

INSPECTION REPORT

FRITTENDEN CHURCH OF ENGLAND PRIMARY SCHOOL

Frittenden

LEA area: Kent

Unique reference number: 118701

Headteacher: Mrs Elizabeth Bradshaw

Lead inspector: Wendy Simmons

Dates of inspection: 27th-28th May 2004

Inspection number: 256180

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

INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Type of school	Primary
School category:	Voluntary Controlled
Age range of pupils:	4 to 11
Gender of pupils:	Mixed
Number on roll:	77
School address:	Frittenden Kent
Postcode:	TN17 2DD
Telephone number:	(01580) 852250
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Appropriate authority:	The governing body, Frittenden Church of England Primary School.
Name of chair of governors:	Mrs Jane Gurdon
Date of previous inspection:	5 th – 7 th May 1998

CHARACTERISTICS OF THE SCHOOL

Frittenden Church of England Primary School is a very small rural school educating 77 pupils. There are broadly equal numbers of boys and girls, but in Year 6, all the pupils are girls. There are few pupils from ethnic minority backgrounds. The school educates pupils from a wide range of social backgrounds. There are currently 14 pupils on the SEN register, two of whom have a statement of special educational needs (SEN). This is a high proportion for the size of the school. Most have specific learning difficulties and a few have complex needs. A few pupils come from a Traveller heritage background. Just a few pupils have free school meals, as many prefer to have packed lunches. One pupil speaks English as an additional language. Overall, pupils are from a broadly average range of social circumstances. Pupils attend the school from several surrounding villages. The school is housed in a listed building, which has been considerably altered in recent years to give additional teaching space. Pupils are organised in three mixed aged classes and are taught by five teachers, three of whom work on a part time basis. In the last two years, there have been significant staff changes. The school is part of the Cranbrook learning partnership, which consists of a group of schools that share teaching and other professional skills. Several community groups use the school's site. Pupils' attainment on entry is average overall, but a higher than average number of pupils join and leave the school at different times from the usual points of entry and exit. This can alter the entry profile to lower than average in some years.

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Members of the inspection team			Subject responsibilities
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9588	Tony West	Lay inspector	
16492	Robert Lever	Team inspector	Science, information and communication technology.
19142	Audrey Quinnell	Team inspector	English, Foundation Stage, religious education (RE), geography and history.

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PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

OVERALL EVALUATION

Frittenden Church of England Primary School provides a good overall standard of education.

Teaching and learning are good overall. Good leadership and management are leading to good achievement and improving standards for most pupils, although children in the Reception class do not achieve as well as pupils higher up the school. This caring village school provides good value for money but reduced school funding is a barrier to further improvement.

The school's main strengths and weaknesses are:

- Good leadership and management are underpinning effective school improvement.
- Pupils' achievement in English, mathematics, religious education (RE) and history is very good
- Teaching, learning and progress are very good in Years 2 and 3 and good from Years 4 to 6, where a very good range of activities and good assessment procedures support learning.
- The provision for children in their Reception year is unsatisfactory.
- Pupils show very positive attitudes. High standards reflect the very good moral education and very good relationship as well as good social, personal and cultural education.
- There is good provision for special educational needs (SEN) and higher ability pupils.
- Links with parents and the community are very good and enrich pupils' learning.
- Attendance is below average.

Good improvement has been made since the last inspection in 1998. Standards have improved in almost all subjects. Most noticeable are the very good progress in English, mathematics, history and the overall provision in Year 2. High standards in pupils' attitudes have been maintained although pupils' rate of attendance is not as high. There has been good improvement in the key issues identified in 1998, especially in the very good development for higher ability pupils and in the development of writing, spelling, information and communication technology (ICT) and in the role of governors. However, there has been insufficient development for Reception children. Links with parents and the community show substantial improvement and good progress is evident for pupils with SEN.

STANDARDS ACHIEVED

Standards in the Reception class are below average especially in children's communication, mathematical, personal and social skills and in their knowledge and understanding of the world. Standards of work are well above average by Year 2, particularly in reading, writing, mathematics, science, history and RE. In ICT and art, they are above average. The table below shows that results, by Year 6, have improved, especially in mathematics and English. There is variation for pupils from year to year in this small school, as one pupil's results can dramatically alter results, especially as the school has a high proportion of pupils with SEN. Standards, by Year 6, are currently above average in English and mathematics, with average results in science and ICT.

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

Key: A* top 5% of schools – A well above average; B – above average; C – average; D – below average; E – well below average; E* – in the lowest 5% of schools

Similar schools are those whose pupils attained similarly at the end of Year 2.

Achievement is good overall. Although children do not make enough progress in the Reception year, from then on, pupils achieve very well in Years 2 and 3 and they continue to make good progress in Years 4, 5 and 6. Higher ability and SEN pupils achieve well. In the Reception class, achievement is unsatisfactory because the curriculum and teaching and learning experiences and accommodation are not suitable for their very specific needs. Achievement is good overall by Year 6, with significant strengths in English, mathematics, RE and history.

Pupils' personal qualities, including their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development are good. Pupils show very good attitudes and good behaviour. A very small proportion of parents do not always get their children to school every day and some take holidays in term time. This is why attendance is unsatisfactory overall.

QUALITY OF EDUCATION

The quality of education provided by the school is good overall. The care shown by staff contributes to pupils' good personal development. Pupils are very keen to learn. **The quality of teaching and learning are good overall.** Teaching and learning are very good in Years 2 to 3 and then consistently good from then on in Years 4, 5 and 6. High quality teaching makes learning fun, with many interesting activities. Pupils work hard and teachers have high expectations. Pupils are praised and think and learn for themselves and work is carefully marked to ensure that pupils make progress. Teaching and learning for the pupils in the Reception class are unsatisfactory because activities are not often suited to their specific needs. Expectations are not high enough for this age and they are not embedded in an understanding of how young children learn to best effect. Overall, assessment procedures are good in the school and information is used well to enable staff to plan work that meets the needs of different ability groups. Literacy, numeracy and ICT are used well to support pupils' learning and links with the community and extracurricular activities enrich pupils' learning. Assistants give good support, especially for pupils with SEN.

LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

The leadership and management of the school are good overall. The Headteacher has a very clear vision for the school. The leadership by subject managers is good. A strong aspect of management is the way that the Headteacher, staff and governors have acted firmly to improve standards by Year 6 and that they recognise that there are weaknesses in the provision for Reception children. Governance is good and almost all statutory responsibilities are met.

PARENTS' AND PUPILS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

Parents and pupils like the school very much, although a few parents and pupils noted that one or two pupils show inappropriate behaviour. Staff also recognise this and are taking firm action to help pupils to behave well and to develop their self-esteem.

IMPROVEMENTS NEEDED.

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

- improve the quality of the curriculum, accommodation and teaching and learning for Reception aged children;
- continue to take firm action to raise the attendance rate in the school.

and, to meet statutory requirements:

governors need to: write a policy for race equality and up-date the school's health and safety policy.

PART B: COMMENTARY ON THE INSPECTION FINDINGS

STANDARDS ACHIEVED BY PUPILS

Standards achieved in areas of learning, subjects and courses

Achievement is good overall. Although pupils do not achieve well enough for their ability in the Reception class, pupils' rate of achievement lifts rapidly from Year 2 onwards for all pupils. Standards, overall by Year 6, are above average.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Pupils achieve very well overall in English, mathematics, history and RE by Year 6. Overall, achievement is good as pupils move through the school.
- Provision for children in the Reception class is unsatisfactory and this means that they are not achieving well enough for their ability at the very start of their education.
- There has been good overall improvement in standards since the school was last inspected for pupils in Years 2 to 6.

