' achievement is good. By the end of Year 6, the current inspection showed that standards in English are average; pupils make good progress in their learning from a low starting point. In mathematics, standards are average this year. In science, standards are above average. In information and communication technology (ICT) standards are average. No secure judgements could be made about standards in other subjects. There are variations in standards from year to year, depending on pupils' attainment when they join the school, and the proportion of children in each year group with special educational needs. With a small cohort, these factors can have a dramatic impact on national test scores.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Pupils achieve well in English, mathematics and science in relation to their prior attainment.
- Pupils who have special educational needs achieve well.
- Pupils attain above average standards in science.

Commentary

1. Current standards in subjects inspected are not as high as those found in the last inspection. The small cohort of pupils causes many variations in outcomes in national tests, so care should be taken when making comparisons. When compared to all schools, standards achieved in the end of Year 6 2003 national tests in English, mathematics and science were well below average. When compared with similar schools results were in the lowest five per cent of all such schools in the country. However, in last year's group of pupils 43 per cent had special educational needs. Standards seen in English and mathematics during this inspection were average, and those in science above average. In reading at the end of Year 2, standards in the 2003 national tests when compared with all and similar schools were very high, and in writing well above average. In mathematics, standards in the national tests showed above average attainment when compared with all schools, and below average attainment when compared with similar schools. Teachers assessed science as being above average. This inspection showed average standards in reading, writing, mathematics and science in the current Year 2 class.

Standards in national tests at the end of Year 2- average points scores in 2003

Standards in:	School results	National results
Reading	18.7 (17.9)	15.7 (15.8)
Writing	16.7 (15.3)	14.6 (14.4)
Mathematics	16.9 (18.5)	16.3 (16.5)

There were 14 pupils in the year group. Figures in brackets are for the previous year.

Standards in national tests at the end of Year 6 - average points scores in 2003

Standards in:	School results	National results
English	24.4 (27.5)	26.8 (27.0)
Mathematics	23.6 (28.1)	26.8 (26.7)
Science	26.1 (28.6)	28.6 (28.3)

There were 14 pupils in the year group. Figures in brackets are for the previous year.

2. The trend in improvement of the school's National Curriculum test results for all core subjects is above the national trend in Years 1 and 2, and below the national trend in Years 3 to 6. This reflects the differently composed cohorts of pupils as they move through the school. By the end of Year 6, when compared with similar schools, the standards achieved in 2003 were in the bottom five per cent of all schools in the country. However, this is attributable to the size of the cohort, just 14 pupils, and the fact that 43 per cent of them had special educational needs.
3. When children joined the Reception class in September 2003 they had above average skills, but there are significant variations each year. As a result of good teaching, most children reach the standards expected for five-year-olds, and many exceed these expectations. This represents good achievement.
4. Higher-attaining pupils achieve well as a result of the good start they receive to their education in the Reception class. Those who are capable of attaining the higher levels in the national tests do so. Pupils in Year 2 and 6 attain average standards in ICT. In art and design, design and technology, history, geography, music, religious education and physical education there is insufficient evidence to make judgements about standards. In literacy and numeracy, pupils make good progress, as evidenced in the end of Year 2 and Year 6 national test results. There are no significant differences between the attainment of girls and boys.
5. Pupils with special educational needs make good progress, particularly in literacy, and achieve well. Pupils receive good support within their classrooms and this promotes their achievement.
6. The school's current targets are ambitious for both English and mathematics, and it is unlikely that the current cohort of Year 6 pupils will meet these targets.

Pupils' attitudes, values and other personal qualities

An ethos of mutual trust and respect underpins the development of very positive attitudes to learning. Pupils like to go to school and enjoy their time spent there. The behaviour of pupils in and around the school is good. Their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is very good overall.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The ethos of care, trust and respect underpins positive attitudes to learning.
- Pupils are confident and acquire very good social skills.
- Provision for pupils' spiritual, moral and social development is very good and underpins relationships within the school.
- Aspects of pupils' multi-cultural education, is a developing area.

Commentary

7. Pupils' attitudes regarding every aspect of their school life are very good. They show thoughtfulness and care towards each other. They respond well to staff expectations as to how they should behave. Consequently behaviour is generally good and any occasional lapses or challenges are well managed by the staff with a minimum of fuss; pupils clearly respect this. There have been no exclusions.
8. Most pupils are attentive during lessons. They behave well, obeying simple yet clear rules based on courtesy and respect. Pupils are very confident and outgoing; they are proud of their school and are eager to demonstrate this. Visitors receive a warm welcome into the school community and pupils like to engage them in thoughtful, refreshingly enquiring conversation. Pupils are ready to take on responsibilities, which they carry out with pleasure and care.

9. Pupils are encouraged to work and play together in pairs and groups and, as a consequence, develop the skills necessary to build constructive relationships with others. Older pupils learn how to take responsibility for younger children; both in looking after, and safely guiding them around the school. Pupils with special educational needs show very good attitudes to their work. Even those pupils who have behavioural difficulties settle quickly and pay attention for considerable periods of time. They take pride in their work and present it well
10. There is a highly effective and valued reward system in place in which the headteacher and all staff are fully engaged. Every kind of achievement and thoughtful act is recognised within the school community. There is a 'Sharing Assembly' every Thursday which parent governors attend. Recognition of exceptional behaviour or kindness is celebrated with the presentation of a 'Fawkham Behaviour Award' and there is also a separate Fawkham Achievement Award for other special successes. The school's values are appreciated and fully supported by parents.
11. As a result of the school's very good provision for their spiritual, moral and social development, pupils grow in confidence and maturity. Spiritual development is relevant and absorbing for pupils. Assemblies are interactive; there are weekly visits from the rector and church readers, including the chair of governors. They involve children in stories illustrating a range of moral and ethical issues focused upon their daily lives such as friendship, caring for others and standing up for beliefs. They include periods of reflection accompanied by music and prayer.
12. Socially, pupils are mature for their age as the school encourages them to take responsibility for the younger pupils; for example, escorting the Reception children into assembly. The residential visit for all Years enhances social, academic and physical development.
13. Pupils' cultural development is satisfactory. There are some opportunities for pupils to develop an understanding of living in a multi-cultural society, but they are not yet fully developed. There have been some interesting past visits by ethnic dance and drama groups. By studying artists from western and other cultures, pupils learn to appreciate a range of artistic styles. Displays of artwork around the school help to raise pupils' awareness; as has their work on the new fresco at Rochester Cathedral.
14. Pupils of all social and ability backgrounds are well integrated into the life of the school and achieve equally well. Staff give consistent messages about the school's behaviour and work expectations. Staff treat, and value, pupils as individuals. The behaviour management systems are based on positive reinforcement of good behaviour, and they work well.
15. Attendance is satisfactory; in a small school of 103 pupils long-term absence such as extended sickness (as in the case of two children) has a disproportionate impact on the school's record of attendance. The vast majority of pupils attend regularly. Pupils are punctual to school and quickly settle to work on arrival. The school monitors attendance conscientiously and does all it can to discourage parents from taking their children on holiday during term time.

