

INSPECTION REPORT

KINGS HILL PRIMARY SCHOOL

Kings Hill, West Malling

LEA area: Kent

Unique reference number: 130952

Headteacher: Ms Sue Tunncliffe

Lead inspector: Mr Paul Canham

Dates of inspection: 8th – 11th December 2003

Inspection number: 256618

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

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INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Type of school:	Infant and Junior
School category:	Community
Age range of pupils:	4 to 11 years
Gender of pupils:	Mixed
Number on roll:	401
School address:	Crispin Way Kings Hill West Malling
Postcode:	ME19 4LS
Telephone number:	01732 842739
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Appropriate authority:	The governing body
Name of chair of governors:	Mr Roy Williams
Date of previous inspection:	29 th June 1998

CHARACTERISTICS OF THE SCHOOL

- Kings Hill is larger than average for this type of school.
- It has grown rapidly in size since the previous inspection, from a roll of 100 to its current number of 401 pupils. Fewer than half of the pupils currently in Year 6 began their education at Kings Hill.
- The school serves an area in which businesses and new housing are being developed at a rapid rate.
- Nearly all pupils are White British.
- Kings Hill has gained nationally recognised awards for Healthy Eating and Investors in People.
- The proportion of pupils with English as an additional language is very low.
- The proportion of pupils with special educational needs is well below average; the majority of pupils have moderate learning difficulties.
- The proportion of pupils eligible for free school meals is well below the national average.
- Attainment on entry to the Reception is average.

INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Members of the inspection team			Subject responsibilities
1353	Paul Canham	<i>Lead inspector</i>	Science; Personal, social, health and citizenship education; Physical education.
9388	Anthony Mundy	<i>Lay inspector</i>	
18498	Denise Morris	<i>Team inspector</i>	Design and technology; Information and communication technology; Mathematics; Special educational needs.
26292	Helen Mundy	<i>Team inspector</i>	Art and design; Music; The Foundation Stage.
12764	Wendy Thomas	<i>Team inspector</i>	English; Geography; History; Religious education.

The inspection contractor was:

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PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

OVERALL EVALUATION

Kings Hill is an effective school and it provides good value for money. Since the last inspection the school has grown considerably in size and fewer than 50 per cent of pupils in the current Year 6 began their education at Kings Hill. The headteacher and staff have worked hard to maintain the strong feeling of community, and parents value this greatly. Pupils achieve well and their personal development is very good, because they receive good teaching and very effective support and guidance. Recent results show that pupils attain standards that are above those expected nationally of pupils of similar age. The headteacher provides very effective leadership, and leadership and management overall are good. With the support of staff and the very effective governors, she provides a clear vision and is committed to promoting equality and high levels of achievement. The school works in close partnership with parents, who value the broad and rich curriculum their children receive.

The school's main strengths and weaknesses are:

- Good levels of achievement and standards that are above average in English, mathematics and science by Year 6.
- Very effective leadership by the headteacher and very good governance.
- Good leadership and management overall.
- Pupils' very positive attitudes and very good behaviour.
- Very good personal and social development.
- A very good range of extra-curricular and enrichment activities.
- Very good support and guidance for pupils, based on careful monitoring.
- Good teaching, but with some inconsistencies.
- The limited outdoor facilities for children in the Foundation Stage.
- The lack of consistency in standards of spelling, handwriting and presentation of pupils' work.

IMPROVEMENT SINCE THE LAST INSPECTION

Improvement since the last inspection is **good**. The school has successfully addressed the issues for action identified in the previous report. Work is now well matched to the needs of pupils of different attainment. Challenging tasks are provided for higher attaining pupils. Assessment procedures are now good, and teachers use them effectively to identify the next steps for pupils' learning. Standards in the core subjects of English, mathematics and science have improved and are now above those expected of pupils aged 11. Good standards in teaching have been maintained. The school now provides a good curriculum for its pupils, with very good extra-curricular opportunities. The headteacher continues to provide very good leadership. The role of the governors has been strengthened and governors now provide very effective support to the school.