1. When they start this school, children in the Reception class show a wide range of abilities, which are average overall. However, high mobility, as pupils join and leave the school, lowers the overall picture of attainment for some year groups to below average. This is especially evident in Years 4 and 6. High mobility is the result of some parents feeling unhappy about the loss of the fourth class in 2003 and transferred their children to other larger schools. However, the school is now oversubscribed and parents often choose this school because of the small and friendly ethos. This has been a significant factor in why pupils with significant SEN have joined this year. In the past, higher ability pupils sometimes transferred to other schools, although in recent months this has slowed down considerably. The current Year 6 has only six pupils, who are all girls. Out of these, only three started the school in the Reception class.

2. When children first start school in either the autumn or spring terms they are mixed with Year 1 pupils. Whilst efforts have been made to develop the planning for Reception children, there are several significant shortcomings, which mean that the children are not making a good enough start in their education for their ability. Overall, they do not make enough progress in developing their skills and knowledge by the beginning of Year 1. Although there is adequate emphasis on planning basic literacy and numeracy skills, many activities are too directed by the teacher and there are insufficient opportunities for the children to develop their personal and social skills within the daily classroom organisation. In addition, there is no outside adjoining area for them to work in, which especially limits opportunities to enhance children's progress in their social and physical development. Staff are not sufficiently skilled at providing play activities that promote learning. They do not intervene sufficiently to extend children's play, so that they can achieve higher standards in their talking, thinking and collaborative work. These are factors in why standards are lower than average by the end of the children's time in the Reception year. Only half of the group are likely to reach the goals they are expected to reach in almost all areas of learning, especially in language, communication, personal and social development and mathematical development.

3. Pupils' achievement in Year 1 is satisfactory, as these pupils have more direct and suitable teaching and learning time. Nonetheless, they are sometimes interrupted by the needs of the Reception children, who are not always suitably organised to allow them to achieve their best. Visiting advisory staff have begun to assist the school in developing the provision.

4. As pupils move into Year 2, they make rapid and sustained progress. Here, very high expectations and excellent planning are enabling pupils to achieve very well. Achievement is supported by very good assessment procedures, inspiring teaching and a very good awareness of the curriculum. Progress for pupils in Years 2 and 3 is much higher than would normally be expected. By Year 2, standards in reading, writing, mathematics, science, RE and history are well above average. In ICT and art, they are above average. High standards are evident in national tests results and overall, since 1998, standards by Year 2, show very good improvement. All pupils are working in at least the average Level 2 and over half of the year group are working at the higher Level 3 in most subjects.

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

Standards in:	School results	National results
Reading	16.5 (15.7)	15.7 (15.8)
Writing	16.5 (15.2)	14.6 (14.4)
Mathematics	18.5 (17.7)	16.3 (16.5)

There were 11 pupils in the year group. Figures in brackets are for the previous year

5. From Year 4 to Year 6, achievement is good overall, with very good achievement and progress in English, mathematics, RE and history. Standards of work by Year 6 are currently above average. Individual needs are well catered for and there is rigorous analysis of the progress that different groups of pupils make. The school has set challenging targets for improvement and is being successful in reaching them. The school has raised standards overall by Year 6 since the last inspection, when they were broadly average and since 2002, when standards were very low. National tests results show a rising trend since 2002. Although some groups of pupils taking national tests are very few in number, past low results were often due to insufficiently high enough expectations of the most able pupils. Since 2002, improvements in assessment procedures and a purposeful focus on developing writing have helped to lift standards in many subjects. For example, in RE and music, writing has been used very effectively to help pupils to express their opinions. The staff have also looked at how to develop drama, as a way of improving pupils' ability to write creatively by using dialogue and a more powerful use of exciting vocabulary. The school now has a clear programme for the development of spelling, which was noted for improvement in 1998. These features are significant factors in why the school is also doing better than other similar schools in English.

6. The school is doing particularly well in mathematics, where there has been a rigorous focus on developing pupils' skills and thinking to solve word based problems. Numeracy is used successfully to help pupils to widen their learning in other subjects. The school has also been working to improve ICT and science. In both subjects, there has been good improvement, due to the good range of activities and opportunities for pupils to investigate things for themselves. In ICT, pupils confidently use skills to support their learning in a wide range of other subjects. In RE and history, very high standards are a direct result of high standards in teaching and moreover, the support of visits to widen pupils' knowledge.

7. Overall, staff work hard to include all pupils, whatever their interests and abilities. In most year groups, the provision for higher ability pupils is good. Not only are they identified and supported in the core subjects of English, mathematics, science and ICT, but also in RE, art and design, music and PE, where they are helped to flourish.

8. Staff support and monitor the progress of the very few Traveller pupils rigorously. This shows that they often reach very high standards in mathematics. Nonetheless, some poor attendance can adversely influence their progress in English. Traveller pupils achieve well.

9. From the work seen, boys and girls achieve equally well. Pupils and parents are pleased with the standards of the school. Pupils commented that they have to work hard and especially like having targets, so that they know how to improve.

10. Pupils with SEN make at least good progress and for some, this is very good, especially relating to the development of their basic skills in English and mathematics. They receive focused help by teachers and assistants, which enables them to do well for their ability. Their achievement is enhanced by useful links to ICT. For example, dyslexic pupils use keyboards in most lessons and regular use of spelling programs further supports their achievement.

Pupils' attitudes, values and other personal qualities

Pupils like this school very much. Pupils' attitudes are very good and behaviour is good. Their attendance in the reporting period was unsatisfactory. Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Pupils' attendance rate is lower than the national average.
- Pupils show very good interest in learning and behave well.
- Relationships between pupils, and between pupils and adults, are very good.
- Pupils have a good awareness of right and wrong and others' feelings and beliefs.
- Pupils' cultural development is good.

Commentary

11. Pupils commented that the school is a very friendly place. They are keen to come to school and most arrive on time. However, attendance is below the national median and is, therefore, unsatisfactory, although unauthorised absences were lower than the national median over the same period. Staff monitor attendance well and receive support from the education welfare service. Pupils whose attendance is poor are identified and the school works hard to ensure that they attend school more regularly. However, there are a small number of parents who have difficulty in ensuring that their children attend school. This is often due to transportation difficulties for pupils who live more than two miles away from the school. Also, a few parents take their children out of school during term time for family holidays. There are a very small number of children who regularly arrive at school late and their punctuality is unsatisfactory. There have been no exclusions during the past school year.

12. Pupils show interest and curiosity in lessons and have a very positive attitude to work. Most of the pupils concentrate very well on their work, particularly for Year 2 onwards. Behaviour is good in lessons, around the school and on the playground. However, a few parents expressed concerns about behaviour and pupils confirm that there are inconsistencies when a few boys do not behave well enough. Pupils are aware of the school and class rules and fully understand the difference between right and wrong. Their moral development is very good overall and pupils from different backgrounds mix together well.

13. Pupils have many opportunities for taking on additional responsibility and they respond well to them. They join the school council and are able to influence school management and to contribute significantly to the life of the school. They are encouraged to deal with behaviour and relationship issues themselves, they chart their feelings and can act as buddies. The great majority of pupils are very happy at the school and feel secure and well cared for. They have access to a counsellor and can turn to an adult if they need. They have a very clear picture of what they need to do to improve their work.

14. 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 range of charities, some of which they nominate themselves. Pupils' social development is good; relationships between pupils and with all the staff are very good, and pupils get on very well. They show good understanding of, and respect for, other pupils who may have complex needs, they benefit significantly from being taught alongside them. Pupils have a good understanding of their own and the wider multicultural society because the school places a strong emphasis on this in many subjects.