Attendance in the latest complete reporting year (%)

Authorised absence	
School data	5.6
National data	5.4

Unauthorised absence	
School data	0.0
National data	0.4

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

QUALITY OF EDUCATION PROVIDED BY THE SCHOOL

The quality of education provided by the school is good. The curriculum is well planned and provides a good range of experiences in lessons. Opportunities outside school hours are good. Pupils who have special educational needs are supported well and make good progress. Pupils are cared for very well and the school has good partnerships with parents, and very good partnerships with other

schools and the local community. The accommodation is good overall with imaginatively designed and well-maintained grounds that enhance all curriculum areas. Resources are good in most subjects and this supports teaching and learning effectively. In ICT, limited resources are available to teach the control aspect of the subject.

Teaching and learning

The overall quality of teaching and learning is good. Lessons are planned carefully, especially in literacy and numeracy. The school's assessment procedures are satisfactory in all subjects.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Teachers manage pupils' learning well, encouraging and engaging them.
- The teaching of English and mathematics is good overall.
- Assessment procedures are well used in the Reception class and in Years 3 to 6 in English and mathematics, and helps pupils to achieve well.

Summary of teaching observed during the inspection in 18 lessons

Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
0	3	8	7	0	0	0

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

Commentary

16. Teaching and learning are good overall. The teaching judgement takes full account of the analysis of pupils' work as well as the lessons observed. The best lessons had good features such as effective relationships in the classroom, pace, behaviour management and teachers' subject knowledge. Examples of very good teaching were seen in Years 3 to 6. For example, in a Year 5/6 literacy lesson when considering persuasive writing, the teacher shared the learning objectives well before using skilled questioning to promote thinking. Activities were well differentiated to meet the needs of all pupils and this resulted in all pupils achieving very well and making very good progress in their learning. Higher-attaining pupils worked independently, but made valuable contributions to the class discussions. Satisfactory lessons are characterised by the emphasis on worksheets, as seen in a Years 1 and 2 science lesson, and the lack of clearly defined activities to meet the needs of pupils of all abilities. Overall, the quality of marking in Years 1 and 2 occasionally limits pupils' progress, because it provides pupils with insufficient feedback about how they can improve their work. The quality of teaching and learning has improved in the Reception class since the last inspection, and is now consistently good.
17. The teaching of English and mathematics is good overall. The teaching of literacy and numeracy is good in all classes. Overall, teachers have a good knowledge of the subjects they teach and use this well to extend the learning of pupils. Staff effectively build pupils' self-esteem so that they feel confident. Most pupils try hard with their work and this helps them to be successful in their learning.
18. The quality of pupils' learning and progress reflects the quality of teaching and is good overall across the school. Strengths in learning include the enthusiasm with which children apply themselves to tasks for example, when the Reception class attempted independent writing and became 'bug detectives', using their magnifying glasses to search for insects. Pupils' behaviour is well managed in the majority of lessons, so they have the opportunity to listen and learn.

19. Homework is used well to support pupils' learning and to improve their work. The planning and monitoring of pupils' performance, particularly in the main core subjects, support continuing progress. There are systems in place to transfer information from such monitoring to form the school improvement plan. The use of assessment in English and mathematics helps pupils to reach their potential because it enables teachers to know exactly what pupils can already do, and so set appropriately challenging work. In the most successful lessons, planning takes full account of the varying needs of all pupils, the pace of the lessons is brisk and there is a 'busy buzz' of intellectual activity. Teaching assistants make a good contribution to the quality of learning. Pupils with special educational needs are taught well and receive sensitive support from their classroom assistants and teachers.
20. The quality of tracking pupils' progress across the school is sound, with some opportunities provided for pupils to evaluate their own progress when reviewing work at the end of lessons. However, teachers' comments in their books do not give pupils consistently clear messages about what they need to do in order to improve their work.
21. Teaching in the Reception class is good overall. Teachers' knowledge and understanding of the Foundation Stage curriculum and how children learn are good. Children's learning reflects the teaching. There is a good balance between directed and self-chosen activities, and between structured and free play. The early stages of literacy and numeracy are well taught, and suitable for children's age. They make good progress because of the consistently good quality of teaching, good lesson planning, assessment and record keeping.
22. Good support is provided to pupils with special educational needs, by a valuable team of teaching assistants. Teaching assistants work closely with the class teachers to provide focused and targeted support. Good practice was seen, where teaching assistants give pupils opportunities to extend their thinking. Targets in individual education plans are used well in individual and small group activities, but are less evident in whole-class teaching.
23. The overall improvement since the last inspection is good. The quality of teaching is more consistently good than at the time of the last inspection.

The curriculum

The curriculum is good and is relevant to the ages and interests of pupils, with an appropriate range of subjects that meet statutory requirements.

Strengths and weaknesses

- The curriculum is both broad and balanced and is planned to promote pupils' continuing progress.
- The curriculum is continually developed to keep abreast of new ideas for facilitating learning.
- Environmental studies in science are very strong.
- There is good provision for English and mathematics.