STANDARDS ACHIEVED

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

Key: A - well above average; B - above average; C - average; D - below average; E - well below average

** Just 25 per cent of pupils in last year's Year 6 began their education at the school so it is difficult to make a sound comparison with similar schools.*

In making comparisons with similar schools in terms of achievement and trends over time, it is difficult to make a well informed judgement, because the school roll has increased substantially and fewer than 50 per cent of pupils in the current Year 6 began their education at the school. The national test data shows that, when compared with those of all schools, standards achieved by Year 6 pupils were well above national averages in English and mathematics, and average in science. In English, girls gained higher standards than boys. However, boys achieved higher standards than girls in mathematics, and substantially higher in science. When these standards are compared to those gained nationally, boys are outperforming the girls in all three subjects. The school has highlighted the differences in performance, and it already provides additional support for science. Pupils in Year 2 achieved standards that were above average in reading, and well above average in writing and mathematics. The girls outperformed boys in all three subjects, though the pattern is similar to that found nationally. There were no significant differences between the standards gained by pupils from different ethnic backgrounds.

Evidence from the inspection shows that achievement is good. Attainment on entry is average, and the good start children receive in the Foundation Stage is developed systematically through the school. Standards of work seen in Years 2 and 6 during the inspection suggest that the majority of pupils are on course to reach levels above those expected nationally in English and mathematics by the end of the school year. In science, standards of work in Year 2 indicate that the majority of pupils are likely to reach the nationally expected level, although pupils in Year 6 are on course to reach levels above those expected nationally. In religious education, pupils' work in Years 2 and 6 is likely to meet the requirements of the locally Agreed Syllabus. Standards in information and communication technology (ICT) are on course to meet the national expectations for Years 2 and 6. Pupils in Year 6 are likely to reach above average standards in history and geography. Owing to the focus of the inspection, it was not possible to gather sufficient evidence to judge standards in all subjects, although some good quality work was seen. No apparent differences in achievement were seen between boys and girls, or pupils from different ethnic backgrounds. Pupils with learning difficulties achieve well and make good progress towards their individual targets.

Pupils' personal development is very good, and spiritual, moral, social, and cultural development is good. Pupils have very positive attitudes to school and to their learning. Behaviour in lessons is very good, and pupils enjoy very good relationships with one another. They are extremely confident and develop into very mature individuals by the time they leave school.

QUALITY OF EDUCATION

The school provides a good quality of education. The quality of teaching is good, but there are some inconsistencies across the school. Teaching ranged from excellent to unsatisfactory, and there was a striking contrast between the imaginative and challenging teaching styles seen in some classes and the mundane teaching seen in others. Good teaching was found in almost all year groups and in several subjects, and assessment is good. The school recognises the need to build on existing good practice to improve consistency in teaching. Owing to the focus of the inspection, it was not possible to gather sufficient evidence to judge teaching in all subjects. The school provides a good curriculum, which is broad and balanced. Pupils benefit from a rich range of extra-curricular activities, including foreign languages and sport. The provision for special educational needs is also good, and individual education plans (IEPs) include clear guidance on how to meet pupils' needs. The quality of care is very good and the school is highly valued by parents and the community.

LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

The headteacher provides very effective leadership for the school, and management is good overall. Governors are very effective and the school fully complies with statutory requirements. The headteacher has a clear vision for the school and has skilfully managed the changes as the school has grown in size. The support of key staff and of the very effective governing body means that the values are shared, and there is a strong commitment to high

achievement, a rich curriculum and a high quality of care for pupils. The leadership of staff with curriculum responsibilities is good overall. Subject leaders have good knowledge of the strengths and weaknesses in their areas, though this would be strengthened further if they had more opportunities to monitor teaching and learning.

PARENTS' AND PUPILS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

Parents are very supportive of the school. They feel they are well informed and are very comfortable about approaching the school with concerns or suggestions. Discussions with pupils confirm that they are very happy at school. They feel safe and well cared for, enjoy their lessons and like their teachers.

IMPROVEMENTS NEEDED

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

- Improve consistency in teaching.
- Implement a consistent approach to spelling, handwriting and the presentation of pupils' work.
- Improve the outdoor learning area for the Foundation Stage.