Attendance in the latest complete reporting year (%)

Authorised absence		Unauthorised absence	
School data	6.3	School data	0.0
National data	5.4	National data	0.4

The table gives the percentage of half days (sessions) missed through absence for the latest complete reporting year:2002 /2003

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	57	0	0
White – any other White background	1	0	0
Mixed –any other mixed background	1	0	0

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

QUALITY OF EDUCATION PROVIDED BY THE SCHOOL

15. The quality of education provided by the school is good overall. Pupils are well cared for, so that most pupils have equal opportunities and are included in activities. Teaching and learning are good overall. The curriculum is good and enriched by a very wide range of activities. Very good links with parents and the community support pupils' learning. Accommodation and resources are satisfactory overall. Assessment is good overall. The provision for children in the Reception class is unsatisfactory.

Teaching and learning

The quality of teaching and learning is good overall, but unsatisfactory for Reception children. Assessment is good.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Teaching and learning are very good in Years 2 to 3 and then consistently good. Teaching and learning for the pupils in the Reception class are unsatisfactory.
- Assessment procedures mostly help pupils to achieve well for their ability.
- Pupils are very keen to learn.
- Literacy, numeracy and ICT are used well to support pupils' learning in other subjects.
- Provision for pupils of all abilities is good overall.

Commentary

Summary of teaching observed during the inspection in 16 lessons

Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
0	5	6	1	3	1	0

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

16. Since the last inspection, the overall quality of teaching and learning has remained good, but the learning environment for the Foundation Stage has declined. However, there has been significant progress in pupils' learning in other subjects. Teachers and assistants make learning objectives very clear to pupils. The best progress has been in ensuring that higher ability pupils have work that has been carefully planned to meet their needs.

17. Pupils and parents feel that teaching and learning are good. As pupils move through the school, they enjoy good teaching and learning opportunities, which enable pupils of all abilities to achieve well by Year 6. However, they do not make the best start in the Reception class.

18. Currently, Reception children are mixed with Year 1 pupils. Whilst the provision for Year 1 is largely satisfactory, the organisation and learning opportunities for children in their first year at school are unsatisfactory. The quality of teaching and learning is unsatisfactory for Reception children. Although planning is satisfactory, the teaching methods and class organisation do not allow the children to achieve the standards expected for their age. Overall, there is insufficient understanding of how younger children learn to best effect and learning opportunities are not rich enough to enable these young children to achieve well. Although in-class observations are made of the children, overall, assessment procedures are unsatisfactory. The information gained from the assessments is not used sufficiently well to ensure that learning is adapted to the diverse needs of Reception children.

19. In Year 1, although pupils make steady progress, there are missed opportunities to improve pupils' achievement. Whilst planning for this group is satisfactory, in practice, their learning is sometimes interrupted by the needs of the younger pupils, who have not been sufficiently well organised to ensure that their time is used to best advantage. Moreover, in lessons and group activities, pupils do not always use a wide range of resources, which allow

them to think and learn for themselves. For example, in a mathematics lesson on money, few of the pupils had coins to work out how to pay for shopping items. In Year 1, pupils are expected to rely too heavily on using worksheets to record their work, whereas, in other year groups, pupils are helped to think for themselves and develop their recorded work in their subject notebooks

20. Once pupils start in Year 2, they make tremendous and rapid progress because of very good teaching and learning opportunities in the mixed Year 2 and 3 class. Here, planning is excellent and makes very good use of assessment information to help pupils to make speedy progress. Learning is fun and is rooted in many interesting activities. Learning is well supported by links to other subjects, such as ICT. As a consequence, pupils work hard and extend their knowledge. Marking is of very high quality, which clearly keeps pupils thinking and improving.

21. Good teaching is consistently evident in Years 4, 5 and 6. In all of these year groups, staff have high expectations and work is well planned to meet the needs of pupils in the mixed aged classes. Moreover, pupils' progress is regularly monitored and tracked and some very good use of marking helps pupils to understand how to improve their work in all subjects. Work is carefully planned, so that pupils link their learning from one subject to another. For example, in literacy, they learn how to write reasoned arguments, which they then use to help them to evaluate their work in such subjects as art and music. Pupils confidently think and learn for themselves and are actively encouraged to make decision for themselves. Teachers share their subject knowledge and skills, so that pupils learn music, art and design, PE and sometimes, ICT, from a range of permanent and visiting staff.

22. Assessment is good and has developed considerably since 1998. Time is used effectively to ensure that pupils learn by listening to adults and then investigating things for themselves. Group activities are carefully thought out to enable the pupils to talk about what they are doing with other adults. High priority is given to developing literacy and numeracy but good attention is also given to creative and physical activities. The staff have been successful in improving opportunities for pupils to do more individual investigations in science, which has a positive impact on how they develop their independent thinking and learning skills.

23. The Headteacher, subject leaders and governors have taken firm and successful action to improve the overall quality of writing, mathematics, science and ICT teaching and learning throughout the school. There has been a strong emphasis on ensuring that pupils know what they are learning about and are also given ongoing praise for their efforts in lessons. This was a direct result of monitoring, which indicated that this needed improvement. The inspection has found that this is working well and has a positive impact on pupils' self-esteem and wider spiritual development. Links with the community and parents play a very positive part in pupils' learning, especially through visits. For example, pupils visited the National Film Theatre and learnt about drafting skills as a means of improving their writing skills.

24. Opportunities for pupils with SEN are good overall. There is a strong emphasis on developing literacy skills due to work being well planned, and every pupil being clear about how to make good progress. Teaching assistants work very closely with teachers and they are skilled at helping pupils to master new skills and knowledge, while also enabling pupils to repeat activities in different ways so that they really understand them. The individual education plans are of a very high quality. Not only do they give very specific targets for pupils to work towards to improve, but also they clearly set out key teaching points for classroom management and organisation for each member of staff, who works with the pupils.

25. Almost all pupils are very keen to learn. Only a few older pupils occasionally act inappropriately, but staff quickly address this and thus it does not slow the learning of others in the class. Almost all teachers insist on high standards of behaviour, but occasionally they are not firm enough about setting the boundaries about what is expected in the Reception class. Consequently, some children chat when the teacher is talking.

The curriculum

The curriculum is good overall but is unsatisfactory in the Foundation Stage. Beyond the Early Years, it is broad and balanced and is planned to ensure progression in pupils' learning. It provides very good opportunities for enrichment. The quality and quantity of accommodation and resources at the school are satisfactory overall but inadequate for the youngest children.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- In Years 2 to 6, the curriculum provides a good range of learning opportunities.
- There are weaknesses in the curriculum for the youngest children.
- The school provides a very good range of extra curricular activities.
- Provision for pupils who have special educational needs (SEN) is good.
- The provision for able, gifted and talented pupils is good.

Commentary

26. The curriculum is mostly appropriately planned to provide breadth and continuity in learning. Time allocations are in line with recommendations with a very good emphasis on literacy and numeracy. Schemes of work are in place for all subjects to guide planning and to enable pupils to build up skills progressively. The numeracy and literacy strategies are in place and staff have received good training. Teachers make very good links between different subjects. For example, visits to galleries result in three dimensional artwork, which links with literacy. There has been good improvement in ICT and standards are now average, whereas they were below average at the previous inspection. Pupils receive lessons in French, as part of their weekly timetable. This is more suitable for pupils from Year 2 onwards, as provision for this in the mixed Reception and Year 1 class limits the time available to develop the basic curriculum requirements for the very youngest children.