Commentary

24. Curricular provision is good overall, and the school provides a broad and balanced curriculum which meets statutory requirements in all the subjects of the National Curriculum and in religious education. Weekly teaching time is satisfactory. Provision, co-ordination and monitoring are particularly strong in the main core subjects of English and mathematics, while in science the use made of the environment for study is a strength. The school provides well for equality of access and opportunity for all pupils, and provision for personal, social and health education, including sex and relationships education and education about the misuse of drugs, is good. The influences from this part of the curriculum form an essential part of the school's very positive ethos, which pervades the school and relationships within it.
25. Provision for special educational needs is good. The requirements of the Code of Practice are met. All pupils have full access to the curriculum and are well integrated and included in school life. The curriculum is differentiated to meet individual needs; this enables all pupils to make good progress. However, the literacy targets in the individual education plans are not always incorporated into teaching across the curriculum.
26. Good cross-curricular integration of subjects is developing well and, on occasions, topic days or themed weeks, such as book week, add to this enrichment. The curriculum is additionally enhanced by a variety of events and visiting speakers, performers and specialists, as well as by visits to places of interest linked to pupils' studies. In Years 5 and 6, pupils learn French, and have a residential trip for study purposes, and to help develop their social skills. Added to this, there is a range of extra-curricular activities which includes opportunities for sport and the arts, and the school tries to tailor special opportunities for pupils who have particular gifts or talents in one field or another, to develop them.
27. The school is well aware of new developments in education, and evaluates them, introducing some worthwhile initiatives designed to promote thinking and learning. Arrangements for the transfer of pupils to secondary school are good, and care is taken to effect a smooth transition.
28. The match of teachers and teaching assistants to the curriculum is satisfactory, and all members of staff receive regular in-service training. Resources are good across the curriculum, although there is a lack of resources to teach control technology in ICT. The premises are modern and well kept. The school grounds have been developed to provide a highly attractive learning environment for pupils. With considerable support from parents and the community the school has worked very hard to develop its own rich environment in complete sympathy with its surroundings and this contributes greatly to its overall caring ethos. Worthy of special note is the extensive nature trail, which has been developed at the rear of the school where pupils enjoy learning about their immediate natural environment. The entire area is impeccably maintained. Key improvements since the last inspection include the good improvement in the provision for the under fives. This has also included the development of the outside play area.

Care, guidance and support

The school offers its pupils very good care in a safe and supportive environment. Parents have every confidence in the high level of interest the school has for the welfare of their children and in the willingness to listen to and act upon any concerns.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The school has an ethos of community, trust and care.
- Health and safety arrangements for pupils and staff are very good.

Commentary

29. Pupils are provided with a very caring and supportive environment and they know that they are important and matter as individuals within the school community. As would be expected in such a small school, all staff know both pupils and parents extremely well. The very good relationships between staff and pupils results in a comfortable and cheerful atmosphere where pupils feel valued and supported. They know that their views are taken seriously. Assessment is used to plan work to meet pupils' needs and is enhanced by the school working with parents. Parents are right to be very pleased with the care the school offers to their children. The inspection evidence confirms their view that the school is helping its pupils to develop into mature and caring individuals.
30. Through the school rules, pupils are encouraged to take responsibility for their own actions and to consider the consequences of their behaviour. The monitoring of pupils' personal development is good as all staff know the pupils very well, and provide them with sensitive support when necessary. Both the pupils' questionnaire and subsequent conversations with them during the inspection confirmed that every pupil felt that there was an adult that they could turn to if they had worries or concerns of any kind. They know that bullying will not be tolerated and there was little evidence that any form of inappropriate or oppressive behaviour existed. A school council was formed earlier this academic year and is still in the process of being developed. However, due to the small size of the school, neither pupils or staff felt that this delay had disadvantaged communication or prevented any issues from being addressed by the whole school community.
31. Child protection procedures are in place and staff have been appropriately trained in their use. Staff are particularly vigilant to ensure that children in the Foundation Stage, together with other pupils, are carefully supervised and safe at all times. Attention is paid to the health needs of individual pupils and there is a heightened awareness and understanding of healthy living and personal safety. Thorough maintenance ensures that the building and school equipment are safe. Physical security of the building, environs and perimeter are very good. Accidents are rare and any problems or difficulties relating to safety in the school are promptly addressed and steps taken to prevent any recurrence.
32. The school has worked hard to encourage road safety, especially along the one road that flanks the school. The headteacher has already succeeded in having the speed limit reduced from the national speed limit to 40mph and is in constant dialogue with the relevant authorities on safety issues. However, during the inspection it was obvious that many drivers continue to disregard the speed restriction in the vicinity of the school entrance, which is not only very narrow but has no footway. Parents have to drive onto the school site to drop off and collect their children, although parents can use the facilities of the village hall car park, a 40 metre walk away via a fenced footpath. The school, working with parents and with their continued co-operation, has developed effective safety systems. The danger lies when vehicles exit the school. There is the potential for a very serious accident to occur, because of some inconsiderate parking on the zig-zag lines, and on some occasions parents reversing into the road.
33. Parents confirm that they are content with the arrangements the school has for new pupils. The Foundation Stage (Reception class) teacher visits local playgroups and parents and children make visits before starting at the school. Effective arrangements are in place with the many secondary schools in the area to which pupils transfer. Visits by pupils to their new school are arranged. Teachers from receiving secondary schools come to the school to discuss the transfer arrangements and this is reassuring both for pupils and their parents. The school works in pupils' best interest to safeguard their welfare and promote their development. The very good partnership with outside agencies ensures the 'joined up' approach to the welfare of pupils with special educational needs. All staff take careful consideration of individual needs and cultural backgrounds.

Partnership with parents, other schools and the community

The school has a good partnership with parents. There are very good links with other schools, colleges and the community.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Good links with parents contribute well to pupils' learning.
- Parental support through the 'Friends of Fawkham' positively benefits the school.
- The school is an integral part of the local community.
- As a Beacon School there are wide-ranging links with other schools and colleges.