27. Children in the Reception class do not follow a broad enough curriculum that meets all children's learning needs and ensures a good start to their education. The school has not sufficiently addressed the issues raised at the previous inspection in providing a suitable outside area. As a result, pupils do not have the opportunity to achieve as well as they should.

28. The curriculum is enhanced by a very good range of visits and visitors and extra-curricular clubs. The range of visitors includes a local artist working with pupils and displaying their work. Work with a local poet is entered in a book, which is displayed around Kent. Participation in the arts is particularly strong and the Arts Week is very successful. Visits include residential visits to the Isle of Wight and a three day visit to Le Touquet flying from Lydd.

29. Overall the provision for SEN is good. Teachers and assistants carefully plan the curriculum for these pupils, so that they can be included in all class activities at a suitable level for their needs and abilities. Pupils are quickly identified.

30. The school is successful in adapting the curriculum to take account of pupils of higher ability, especially relating to work planned to help them to improve their English, mathematics, art and design, music and RE. Recent improvements in the provision for science are enriching the curriculum for the most able pupils. Unfortunately, due to financial restrictions, the school has lost an additional teacher for this group of pupils. Nonetheless, other teachers work hard to identify and support these pupils. Visits make a significant impact on the curriculum. For example, a visit from staff working at Dungeness Power Station, which helped pupils to develop their understanding about the generation of electricity, as part of their work in science.

Care, guidance and support

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

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Members of staff know the pupils very well.
- There are good procedures for health and safety, child protection and first aid.
- Adults provide good levels of care for their well being and welfare.
- The school has very good systems to monitor pupils' progress.
- The involvement of pupils in the school's work and development is very good.

Commentary

31. There are good induction arrangements for pupils when they start at the school, enhanced by the very good relationships with the local pre-school that most children attend before joining. This is a good improvement on the previous inspection.

32. The school has health and safety procedures in place and governors and staff make regular health and safety checks. Regular checks are made to grounds, buildings and equipment. However, the school's policy has not been updated recently to reflect recent changes in risk assessments. The school and the pre-school do not formally jointly discuss safety issues. There is great enthusiasm and skill in this area within the governing body and they are fully aware about the need to up-date the school's policy.

33. The Headteacher is the nominated officer for child protection procedures and other members of staff have been trained. All staff are kept aware of the need to inform the Headteacher should they have any concerns. The head teacher attends family court welfare hearings and the school supports any families in difficulty very well. Arrangements for the administration of first aid and for the care of children who are unwell are good.

34. Relationships in the school are very good. All adults working in the school form close and trusting relationships with the pupils and provide very good role models. Discussions with the pupils show that they feel safe and secure and can turn to the school counsellor if they need help or comfort. There are very good and comprehensive arrangements for seeking the views of pupils about different aspects of school life through membership of the school council and through discussion at all levels. The school council does not meet as regularly as pupils want.

35. The school's very good systems for monitoring pupils' progress enable teachers to advise pupils on how to improve. Target setting is a constant theme through the school. For example, the targets for pupils with SEN are very carefully thought out, so that staff and pupils can see how to make progress quickly in small steps. Care for SEN pupils is good overall.

Partnership with parents, other schools and the community

The school's links with parents and the community are very good. There are very good links with other schools.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Parents have very positive views of the school.
- The school provides parents with very good information.
- There are very good links with the pre-school and other local schools and organisations.

Commentary

36. Since 1998, the school has made very good progress in improving links with parents. Parents and carers have very positive views of the school. The school works well with them, and encourages them to support the school through the Friends' Association and to help the school enrich the pupils' experiences at school. The parents have made extensive contributions to the school and have been involved with the school in organising a transport scheme. Parents help in school during the day and have contributed to improvements in the fabric, the resources and the outside play facilities. Most significantly, they raised £8,000 towards developing an additional classroom, which is a very good and well-used resource.

37. The school provides a very good range of information for parents about future school events, what their children will be doing, extra-curricular activities, and the curriculum and how their children are progressing. Information on how they can help their children at home and the use of homework are not always consistent. With three meetings a year, there are good opportunities for parents to meet staff formally and to discuss their children's progress. Parents are encouraged to meet staff and they confirm that the open door policy is a reality. Links with parents of pupils with SEN are strong and parents and staff work in partnership to help these pupils to make good progress.

38. The views of parents are valued by the school and many opportunities have been provided for parents to express opinions on the school. Recently, the timing of the school day was changed, following analysis of a pupils' questionnaire and feedback from parents.

39. There are very good links with the local pre-school group and the local secondary schools. The school obtains considerable benefit from the secondary school links with subject support and extra-curricular benefits. Year 6 pupils visit the senior school before transfer and are happy about their move to a big school.

40. The Headteacher and staff meet staff of other schools regularly as part of the local cluster groups of schools. The school has very good links with the local community, it is a central feature of village life. The community makes very good use of the school and the school makes very good use of local resources for sport and other curricular activities. There are strong links with the church that contribute significantly to the spiritual life of the school. The school has

links with local businesses as well as making visits locally. Pupils experience a diverse range of visits to France, London and a residential trip to the Isle of Wight.

LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

The leadership and management of the school are good overall. The leadership of the Headteacher is good. Management is good. Subject managers give good support. Governance is good.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The Headteacher has a very clear vision for the development of the school.
- Governors make a strong contribution to the leadership and management of the school.
- The leadership and management of English, mathematics and SEN are very good.
- The leadership and management of the Foundation Stage are unsatisfactory.
- There is good leadership and management in art, music, PE, RE and ICT.
- A reduced budget has been a barrier for the further development of the school.
- Governors are taking action to ensure that they fulfil all statutory responsibilities.

Commentary

41. The Headteacher has a very clear vision for the improvement of the school. On her arrival at the school, she identified weaknesses in achievement in Years 3 to 6 and has taken very firm and successful steps to address them. This required her to have to make some very difficult decisions about staffing and class organisation. As a consequence of reduced funding, the fourth class was no longer financially viable and the Headteacher is having to teach for a high proportion of the day in the mixed Year 4, 5, and 6 class. The management, recruitment and deployment of staff became a significant issue for the school in 2003. Again, some difficult, but good decisions were made, which are having a very positive impact on pupils' achievement from Year 2 through to Year 6. This has necessitated much additional very good re-planning of the curriculum to meet the needs of pupils in the mixed aged classes from Year 2.

42. Overall, amongst staff there is a strong sense of purpose and high aspirations in leadership. This is supported in the school's good management development plan, which has placed a strong emphasis on developing English, mathematics, science and ICT. The leadership and management of English, mathematics and SEN are especially strong and this reflects the very good improvement, which has been made, particularly in the last two years. Management systems, such as monitoring of lessons and pupils' work, have been very focused, which has speeded up the pace of improvement and enhanced pupils' overall achievement.

43. Good leadership in other subjects, such as art and design, PE, RE, history and geography help staff to widen pupils' learning opportunities. This is most evident in the way the school has increased visits, so that most pupils' learning is rooted in high quality first hand experiences. Almost all staff inspire and influence the work of each other, which has a positive impact on the standards reached by Year 6. The Headteacher leads the curriculum very well and encourages staff to develop their skills.

44. The Foundation Stage was rightly not a main focus area for development when the Headteacher joined the school. Although good improvement has been made overall in the school, there has been insufficient development in the Foundation Stage. The Headteacher and

governors have already identified this as their next major priority. For example, two advisors have begun assisting in suggesting how to move forward and the inspection team were asked to make a specific evaluation about the opportunities for children to initiate play and learning activities for themselves. Since 1998, the accommodation has not improved sufficiently and this is a significant barrier in ensuring that these young children do well. The development plan for this age group lacks sufficient detail to assist the improvement process.