Commentary

34. Contact with parents during the inspection revealed that they were pleased and positive about almost every aspect of the school, which is over-subscribed in the Foundation Stage. Parents and children love this school and have a very strong sense of ownership towards it. This was reflected during the initial parents' meeting where no concerns or issues were expressed at all and in all subsequent meetings during the actual inspection.
35. The school views its relationship with parents and carers as an important part of its overall role in the wider community. It welcomes contributions towards and suggestions about pupils' learning, care and social involvement. There are good links with parents of pupils with special educational needs, who attend and contribute to the annual reviews. Parents are given support and advice on working with their children at home. There are close links with the secondary sector to smooth the transition for all pupils, including those with special educational needs. The school adopts an open-door policy and most parents meet the headteacher and staff every morning and afternoon. Many parents provide regular help to the school in a variety of ways and involve themselves in its day-to-day life, upkeep and improvement.
36. Information provided to parents is good overall. The prospectus and governors' annual report are well presented and contain helpful and relevant information. Newsletters are published at least three times a term and keep parents well up to date with life in the school. The school has not sought the views of parents through a questionnaire. It takes the view, that as a small community school, it knows its parents very well through both regular informal and formal meetings. Once being made aware of parents' views, and any concerns, the school willingly and promptly acts upon them.
37. 'Friends of Fawkham' is the parent teacher association for the school and is widely supported by parents and the local community, including many businesses that make generous donations. A wide range of fund raising initiatives and social events throughout the year ensures that the school has extra funds at its disposal for the benefit and enjoyment of the pupils. An excellent example of their work was to contribute half the cost to have the multi-use plateau resurfaced, and for football, netball and mini tennis courts to be marked out.
38. Community links are very good, not only through the school's close affiliation with the local church but because it takes its role in the wider community especially seriously. The school plays a fundamental role in local life and has developed some extremely positive relationships; support from local people and business is consequently very high. Many local residents visit the school and talk to the pupils about history in the area and past events. These links make learning more varied and interesting for pupils. Governors, parents and staff actively reach out to ensure that the social momentum continues. The school, supports local and national charities and, for example, is about to commence a sponsored walk around the neighbouring Brands Hatch motor racing circuit, who have donated track time exclusively for the occasion.

39. All school productions welcome pupils, families, members of the local education authority and the local community, and productions are very well supported. Christmas and other musical productions are also well attended and the school has the benefit of a new and spacious hall to mount ever more imaginative entertainment. In addition, the school regularly participates in many musical and other celebrations at the church. The school choir sings for the local elderly and also sings carols on the village green at Christmas. The pupils are very positive ambassadors for their school in a wide variety of activities which also includes inter-school sport. These experiences enrich pupils' social development.
40. As a Beacon School, Fawkham C of E Primary provides very good support and links to over twenty other schools, particularly in areas of science, mathematics and ICT, and has recently led a conference on raising standards in writing. The school works hard with several teacher training faculties. It welcomes student teachers for teaching practice, together with other students who have expressed an interest in teaching as a profession for 'taster sessions' at the school. The school has recently gained an 'Investor in People' award and the subsequent report placed a great deal of weight upon its ongoing work as a Beacon School.

LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

The quality of leadership and management is good. The headteacher leads the school well and is ably supported by the deputy head and other staff. Management systems and procedures are effective. Governance of the school is good.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The headteacher has good team-building skills.
- The headteacher, deputy and staff are working effectively together to improve the school's performance further.
- Governors are effective in their roles.

Commentary

41. The headteacher has a positive and passionate approach to the school, leading the staff team with a clear direction and purpose; a good team spirit has been developed. He has a clear understanding of pupils' needs and makes appropriate arrangements for their support. There has been sound improvement in the leadership and management of the school since the last inspection.
42. Senior managers are working well to develop strong management systems in order to sustain and improve good standards. The deputy brings valuable experience to the post. The role of subject co-ordinators is complex, as they have so many differing responsibilities in a small school. The co-ordination of English is very good and that of mathematics good. The quality of assessment procedures is supporting pupils' learning well in English and mathematics, although there is room to improve the marking of some pupils' work to make it more consistent in giving pupils clear messages about how to do better.
43. The co-ordinator for special educational needs is knowledgeable and is developing her role. Strengths include good relationships between staff and pupils with special educational needs and the work of the teaching assistants who co-operate closely with the class teachers to plan appropriate support. Strategies to support learning could include more stimulating resources, including better use of ICT.
44. The governors support the school well and are sufficiently knowledgeable about strengths and weaknesses in the standards achieved by pupils. They understand where the school works successfully and share a common desire to improve further. They are effective in planning strategically for the school's future, and their understanding of how and where the school needs to be better is satisfactory. Governors willingly contribute from their areas of expertise and are

supportive of management whilst questioning and interrogating proposals. A very good example of this was a knowledgeable governor taking charge of the building project on behalf of the governing body, which has resulted in a splendid new school building and provided excellent value for money. Governors fulfil all their statutory responsibilities.

Financial information for the year April 2003 to March 2004

Income and expenditure (£)		Balances (£)	
Total income	304652	Balance from previous year	61639
Total expenditure	333060	Balance carried forward to the next	33231
Expenditure per pupil	3233.59		

45. The school manages its finances well and priority developments are supported with appropriately targeted funding; the principles of best value are applied when considering purchases. The current carry-forward figure from the previous year, includes money set aside for the purchase of ICT equipment, support staff and additional specialist teachers. The apparently high cost per pupil reflects these retained monies identified for future purchases, and also the money saved through prudent budgeting for the new building. New initiatives and projected spending are costed carefully. Office staff are vigilant in keeping track of day-to-day funds and administrative tasks. The monitoring of teaching and learning is well organised, and the headteacher and governors ensure that targets for development are met. Therefore, the school can be sure that its spending is effective. The school utilises ICT satisfactorily for administration.

PART C: THE QUALITY OF EDUCATION IN AREAS OF LEARNING AND SUBJECTS

AREAS OF LEARNING IN THE FOUNDATION STAGE

Provision in the Reception class is **good**.

Children enter Reception in their fifth year. Teaching and learning promote good levels of achievement, especially in children who start school with limited literacy and numeracy skills. Currently, attainment on entry for the majority is above average, particularly in language, communication and literacy and personal, social and emotional development. Good teaching, planning, assessment and an enriched curriculum enable the majority of the children to exceed the expected standards by the end of the Reception year. This is satisfactory improvement since the previous inspection as high standards have been maintained. The curriculum provision issues have been addressed. On the advice of the local authority there is, as yet, no baseline assessment system, to track progress throughout the year. Co-ordination is satisfactory, but there is no clear plan of action in place to help raise standards even further. Parents do not help in class although they are encouraged to discuss matters of concern with staff, thus maintaining strong communication channels with the school.