45. The Headteacher provides a strong role model for other staff in her leadership and management and in the quality of her teaching. There is no senior management, due to the small size of the school but there is a growing team spirit in the school and staff work well together. This is in spite of the fact that there has been a high turnover of teaching staff. New staff are quickly made to feel part of the team and are well supported.

46. The governors have made good improvements to their role since the last inspection. They have developed their financial management, so finances are used to raise standards and they have become more confident in evaluating the effectiveness of their work. Governors are enthusiastic and committed to the school. Many are quite new to their role, but are generally well trained and many have professional skills, which are especially useful to the effective management of the school. They have a clear understanding of the school's strengths and weaknesses. They gain this through a variety of appropriate procedures including evaluation of performance data, discussions with staff and visits. The governors use this knowledge well to assist them in making decisions about what the school needs to do to improve. They contribute to the school improvement plan and have had to make some challenging and difficult decisions about staff and class organisation. For example, they question how effective three classes are compared with four and are conscious of ensuring best value for the pupils and parents by monitoring the progress that pupils are making. Firm action has been taken by the governors to ensure that they fulfil their statutory responsibilities. However, the policy for race equality has not been written and the health and safety policy has not been recently updated.

47. The school has a comprehensive staff development programme. Within the last year, training has, for example, taken place in developing science, writing and mathematics, as well as gymnastics. Performance management is suitably established.

Financial information for the year April 2003 to March 2004

Income and expenditure (£)	
Total income	256262
Total expenditure	260153
Expenditure per pupil	3469

Balances (£)	
Balance from previous year	19301
Balance carried forward to the next year	15410

48. Finances are managed efficiently and governors understand the importance of using funding to raise standards. Planning is linked to the educational priorities in the school. Governors receive regular information, which allows them to monitor spending. Governors know that the next priority will be to enhance the provision in the Reception class. Financial reserves partly reflect this, while also planning to reduce the teaching commitment of the Headteacher in the next year. Governors have a clear understanding about how to get best value.

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

AREAS OF LEARNING IN THE FOUNDATION STAGE

The provision for children in the Foundation Stage is **unsatisfactory**.

49. Children are admitted to school on a part-time basis during September or January in the year in which they become five. They are integrated into full-time attendance at the start of their second term in school. This year, they entered a class that also had a group of sixteen Year 1 pupils. Induction procedures are good and this means that the children quickly get used to the school routines. Overall, their attainment on entry is average. By the end of the Reception year, most children are unlikely to achieve the standards expected for their age. The quality of teaching and learning is unsatisfactory, which prevents the children from achieving well. The curriculum provided is unsatisfactory and does not meet the needs of the children. There are insufficient opportunities for children to develop their independent learning by selecting an activity and using their imagination in free-play activities. There is insufficient use of outside space to offer the full range of an appropriate curriculum for children in the Reception class. The size of the indoor classroom is relatively small for the number of children and, together with the amount of furniture in there, the children have very little space to move about. The provision, children's achievement and teaching and learning have declined since the last inspection and there has not been sufficient improvement in the accommodation

Personal, social and emotional development

Provision is **unsatisfactory**

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The children are happy in school and relationships are satisfactory.
- Unsatisfactory teaching and learning limit the children's progress.
- The curriculum is not matched to the needs of the children.

50. By the end of the Reception year, most children are unlikely to achieve the expected standards for children of this age in their personal, social and emotional development. Teaching and learning are unsatisfactory, as too few opportunities are provided for the children to take part in their own initiated activities. Too often, the children are directed to activities, which limits the progress that they make in developing independence and sustaining concentration. Also opportunities for children to engage in play activities that develop cooperation between children are poor. Nonetheless, children are happy to come to school and are enthusiastic. Relationships between adults and children are satisfactory, which helps to promote the children's self-esteem and confidence. Overall, the children are well behaved, but many do not quickly respond when asked to stop their activities and be ready to listen.

Communication, language and literacy

Provision is **unsatisfactory**

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Communication, language and literacy skills are underdeveloped.
- Children make unsatisfactory progress from their average starting point.
- The children have poor listening skills.

51. The children make unsatisfactory progress in developing new skills in their communication, language and literacy development. The teaching and the curriculum provided for speaking, listening, reading and writing are unsatisfactory. Most children are confident speakers, but their listening skills are poor. Although the teacher provides opportunities for the children to talk, there are missed chances for high quality promotion of speaking and listening skills. The children enjoy listening to stories and most know about books and how to use them. They regularly take books home to share with their parents. Due to the children being taught with the pupils in Year 1, the teaching of phonics is not adapted well enough to the needs of the young children in the Reception year so that they can use these to help with the development of their reading and writing skills. However, they are encouraged to use their early writing skills, which is good, as this gives them confidence to write.

Mathematical development

Provision is **unsatisfactory**

Main strengths and weaknesses

- There is underachievement for most children.
- Poor organisation and lack of pace limit learning.
- There are insufficient resources.

52. The teaching of mathematics does not take full account of the children's prior learning and of their stage of mathematical development. This results in many children underachieving. The over use of worksheets limits the children's mathematical development and too often results in a colouring exercise. Most times, the worksheets are the same for all the children, which shows that the work is not matched to the needs of the children. The lack of pace in the lessons does not move the children's learning on quickly enough. Although practical experiences are provided, frequently all the children in the Reception year are taught as a group with Year 1 pupils. This does not ensure that the needs of each child are met. When the children were in the hall estimating the number of cubes in a feely bag and writing the guessed number on their mini white boards, they did not have a number line to help them to know the correct formation of the numbers. This activity was very directed and resulted in much time being lost while the children waited for their turns. Although adults question the children while they are engaged in their activities, this is too infrequent to draw out and develop the children's mathematical understanding. The lack of sufficient resources restricts the children's mathematical development. While buying and selling flowers, the children only had seven plastic pennies, so were unable to have sufficient for both the shopkeeper and the customers to work with. Opportunities to develop the children's mathematical thinking through play are missed. Despite these weaknesses, children are well behaved and keen to learn.

Knowledge and understanding of the world

Provision is **unsatisfactory**

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Teaching and learning are unsatisfactory.
- Visits to places of interest provide children with first-hand experiences.

53. Teaching and learning are unsatisfactory for this area of the curriculum, as the children's achievement is unsatisfactory. First-hand experiences, such as the visit to the local plant nursery, engage their interest and extend their learning. However, the follow up to the visits was not used to the best advantage. Although the children planted seeds, insufficient time was given to this activity to help the children fully understand the conditions required for the seeds to grow. The children listen to stories from different religious cultures. They know the story of *Noah's Ark* and the parable *The Good Samaritan*. The story about the death of Buddha was retold using text that was beyond young children's understanding. Although the teacher explained some of the words, the children made unsatisfactory gains in their learning. Many have difficulty understanding that Jesus and Buddha were two different people. This was clearly evident when they were asked. "How did Buddha die?" The reply quickly came back "He died on the cross". Assessment from this lesson was unsatisfactory as it indicated that the children were able to compare the lives of Jesus with that of Buddha rather than that the children have little understanding that they were two different people. The children learn satisfactorily about the differences between old and new toys and how to master basic computer skills.

Physical development

54. There is insufficient evidence to make judgements about the quality of teaching and learning for the children's physical development. However, much of the children's writing shows that many have weak pencil control. The limitations of the accommodation mean that the children cannot move easily between the indoor and an easily accessible outdoor play area. They have insufficient opportunities to use the large toys for outdoor play, which limits their physical and personal and social development.

Creative development

55. There was insufficient evidence to make judgements about the quality of teaching and learning for the children's creative development. However, many of their drawings and paintings are immature for their age. Also, when playing in the role-play area, their imaginative play is not stimulated and their vocabulary is not extended through an adult taking part with them.