PERSONAL, SOCIAL AND EMOTIONAL DEVELOPMENT

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

Main strengths

- Children easily reach and exceed the standards expected for their age at the end of Reception because of very good teaching and the emphasis placed on the development of these skills, particularly for those children with special educational needs.
- All children respond very well to the expectation that they will behave sensibly, and attitudes and behaviour are good.

Commentary

46. The clear boundaries, and the consistent role models set by the adults ensure that the children know what is expected of them, so that they quickly learn the correct way to behave. Children already know the routines well, settle to tasks with a minimum of fuss, and behave sensibly. The very good teamwork of the adults gives the children clear role models for co-operation and a calm but rigorous approach to work. The majority of children show interest in what they are doing, concentrate well, even when not directly supervised, and are eager to learn.
47. Children are continually encouraged to feel confident about what they achieve, and are reminded of the high standards that the adults expect. They are friendly and take a pride in their work. Children are encouraged to share and take turns amicably, and put up their hands when answering a question. There is great emphasis on good listening skills. Children are expected to clear up after themselves, which they do without much prompting. The very supportive relationships ensure children feel secure and confident to seek help when required. The gains in learning already evident in this area are as a result of the continual reinforcement of rules by the adults, and treating each other and the children with courtesy and respect. This leads to trusting relationships, and helps the children succeed. They show mature attitudes when they eat their lunch or play with the older pupils in the playground.

COMMUNICATION, LANGUAGE AND LITERACY

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

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Staff provide many opportunities for children to develop these skills.
- Good emphasis on developing children's speaking and listening skills.
- Children are encouraged to try out their knowledge in writing at a very early stage.
- Children who learn more quickly are not always fully challenged.

Commentary

48. Most children are on course to exceed the goals they are expected to reach by the end of Reception. They achieve well. Emphasis is placed on speaking and listening from an early age and this contributes positively to the standards attained, even for those children who enter Reception with underdeveloped skills. For example, children share books, listening to each other's ideas. They talk about the stories they have heard. In particular, they enjoy reading the interactive stories on the computer. They have ample opportunities to share books and most recognise initial sounds and talk about their favourite texts. They can sequence pictures to make a story, and read simple texts.
49. Children develop their skills when visiting the writing area with its wide range of mark-making tools, blackboards and the use of word processing. The majority can write simple sentences about for example, their weekend in their journals. A visit to the cinema to see the latest 'Harry Potter' film has been a popular outing. The ethos of the area leads to much imaginative play – for example, children were initiating play about '*Finding minibeasts*' or '*The Hungry Caterpillar*'. Children are encouraged to take books home and share them with their families. Extension activities or a further challenging learning objective would help the more able children to make even better progress.

MATHEMATICAL DEVELOPMENT

Provision in mathematical development is **good**.

Main strengths

- Adults take every opportunity to develop mathematical understanding.
- Children achieve above average standards in their understanding of number.

Commentary

50. Teaching and learning are good overall. Teaching staff take every opportunity to develop mathematical understanding and, as a result, children achieve well and exceed the goals they are expected to reach by the end of Reception. Children hardly realise that they are learning about mathematics. Teaching staff question them whilst they are engaged in a variety of activities, always trying to draw out and encourage mathematical understanding. For example, during registration sessions, children count the number present by touching the owls on the wall. Children learn to identify shapes when looking at books as adults question them. They learn to sequence the days of the week as they complete the calendar each day. Even those children who do not learn so quickly can count to 20 and sort out big and small teddies.
51. Children make good progress in number recognition because staff work with them in small groups to play a game to reinforce this aspect of learning. The high quality of this adult support helps them to recognise numbers in an enjoyable game.

KNOWLEDGE AND UNDERSTANDING OF THE WORLD

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

Main strengths

- First-hand experiences and good teaching mean that children enjoy finding out for themselves in this area of learning.
- Teaching is good in this area of learning.
- The outside environment enriches the curriculum in this aspect of learning.

Commentary

52. A wide variety of activities help children to learn about the natural world. The story of '*The Hungry Caterpillar*' taught the children much about the life cycle of a butterfly, as well as counting and the names of different fruit. Children sort out materials suitable for compost. They make predictions and decide what things will float or sink. They take care of plants, wild flowers and herbs in the garden. Children develop knowledge of the characteristics of different materials through their play with sand, water and play dough and learn the best materials to use for building. They have ample opportunities to use construction materials. First-hand experiences and good teaching mean that children enjoy finding out for themselves in this area of learning; as a result, they achieve well and are on course to exceed the goals expected by the end of Reception.
53. Good use is made of the ICT resources and children easily manipulate the mouse and draw pictures of caterpillars and butterflies. They achieve high standards and are confident computer users.
54. Children learn about different festivals and their own culture. They greet each other in different languages and learn songs from Africa in Afrikaans. Prayers contribute to their spiritual development.

PHYSICAL DEVELOPMENT

Provision in physical development is **good**.

Main strengths

- Children achieve well because of the very good outside equipment.

Commentary

55. Teaching is good and children achieve well. Children are on course to exceed the goals expected by the end of Reception. They develop their manipulative skills well by handling dough, scissors and brushes, and manipulate small construction equipment with dexterity. The stimulating large-scale apparatus outside gives the children good opportunities to develop their gross motor skills as well as nurturing their imaginations as a role play area.

CREATIVE DEVELOPMENT

Provision for creative development is **good**.

Main strengths

- Good opportunities for imaginative role-play.
 - Very good emphasis on use of language for speaking.
 - Teaching is good in this area of learning.
56. Children's development is strengthened through stimulation in art and design, music, dance and imaginative role-play. As a result of the good teaching, children are likely to exceed the expected early learning goals by the end of the year and achieve well. Children are encouraged to develop their language skills whilst participating in art and imaginative role play activities.
57. Full use is made of a wide range of experiences and resources to enrich the children's learning. For example, role-play areas based on 'bug detectives', and the outside 'wendy house', all help to stimulate the imagination. A wide range of activities are on offer that the children can respond to by using different senses. Children enjoy singing a range of well-known songs and making their own music. They show good control and play in time with percussion instruments.

SUBJECTS IN KEY STAGES 1 AND 2

ENGLISH

Provision in English is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Reading is extended well.
- Performance in writing is generally lower than in reading.
- Library skills are well taught and learned.
- Pupils' progress through the school is sometimes uneven.
- Assessment in the subject is good.
- The subject is very well managed throughout the school.

Commentary

58. Standards in reading and writing in Year 2 are average. This is not dissimilar from the results reported in the last inspection, although worse than in the national tests in 2003, when results for the year group then in Year 2 were well above average. Pupils in the current Year 1 show potential to do better than the present Year 2. In schools such as this with small year groups, results often vary considerably from year to year to year. Current Year 2 pupils achieve satisfactorily and make sound progress over time. Both those with special educational needs and the more able pupils do well in relation to their capabilities. There are no significant differences between the performances of boys and girls.
59. Standards in English attained by pupils in Year 6 are also average for their age. This is below the standards reported in the last inspection. However, it is better than the standards found in the last series of annual national tests in 2003. Again, such variations in results are usual where year groups are small. Pupils achieve well and make good progress over time in the current Year 6, although progress through the school has sometimes been uneven. All pupils, including those with special educational needs and the more able, do well in relation to their capabilities. Again, there are no significant differences between the performances of boys and girls.
60. Standards in speaking and listening are average by the end of Year 2 and Year 6. Achievement by Year 6 in oracy, however, is good. Pupils speak confidently and clearly, and are generally

keen to enter discussions and to ask and answer questions. They readily talk about the books they read, and show a suitable understanding of the characters and plots of the stories. Teachers extend speaking and listening by the good use of questioning, and by the inclusion of opportunities for paired and small-group talk, and by the use of the plenary sessions in the literacy hours. There are, however, no criteria for progress in speaking and listening at present other than the standards level descriptors, or any developing programme of oracy with guidance on assessing speaking and listening.

61. Reading standards by the end of Year 2 and Year 6 are better than those for writing, and reading in Year 6 reaches standards above the average for pupils' age. Achievement by Year 6 in reading is good. Pupils generally read accurately the texts they are given, while older pupils enjoy selecting books of their own choice as well as being introduced to new authors for their class and group reading activities. However, the more able readers tend to choose texts that are fairly easy for them: their reading diets are sometimes insufficiently challenging. Older pupils have good library skills, and use them well; they borrow books frequently from the library and enjoy both fiction and non-fiction.
62. Standards in writing are lower than those in reading by the end of Year 2 and Year 6, although they are within the average range. Achievement by Year 6 is satisfactory. Handwriting and presentation of work meet good standards, and make displays of written work attractive. A good range of purposes for writing is presented to pupils, with generally teachers giving plenty of attention to organisation and structure, and to grammar and punctuation. Pupils in Year 6 are beginning to show in their writing how they are adapting the structure and vocabulary they choose to the purpose of the writing. Pupils' writing at all stages shows evidence of good imagination and ideas. In Years 1 and 2, the length of written pieces is sometimes quite short, and structure sometimes rather immature in terms of variety of sentence types.
63. The quality of teaching and learning was good or very good in all lessons seen, throughout the school. There has been recent and substantial in-service training for teachers in the subject, which is producing some positive results already, and tasks are generally well matched to pupils' capabilities. Careful use of questioning and the employment of focused discussions are strengths of the teaching. The marking of written work tends to be variable across the school, and lacks consistency, but where marking is good it provides pupils with accurate feedback and pointers to improvement they learn faster.
64. The co-ordinator has very good subject knowledge, and has introduced a number of recent initiatives to improve provision in the subject, especially through in-service training. She surveys planning, monitors lessons, and samples work. Data are analysed to create individual and group targets, and to set the year group targets for the school. While tracking is used appropriately for this, the official targets for last year, and to some extent for the current year, are unrealistic and are too challenging. Assessment in the subject is good. It is comprehensive in terms of reading and writing, with a battery of standardised and benchmarked tests and assessments as well as the optional national tests and assessments employed.
65. Resources in the subject are good, and the school has a wide range of books for reading and for use in the literacy hours. The library is rather small, making facilities for independent research difficult, and limiting the range of stock. Generally the stock is adequate, although there is some under-representation in one or two areas, notably that of information and communication technology. The books are appropriately classified and use of the library is well organised and used daily. Enrichment opportunities in the subject are good, and include book weeks, author visits and drama events.

Language and literacy across the curriculum

66. Opportunities to extend literacy skills in or through other subjects are beginning to be well exploited, and this is a developing pattern within the school. There is generally good use of

opportunities for reading and writing from other subjects within the curriculum. Standards of literacy in other subjects are similar to those in English. Information and communication technology is well used for word processing and accessing information from the Internet in English.

MATHEMATICS

Provision in mathematics is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Good subject co-ordination.
- Good quality of teaching.
- Marking is inconsistent and does not always tell pupils how to improve their work.
- ICT needs further development to support learning.

Commentary

67. Standards by the end of Years 2 and 6 are average. At the time of the last inspection standards were similar in Year 2, but higher in Year 6. Improvement since then has been satisfactory; however outcomes depend on the ability of the small cohort of pupils in each year group. There has been a marked improvement in the quality of assessment and record keeping that helps teachers keep track of pupils' progress.
68. In the 2003 national tests, all Year 2 pupils reached the national standards. There was however, a sharp drop in standards between 2002 and 2003. The proportion of pupils attaining the higher Level 3 was well below the national average. However, with a small cohort of pupils there is considerable year-to-year variation in results. In Year 6, there has been a decline since the 2001 tests, and 21 per cent of pupils (this represents three pupils) did not attain the national standards in the 2003 tests. Three pupils attained the higher Level 5 in the 2003 tests, and a similar pattern is forecast for the 2004 results.
69. The school does well for its pupils, including those with special educational needs, who make good progress and achieve well. Girls do slightly better than boys in Year 6 mathematics. The quality of teaching is good overall in the mixed Years 1 to 6 classes and this results in pupils achieving well and attaining the standards of which they are capable. Confident questioning by teachers and good subject knowledge are features of lessons. These enable pupils to articulate their mathematical thinking well. Year 6 pupils confidently name, describe, measure and draw accurately a variety of angles. They show good mental agility as they extract information from hotel price tables to calculate holiday prices. In Years 3 and 4, pupils create nets of shapes and confidently answer questions about edges and faces of known shapes. In Years 1 and 2, higher-attaining pupils show the ability to calculate accurately three numbers, and have a good understanding of time, weight and block graphs. Lower-attaining pupils experience difficulty in writing their numerals correctly.
70. The quality of relationships between staff and pupils in Years 1 to 6 ensures that lessons move along at a good pace. Teachers plan carefully to make the subject lively and interesting, this is achieved by setting pupils into four or more ability groups that ensure the tasks match their abilities. In the Years 3 to 6 classes there is a focus on tables, with a useful award scheme that encourages pupils to beat their own personal targets. Work analysis showed that higher-attaining pupils in all year groups were well challenged by their work. However, marking is inconsistent and does not always tell pupils how to improve their work. Homework is set weekly and provides good opportunities for pupils to consolidate their learning. Record keeping and assessment are thorough and help staff to provide a well-matched curriculum.