SUBJECTS IN KEY STAGES 1 and 2

ENGLISH

Provision in English is **very good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Standards in English are well above average in Year 2 and above average by the end of Year 6.
- Pupils' achievement is very good.
- Pupils have very positive attitudes to the subject.
- Teaching is very good in Year 2 and consistently good from there on.
- The subject is managed very well.
- The tasks set for pupils' individual work are closely matched to their needs.
- Literacy skills are used well across the curriculum.

Commentary

56. Standards by Year 2 are well above average in speaking, listening, reading and writing. Many pupils attain standards in English that are above average by the end of Year 6 and their achievement is very good. This includes pupils with SEN and the more able pupils. This is a very good improvement from the judgements of the last inspection.

57. Standards in reading are well above average in the current Year 2, which is similar to the 2003 test results. Most pupils read texts accurately and know how to sound out unfamiliar words. They readily talk about the books they read and show a good understanding of the story and characters. Pupils in Year 6 are achieving standards that are above average in their reading. They enjoy reading and understand its importance in all aspects of their learning. By Year 6, most pupils are confirmed readers who can confidently tackle a wide range of texts. Pupils have developed the necessary skills for finding information in books and on the Internet, which they use well to extend their learning. There is a good range of colour-coded books in the school library, which is used well to extend pupils' learning.

58. Standards in writing are well above average in Year 2 and above average in Year 6. Most pupils achieve very well, because of very good teaching in Year 2 and consistently good teaching from there to Year 6. Pupils are taught about grammar and punctuation and have an increasing knowledge of how these should be used. Most pupils in Year 2 have a secure grasp of the spelling of common words and use adjectives well to enhance their stories. Many pupils have a good understanding of how to form simple and complex sentences, and use a good range of punctuation. Higher order writing skills are taught as soon as pupils are able to manage them. This is helping many pupils to achieve such high standards. Most pupils in Year 6 use paragraphs, correct punctuation and good grammatical structure in their written work. Teachers use assessment information very well in order to set targets to help pupils to improve their standards of attainment.

59. Teachers work hard to ensure that pupils are given good opportunities to develop their speaking and listening skills and this encourages effective learning. As a result, standards are well above average in Year 2 and above average in Year 6. Drama is used well to extend pupils' speaking and listening skills. In a good lesson in the Years 2 and 3, drama was used very well to link pupils' speaking and listening skills with their historical work on the Tudors. Pupils listen well in lessons and confidently speak to each other and adults, using a good, extensive vocabulary. In Year 6, there were many examples of pupils contributing well to discussions on a range of issues. For example, pupils in the Year 4, 5, 6 class can clearly express their ideas on the differences and similarities between the nursery rhyme *Tom, Tom, the piper's son* and Martin McGann's poem *Tom, Tom the Piper's son, Jon Snow and me*. Many are able to use

inference and understand the underlying meaning of the poem. There is good evidence that many younger pupils are achieving very high attainment due to consistently good teaching.

60. Pupils' very positive attitudes to learning and very good behaviour enable all to learn and make a significant contribution to their high standards of attainment. Teachers have a secure understanding of the national literacy strategy and implement it effectively. Teaching in English is very good in Year 2 and consistently good from there on. The effect of this is that pupils' achievement is very good. Teaching assistants are well prepared for lessons and make a good contribution to pupils' learning. Teachers' lively presentations quickly engage the interest of pupils. Pupils respond enthusiastically and are able to concentrate for long periods. When teaching the whole class together in the first part of a lesson, open-ended questions are used effectively to direct pupils' thinking and their learning is consistently extended. When pupils are working on individual or group tasks activities are matched well to their abilities, which extends their learning well. Teachers use good quality literature well, such as works by Robert Louis Stevenson and Ancient Greek Myths, to extend and enhance pupils' vocabulary and learning of story structure.

61. The management of English is very good. The school has concentrated on improving the quality of teaching and learning in English in order to improve the standards that pupils achieve. The school has been very successful, as it has improved the standards very well in English since the school's last inspection. Assessment in English is very effective and teachers use this well to plan further work. Results of national tests are analysed rigorously to identify areas where pupils have difficulty. This enables teachers to set realistic, yet challenging targets for pupils, in order that many may achieve very well.

Language and literacy across the curriculum

62. Speaking and listening skills are developed very well through all subjects. Teachers are very aware of the need to promote accurate and clear speaking skills. By Year 6, pupils confidently use reference and resource books. The use of literacy is very good across the curriculum, especially in history and RE and good in geography and science. This reinforces pupils' very good achievement in English very well. Most teachers use a challenging enquiry based technique, which encourages pupils to think independently and to use research skills very well across the curriculum. However, this good practice is not consistent across the school, as the overuse of worksheets in Year 1 limits opportunities for pupils to develop their writing and recording skills.

MATHEMATICS

Provision in mathematics is **very good**

Strengths and weaknesses

- Pupils' achievement is very good overall.
- The quality of teaching and learning is at least good from Year 2 to Year 6.
- In Year 1, there are missed opportunities to ensure that all pupils' needs are met.
- The curriculum is very broad and interesting.
- Leadership and management of the subject are very good.

Commentary

63. Pupils achieve very well and by the end of Year 6, the current group of six, all girl pupils, are attaining standards that are above average. This shows very good progress for all abilities, including those who have joined the school in the last few years. This very good achievement is also evident in almost all other years in the school and is a direct result of very good leadership of the subject and good overall teaching and learning. These two factors have resulted in very good improvement overall since the last inspection.

64. The quality of teaching and learning is good overall. In Year 1, teaching and learning are broadly satisfactory, but unlike other year groups, sometimes, pupils' individual needs are not so well met. For example, the middle ability pupils made poor progress when adding up and writing money sums, as they did not have any coins to help them and thus found it hard to decide how to record their answers.

65. The quality of teaching and learning in Years 2 and 3 is of a very high standard and pupils make rapid progress. For example, when starting in Year 2, they were just beginning to understand basic tens and units but in nine months, they are confidently doing calculations using multiplication and division facts, such as understanding that 25×3 is also equal to $75 \div 3$. Currently, all pupils by the end of Year 2 are working at well above average standards. This is because pupils benefit from learning how to manipulate numbers, shapes and measurement in all sorts of interesting ways. Learning is rooted in high quality and well-organised investigations. For example, when pupils explored symmetry in the playground and all pupils grasped the idea of lines of symmetry. Higher ability pupils were helped to see how rotational symmetry is achieved by chalking shapes on a large grid. In Years 2 and 3, lessons are planned to an excellent standard.

66. In Years 4 to 6, teaching and learning are consistently good. Lessons are very well planned and reflect a real understanding of the needs of this mixed age class and how pupils learn in different ways. A major strength here is that pupils are helped to think in different ways. For example, the answer is 2012, what is the question?

67. Due to good assessment procedures, work is carefully planned for all ability groups from Year 2 onwards. Overall, higher ability pupils are given activities, which allow them to deepen their skills and knowledge. Pupils with SEN achieve very well in relation to their set targets and are helped to overcome any learning difficulties as a result of good support by teachers and assistants. Traveller heritage pupils also achieve very well and often reach very high standards in their work, not only because of the support that they are given, but also because of the careful analysis of their ongoing progress. All pupils have challenging targets for their improvement. Work is very well marked from Year 2 onwards and this helps pupils to clarify their ideas and make changes to their answers or to find ways of solving the problem differently. Teachers make sure that pupils know how and what to improve. Overall, teachers' methods and strategies are effective in inspiring them to enjoy their learning. The subject makes a good contribution to pupils' spiritual, social and cultural development, particularly through praising pupils for their efforts.

68. Leadership shows a very clear vision of how to develop the subject and, through very good management, this is helping to raise standards. For example, there has been a whole-school emphasis on developing problem solving using written and spoken word problems.

Important changes have been made to improve assessment and the tracking of pupils' progress from year to year and pupils are now doing more investigations. Since 1998, teaching and learning have improved considerably overall.

Mathematics across the curriculum

69. Good opportunities are planned to use mathematics in other subjects. In ICT, pupils make many charts and graphs. For example, pupils in Year 5 made a football league matrix. All classes use an interactive web site for numeracy. In art and design, pupils design and make a variety of pictures. In DT, they have accurately measured the components to make mechanical toys. In science, they record data about experiments using decimals.

SCIENCE

Provision for science is **satisfactory**

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Teaching is good for Years 2 to 6.
- Marking is consistent across these years and aids pupils' learning.
- The opportunities for investigation have been increased.
- There is a good range of visits to support the subject.
- The subject supports English and mathematical development well.

Commentary

70. Standards are well above average by Year 2 and currently average by Year 6. Teaching and learning are good overall. Pupils in Year 2 show very good achievement as a result of very good teaching and, by the end of Year 2, standards are very high. Teaching is good in Years 4 to 6 and pupils achieve well. Standards in the current Year 6 are broadly average. This shows good improvement, particularly on the school's performance in the last year, for the most able pupils, who are now doing work which is at a suitable level for their ability.

71. In Year 1, pupils do not do as well as they could. Where teaching is at its best, teachers motivate all pupils well and expect high standards. This is evident in almost all lessons and in books. There is a good amount of work across the whole range of the subject. Work is well presented and marking tells pupils what they need to do to improve. In a Year 2 and 3 lesson the teacher provided very good mock ups of the arm to show how muscles can only pull. Pupils identified this as an arm joint and why it was not a knee. Where teaching is less successful work is not challenging enough and the pace of learning slow.

72. The use of visits and visitors adds interest and first hand experience to their work in science. These have included a trip for Years 5 and 6 to Glaxo Smith Kline in Tonbridge and visits to the Science Museum and Hadlow Manor, where they studied mini-beasts. Drugs and sex education and healthy eating are also covered within the science curriculum.

73. Leadership and management are satisfactory. The Headteacher is providing a holding role and has ensured that investigations have been given high priority. This has helped to raise standards. The subject supports skills in speaking and listening well. Teachers give good opportunities for pupils to talk with partners and predict what is likely to happen in their

investigations. There are good opportunities to write up their work and present it in a range of written forms. Mathematical skills are developed as pupils measure accurately, collect data and display them in a range of graphs and charts. Pupils are developing scientific vocabulary and have appropriate opportunities to talk about their findings from investigations. There are appropriate opportunities to use ICT to practise basic skills. The subject makes a good contribution to pupils' social, cultural and spiritual development.

INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY

74. Only one lesson was seen during the inspection, therefore, it was not possible to judge the overall quality of teaching and learning or the overall provision. Other evidence indicates that all aspects of the subject are covered and there are several significant strengths. Pupils reach average standards at eleven but above average standards at the end of Year 2. This shows a good improvement and achievement from the previous inspection when standards were average by Year 2 but below average at Year 6.

75. Word processing supports the whole curriculum and data is handled in mathematics. In English, pupils regularly combine text and graphics. In most subjects, CD ROM or the Internet are used to find things out. In the Year 2 and 3 lesson seen, teaching and learning were good and pupils achieved well in controlling a robotic toy. They wrote procedures to move from planet to planet on a space map and developed their mathematical skills well as they instructed 45, 90 and 180 degree turns. The fact, however, that only one control toy was available limited hands on experience. There were some good examples of work using an art package. For example, the stained glass windows were of a high standard.

76. Leadership and management of the subject are good. The co-ordinator is knowledgeable and provides good support for colleagues. Management ensures that work is planned to cover all strands and that pupils now build systematically on their skills. Leaders have a clear vision of what needs to be done to move the subject on and have identified the control element for further development. The new suite has improved opportunities for pupils to develop their skills and use them in other subjects. Staff have completed national training and are competent users of ICT. There is a clear policy in place for safe use of the Internet.

HUMANITIES

77. No **geography** lessons were seen during the inspection and only one history and RE lesson were observed, thus, the overall provision in these subjects was not judged. However, from evaluation of the very comprehensive range of work seen, it was possible to judge standards and pupils' achievement. These subjects make a very positive contribution to pupils' personal, social, spiritual and cultural development.

78. In geography, pupils make good progress and many are achieving above average standards. Pupils are able to use their research skills well to gather information from a good range of resources. Very good marking in Years 2 and 3 is helping to extend pupils' learning very well. The marking is some of the best ever seen and shows very high expectations.

79. Pupils in Year 1 can draw a simple plan of their route to school, showing their home, the church and the school. They learn the difference between the main types of weather in the area, such as sunny, raining, hot and cold. Pupils in the Year 2 and 3 class learn about different types of weather around the world. They use a map of the world to show how the temperature differs in September in many parts of the world. Pupils use a colour-coded key for easy

identification on the map of the six climates in the world. They learn about the uses of water and how the different types of cloud are made. Pupils use photographic evidence well to extend their learning about Kenya. A good range of artefacts helps pupils to gain well in their understanding of the differences between their own lives and those of people living in a different country. Pupils in the Years 4, 5 and 6 build upon their previous knowledge of water to find out about the use of water across the world. Good links are made with their science work on the pollution of water and how this affects people's health. The visit to Rye later this term will help to strengthen their understanding about the similarities and differences between Frittenden and the contrasting locality of Rye. Pupils have made a good start by using maps, photographic evidence and reference materials to extend their learning about the human and physical features.

80. In **history**, pupils make very good progress and many are achieving well above average standards. An enquiry-based technique is used to help pupils to develop their research skills very well and to extend their learning. Marking is of a very high standard. Helpful comments are used to help pupils to feel successful. Probing questions are used to gently persuade pupils to delve even further into their research work, such as "How did the Yorks feel to lose power?" "Why do you think Henry VIII was unpopular?" These types of questions provide ways to improve pupils' knowledge, understanding and speaking skills. Most pupils respond to the questions and teachers often then pose another question, always trying to extend pupils' learning. In Years 2 and 3, drama is used well to help pupils to realise how people from the past may have felt. The drama work on being a master or a servant enabled pupils to realise how Henry VIII may have behaved towards his wives and would have behaved to his servants.

81. Pupils in Year 1 learn about old and new homes and how shopping is different now from then. They know the about the life of Grace Darling. Pupils in Years 2 and 3 can use a range of evidence well to extend their understanding about the Tudors and Ancient Egypt. They have a good understanding of the passing of time and use a timeline well. They have a very good understanding of the importance of the River Nile to the Ancient Egyptians. They can use the information from pictures of tomb paintings to discover facts about farming, Egyptian gods and the use of canopic jars in the ritual of mummification. They review and evaluate their learning at the end of each topic, which is very good as this enables the pupils know what they have learned and helps the teacher with assessment. Pupils in Years 4, 5 and 6 use their prior knowledge to extend their learning about the Tudors, as they delve deeper into that period in history. They learn about the reasons for the Spanish Armada and the lives of the main people involved. They have a very good understanding of life in Ancient Greece compared with life in Greece today. Pupils' artwork is linked well with their history work, such as the collage depicting 'Jason and the Golden Fleece' and paintings of Ancient Greek vases.