71. The subject is well led and managed by a part-time teacher. She has substantially increased her subject knowledge by attending advanced mathematics courses and this is helping to raise standards at the school. The co-ordinator has identified the use of ICT as an area for further development. At present it is used insufficiently to support learning. There is a comprehensive action plan in place for the subject, although this is not reflected in the school's improvement plan. In order to raise standards further it would be useful for the co-ordinator to monitor teaching and learning in mathematics herself, rather than relying on the senior management team to undertake this aspect of her role.

Mathematics across the curriculum

72. There is satisfactory use of mathematics in other subjects, although it is not planned. Pupils extend their vocabulary through learning mathematical terms. They practise their literacy skills through reading mathematical problems. Findings are displayed in a range of charts and graphs for example, in science.

SCIENCE

Provision in science is **satisfactory**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- By the end of Year 6 standards are above average.
- Pupils in Year 2 are capable of attaining even higher standards.
- There are insufficient opportunities to use ICT.
- Pupils have very good attitudes to their work.
- Curriculum enrichment through activities such as the 'Environment Day' enhances provision.

Commentary

73. Standards in national tests at the end of Year 6 were well below average in 2003. Again, where cohorts are small, variations in results are usual. Over the recent past, standards have improved and pupils are achieving well by the end of Year 6. This is a result of much practice and good knowledge of content, although opportunities for scientific enquiry through allowing pupils to design their own experiments are more limited.
74. In the 2003 assessments, Year 2 pupils were assessed by teachers as attaining above-average standards. Evidence during the inspection showed average standards overall. This is partly because marking does not tell the pupils what to do to improve their work, and there is too great an emphasis on the use of worksheets. Pupils in Year 2 are capable of attaining even higher standards in science.
75. Teaching and learning are satisfactory. Good teaching reflects secure subject knowledge and teachers encourage pupils to use the correct scientific language. Pupils respond well and are interested in their activities. Pupils work together effectively, producing interesting work and discussing their findings in a sensible way. Teachers assess effectively what the pupils know. The identification of extension work for the higher-attaining pupils in lesson plans is clear and this enables pupils to make good progress. Pupils are not sufficiently involved in evaluating their own work so that they know what they have to learn next and how to improve. ICT is insufficiently used to support learning in science. Pupils with special educational needs are well supported in class and make good progress.
76. Co-ordination is satisfactory, but science lacks a place in the school's action plan. Displays are not sufficiently 'interactive' and 'hands-on'. However, the curriculum is enriched by events such as 'science week', the use of the beautiful school grounds, and residential trips.

Improvement since the last inspection is satisfactory, but the differing needs of individual pupils is still an area for development.

INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY

Provision in information and communication technology (ICT) is **satisfactory and improving**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Pupils have very good attitudes and behave well.
- Pupils' work is not always recorded and marked.
- Good additional expert support provided in setting up the system.
- Additional resources are required to teach all aspects of control technology.

Commentary

77. Pupils in Year 6 and Year 2 will reach expected standards because they are beginning to benefit from the additional computers. Standards are higher in the communication and data-handling aspects, than in control and simulation, where there is a lack of resources. There has been good improvement since the last inspection, and the use of computers is beginning to make an important contribution to standards in other areas of the curriculum.
78. There is excitement in the learning, which contributes to children's spiritual development. Their delight is plain to see as pupils in Years 1 and 2 accessed a musical instrument program when learning about sound. This is good learning, because it teaches the pupils how computers are used in everyday life. Pupils with special educational needs make good progress but pupils who learn more quickly or have computers at home are not always sufficiently challenged. Older or more able children support younger or less able children, but there is not always a clear record of how much time is spent at the machines. Therefore, in some lessons, a pupil sharing a machine may not actually have a turn.
79. Effective leadership and management of the subject are raising standards and improving the range and quality of provision, although the control aspect is still underdeveloped. The subject leader is keen to ensure that the new resources are fully used. Parents are made aware of Internet safety. The school conducted an audit of standards and agreed an effective improvement. Subsequent investment in resources and staff training greatly enhanced the learning opportunities for pupils, but are not yet fully in place. The school is beginning to monitor pupils' progress, but recognises that monitoring and assessing each child's needs is an area for development. The school has good plans for further development.

Information and communication technology across the curriculum

80. The use of ICT across the curriculum is not sufficiently co-ordinated. Even so, it is used well for data handling in mathematics, and for research using the Internet in history, geography and religious education. Children use word processing when producing books, projects and poetry, and graphic programs in art and design. The use of control technology is not yet fully in place.

HUMANITIES

81. Provision in geography and history was sampled. In **geography**, only one lesson was seen in the Year 1 and 2 class, although work was sampled and discussions held with the co-ordinators and with a sample of Year 6 pupils about their work. While no firm judgements can be made about standards of attainment on this basis, indications are that standards are at least average. Indications are that teaching and learning are likely to be at least satisfactory.
82. In Years 1 and 2, pupils study ways of measuring and assessing the weather, and translate this to an understanding of different climatic features and how this affects whether people feel hot or cold, wet or dry, and how they need to dress accordingly for comfort. In Years 3 to 6, pupils undertake more specific studies of places and their characteristics, and begin to learn more about geographical features. In an English lesson, Year 5 and 6 pupils were studying the texts of travel brochures, but at the same time were learning about some faraway places, such as islands in the Caribbean – they were also using Internet access to find out more. This shows well the value of subject integration for enhancing learning.
83. The co-ordinators survey planning, monitor lessons, and sample work. Assessment procedures are satisfactory. The co-ordination of the subject is at least satisfactory.
84. Only one lesson was seen in **history**, and this was in the Year 1 and 2 class, although here again work was sampled and discussions held with the co-ordinators and with some Year 6 and some Year 5 pupils about their work. While no firm judgements can be made about the subject, the evidence gathered suggests that standards of attainment are at least average, and the quality of teaching and learning is satisfactory or better.
85. Year 1 and 2 pupils learn stories of famous people and events, and were learning about Pocahontas, who came to England in the time of Queen Elizabeth 1. In Years 3 to 6, pupils learn about the ways of life and events from different periods of history in the world, such as the Romans, or Ancient Greece, and also study local history using first-hand experiences and evidence. In Years 5 and 6, pupils are learning about the Norman Conquest and the period of settlement that followed it, and have been to study Rochester castle as an example of a stone castle built on the site of an earlier wooden motte and bailey construction.
86. The co-ordination of the subject is at least satisfactory; work is sampled, planning surveyed and lessons are monitored by the co-ordinator. Assessment is satisfactory.

Religious education

Overall, provision in religious education is **satisfactory**.

Strengths and weaknesses

- Good coverage of the Agreed Syllabus.
- Pupils show interest in religious education lessons.
- Good achievement by the end of Year 6 in knowing about religion.

Commentary

87. Two lessons were seen in religious education. The requirements of the locally Agreed Syllabus are met and standards of attainment are as expected by the end of Year 2 and Year 6. As a result of good quality teaching in the Years 5 and 6 class, pupils' progress accelerates towards the end of Year 6. Analysis of work and discussions with the co-ordinator indicate that pupils' achievement is sound overall in Years 1 to 6.

88. In the lesson seen in Year 2, where the quality of teaching was satisfactory, pupils made useful comparisons between a Hindu temple and the local church. Work scrutiny shows that pupils have learned about aspects of Jewish and Christian festivals. In Year 6, pupils expressed views about the feelings evoked when singing in Rochester Cathedral, 'walking where people had walked before; all the history that went on long ago'. The quality of teaching in this lesson was good because of the teachers' sensitive questioning and her ability to promote pupils' thinking skills. Pupils with special educational needs were given good support to enable them to access the learning. Standards attained by pupils were satisfactory, and their achievement was good. The school has close links with the village church and this enhances provision.

CREATIVE, AESTHETIC, PRACTICAL AND PHYSICAL SUBJECTS

89. Only one lesson was seen in **art and design** during the inspection, and this was in the Year 3 and 4 class, although sketch books were sampled, and displays surveyed, as well as discussions pursued with the co-ordinators and with some Year 6 pupils. While no firm judgements can be made on this basis, this evidence indicates that standards of attainment are likely to be at least average, and the quality of teaching and learning is at least satisfactory.
90. In Years 3 and 4, pupils are studying a unit on sculpture, experiencing the use of three-dimensional media such as clay, for making both models and relief patterns on tiles. Although sketchbooks did not appear to be frequently used, nor used well for the preparation of compositions and assignments, including note making, displays around the school show a good range of skills being taught and learned. The displays are all well presented and attractive, and show good standards of work in the items displayed. Particularly impressive were the models of aboriginal 'bull roarers' painted in traditional styles and colours, in Years 5 and 6. Also notable were the Year 5 and 6 studies of art work in Rochester Cathedral, with drawings, sketches, and written descriptions and notes.
91. Co-ordination is at least satisfactory in this subject. The co-ordinators survey planning for coverage of the programme, and for skill development, and they also look at the outcomes of work, especially in displays. Some assessment is carried out and is satisfactory, although it is less stringently applied than in most other subjects from the point of view of individual progress.
92. In **design and technology** the limited evidence drawn from completed work shows that the requirements of the National Curriculum are met and standards are likely to be average by the end of Year 6. At the time of the last inspection there was also very little evidence presented to the team.
93. In **music**, no lessons were seen and only one extra-curricular activity was seen. From this observation evidence suggests that the requirements of the National Curriculum are met. However, no overall judgements can be securely made about standards, provision or teaching and learning. The choir sings well, and has recently participated in a festival at Rochester Cathedral and the Gravesham festival. They sing at assembly, and this enriches the provision. The recorder group also play for assembly, which gives the pupils good opportunities to practise their performing skills. There are adequate resources and, although the hall accommodation is spacious, the acoustics are poor. The use of a member of the support staff to teach recorder, guitar and play the piano for assembly enriches the provision.
94. In **physical education**, the evidence from discussions with the co-ordinator and from talking to pupils shows that pupils are given satisfactory opportunities for sporting activities, including swimming. There has been satisfactory improvement since the previous inspection.
95. There is a sports after-school club and opportunities to play football and netball which help develop pupils' personal potential. Assessment procedures are more limited with few opportunities for pupils to be involved in their own assessment. The curriculum is enriched through the spacious outdoor area, sports' day and opportunities for outdoor pursuits on residential trips.

PERSONAL, SOCIAL, HEALTH EDUCATION AND CITIZENSHIP

96. No lessons were seen in this subject and no pupils' work was available for scrutiny, so it is not possible to make a judgement about standards, pupils' achievements or the quality of teaching and learning. The curriculum section of this report judges provision to be good overall.

PART D: SUMMARY OF THE MAIN INSPECTION JUDGEMENTS

<i>Inspection judgement</i>	<i>Grade</i>
The overall effectiveness of the school	3
How inclusive the school is	3
How the school's effectiveness has changed since its last inspection	3
Value for money provided by the school	3

Overall standards achieved	4
Pupils' achievement	3

Pupils' attitudes, values and other personal qualities	2
Attendance	4
Attitudes	2
Behaviour, including the extent of exclusions	3
Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	2

The quality of education provided by the school	3
The quality of teaching	3
How well pupils learn	3
The quality of assessment	3
How well the curriculum meets pupils needs	3
Enrichment of the curriculum, including out-of-school activities	3
Accommodation and resources	3
Pupils' care, welfare, health and safety	2
Support, advice and guidance for pupils	3
How well the school seeks and acts on pupils' views	3
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	2

The leadership and management of the school	3
The governance of the school	3
The leadership of the headteacher	3
The leadership of other key staff	3
The effectiveness of management	3

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