82. In **RE**, many pupils are achieving well above average standards, due to the very good progress that they make in their RE lessons. From Year 2 to Year 6, pupils' work shows that many have a very good understanding of Christianity, Sikhism, Judaism and Buddhism. Artefacts are used very well to help extend pupils' learning. In Year 1, pupils learn about some stories in the Old Testament, such as the life of Moses, and from the New Testament about the life of Jesus. They know that Christmas and Easter are the two main celebrations for Christians. They also learn about the main aspects of the life of Buddha. In the Year 2-3 class, pupils make a very detailed study of why Easter is so significant to Christians. They also have a very good understanding of Judaism. They know that the Bible is a very special book for Christians and that the Torah is equally important to Jews. This is linked very well with why certain books are very special to them. They know about the story of creation and many of the parables. They know why the Ten Commandments were important to Moses and are still important to the Jews.

This is linked very well to their understanding of the importance of rules and with making their own class rules.

83. In Years 4 to 6, pupils make an in-depth study of Christianity and Sikhism. Very good links are made with both music and works of art to provide pupils with a greater understanding of Christianity through the ages. Music by Handel and works of art enable pupils to realise that people over many centuries have been inspired by the life of Jesus. Visits to the church, the stained glass windows and artefacts in the church help pupils to gain very well in their learning about Christianity. Pupils' understanding of Pentecost was reinforced very well, when the vicar led an assembly. Most pupils have a very good understanding of Sikhism. They know that Sikhs wear the five Ks as a symbol of their faith and that Guru Nanak believed that it is how you act in your life and what you do for others that is of the greatest importance.

CREATIVE, AESTHETIC, PRACTICAL AND PHYSICAL SUBJECTS

84. The main focus areas for the inspection were English, mathematics, science, ICT and the Foundation Stage. Thus creative aspects did not receive as much inspection time and this is why provision overall is not judged in each subject. It was not possible to see any PE or design and technology lessons. One lesson was seen in art and music. Inspectors talked to pupils about their work and held discussions with teachers and sampled pupils' work. Overall, links with pupils' spiritual, social and cultural development are very good.

85. In **art and design**, standards are above average by Year 2 and Year 6. Achievement is good by Year 2 and Year 6. There has been good improvement in developing learning opportunities since the last inspection, which reflects the good leadership and management in the subject. The curriculum is very good. Whilst no overall judgement is made about teaching and learning, the wealth of high quality evidence suggests that this has many very good features.

86. Strengths in art include the very good links with other subjects. Pupils make effective use of ICT to help to develop their use of colour and expression of their imaginations. Links to literacy are also very good, as art is used to develop descriptive vocabulary and evaluate mood, such as pupils' collage of the Snow Queen and Cobweb designs, which link to their poetry. Links with RE are very good, as pupils develop their spiritual awareness, by looking at the symbolic colours in such paintings as 'The Adoration of the Magi'. Pupils use their sketchbooks very well to record different ways to use artists' materials and styles. These books are also used to assess pupils' skills, which is good practice. Extra curricular activities are very good and enrich pupils' learning. For example, pupils have visited several London galleries.

87. In the good lesson seen, pupils sketched and painted local scenes from Frittenden. Already, they had walked around the area and had used a digital camera to record particular areas of interest, such as the bluebells in the wood. Following a good evaluation and demonstration about how to develop perspective, pupils confidently mixed their own watercolours and used their knowledge of different styles of painting in their own work. For example, a higher ability pupil painted in the style of Seurat. Pupils really enjoy artwork.

88. Limited information was gathered on **design and technology** but evidence from classroom displays and samples of work show that work that is of an average standard by Year 6, which is an improvement on the findings from the last inspection, when designing skills were lower than average. There is insufficient evidence to make judgements about teaching and learning and pupils' achievement. The new subject manager has a good vision for development

and has attended a course to assist in the evaluation of the subject. This subject has not been a major priority for school development. Pupils enjoy a broad curriculum. For example, they design and make moving books and cook wartime recipes. Links with other subjects are good, especially for science, where pupils have designed and made toys, with cams. Pupils evaluate and modify their ideas to improve designs.

89. In **music**, singing, composing and evaluating are above average by Year 6. Pupils achieve well. This shows good improvement since 1998. Links with other subjects are very well promoted, especially the links to literacy and RE, where pupils are helped to widen their vocabulary and talk about their feelings. They often create music from poems, stories and paintings. Pupils control their voices and sing enthusiastically in rounds. They experimented with sheets of paper to compose a piece to express the feelings and mood of a picture by Turner entitled 'Rain, Steam and Speed'. Here, pupils used their imaginations, paper and hand sounds to create an exciting sequence of sound. All pupils from Year 4 have a music diary, which they use to write about a good range of contemporary and classical pieces of music. This work is carefully marked by teachers to widen pupils' knowledge and understanding. The school has a suitable range of instruments. Links with ICT are developing and the school recognises that there are few multicultural instruments. The music curriculum is good and is well supported by clubs and visits. Pupils enjoy two recorder clubs and some have guitar lessons. Links with a local secondary school are well established to widen pupils' learning.

90. It was not possible to gain sufficient evidence about **PE** to form firm judgements. However, the recent appointment of a new subject manager is resulting in speedy progress in developing the subject. All pupils are currently benefiting from tennis and cricket coaching. Pupils and staff visit a local sporting excellence school to widen their skills, particularly in gymnastics and athletics. This is especially useful, as the school hall is not big enough for apparatus lessons and, once a week, it has to use the village hall. Clubs are available in dance, and football and netball and three quarters of all pupils attend a sports club. The subject makes a strong contribution to pupils' social and personal development, as there is a drive to help pupils develop their health and fitness.

PERSONAL, SOCIAL AND HEALTH EDUCATION AND CITIZENSHIP

Personal, social and health education

Provision in personal, social and health education is **good**

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Visits and visitors support learning.
- Pupils' self-esteem is enhanced through praise.
- Pupils' views are valued and pupils learn respect for each other.
- The curriculum policy has not been recently up-dated.

Commentary

91. There are good opportunities for pupils to develop their personal and social skills, especially through visits. For example, as pupils learn how to work and play together on their residential trip to 'Little Canada'. 'Circle time' gives pupils the chance to raise issues of concern for individuals or the whole class. Pupils are encouraged to show their feelings and express

their emotions and staff work effectively to enhance pupils' self-esteem. For example, this is encouraged in art and music and feelings charts let adults know when there is a problem and pupils under stress are helped. The school counsellor provides opportunities for pupils to feel safe in sharing worries. Pupils are encouraged to widen their respect for others from different cultural traditions. The school council gives pupils a valuable say in the day to day running of the school and the opportunity to raise issues. The impressive amount of extra-curricular activity in the school enhances pupils' social and personal skills. Many sports, music, craft and gardening activities are made available out of school hours. Members of the caring and medical professions, emergency services, parents, priests and others provide examples of enrichment in drugs education, health, cultural, fitness, sex education, citizenship, safety and spiritual well-being. There has been effective development of the subject since the last inspection but the curriculum policy has not been reviewed or updated recently and the subject has not been monitored.

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	3
Pupils' achievement	3
Pupils' attitudes, values and other personal qualities	3
Attendance	5
Attitudes	2
Behaviour, including the extent of exclusions	3
Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	3
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	2
Accommodation and resources	4
Pupils' care, welfare, health and safety	3
Support, advice and guidance for pupils	2
How well the school seeks and acts on pupils' views	2
The effectiveness of the school's links with parents	2
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
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Inspectors make judgements on a scale: excellent (grade 1); very good (2); good (3); satisfactory (4); unsatisfactory (5); poor (6); very poor (7).