PART B: COMMENTARY ON THE INSPECTION FINDINGS

STANDARDS ACHIEVED BY PUPILS

Standards achieved in areas of learning, subjects and courses

Pupils' achievement is good. The standards of work seen in almost all the subjects which provided a focus for the inspection, including the core subjects, are on course to reach levels which are above those expected nationally. Standards in religious education are likely to reach the objectives of the locally Agreed Syllabus.

Main strengths and weaknesses:

- Good standards of work seen during the inspection.
- Very good attainment in Year 2 and good attainment in Year 6 in national tests.
- Good achievement for all pupils, including those with special educational needs (SEN).
- Good personal and social development.

Commentary

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

Standards in:	School results	National results
English	28.4 (29.6)	26.8 (27.0)
mathematics	28.9 (28.9)	26.8 (26.7)
science	28.4 (27.4)	28.6 (28.3)

There were 47 pupils in the year group.

1. The most recent national test data shows that, when compared with those of all schools, standards achieved by Year 6 pupils in 2003 were well above national averages in English and mathematics, and average in science. In English, girls gained higher standards than boys. However, boys gained higher standards than girls in mathematics, and substantially higher in science. When these standards are compared to those gained nationally, boys are outperforming the girls in all three subjects. The school's own analyses have highlighted the differences in performance, and it has already introduced booster classes for girls in science, to focus on scientific vocabulary and concise recording techniques. The school is aware of the need to review its teaching and learning styles in all subjects and to share the most effective practice. There were no significant differences between the standards gained by pupils from different ethnic backgrounds.

2. It is difficult to make a well-informed judgement about achievement over time in comparison with that of similar schools, because the roll has increased substantially since the school opened in 1997. Just 25 per cent of pupils in last year's Year 6 began their education at Kings Hill. Fewer than 50 per cent of pupils in the current Year 6 have benefited from being at the school throughout their education. Similarly, it is difficult to make a sound judgement about trends over time. However, the school's own assessment data shows that those pupils who attended Kings Hill throughout their primary education made good progress, and that their attainment was higher than that of most pupils who joined the school during Years 3 to 6.

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

Standards in:	School results	National results
reading	16.8 (16.5)	15.7 (15.8)
writing	16.3 (15.1)	14.6 (14.4)
mathematics	17.6 (16.4)	16.3 (16.5)

There were 59 pupils in the year group.

3. Information from national assessment data shows that, in comparison with all schools, pupils in Year 2 achieved standards in 2003 that were above average in reading, but well above average in writing and mathematics. The girls outperformed boys in all three subjects, though the pattern is similar to that found nationally. There were no significant differences between the standards gained by pupils from different ethnic backgrounds. When the results are compared to those of similar schools, standards were average in reading and above average in writing and mathematics. The school has recently focused on pupils' writing as an area for development and this has had a significant impact on standards.

4. When children enter the Reception class their attainment is broadly average. They make good progress, and by the time they start Year 1 most children are achieving the nationally recommended early learning goals for children in the Foundation Stage.

5. Standards of work seen in Years 2 and 6 during the inspection suggest that in English and mathematics the majority of pupils are on course to reach levels above those expected nationally by the end of the Year. Most pupils are confident readers and achieve well in response to good teaching. The quality of written work is good in terms of content, and pupils write with flair and imagination. However, their work is let down by weaknesses in spelling, handwriting and presentation. The school has recently developed strategies for using drama and role-play across the curriculum. This has had a significant impact on pupils' attainment. For example, pupils are given good opportunities to use their speaking skills in history and geography lessons. In science, standards of work in Year 2 indicate that the majority of pupils are likely to reach the nationally expected level, although pupils in Year 6 are on course to reach levels above those expected nationally. This is because of effective teaching and richness in pupil's learning.

6. In religious education, pupils' work in Years 2 and 6 is likely to meet the requirements of the locally Agreed Syllabus. Standards in ICT are on course to meet the national expectations for Years 2 and 6. The school has only recently been able to develop ICT resources, and standards are rapidly improving. Pupils in Year 6 are likely to reach above average standards in history and geography. Owing to the focus of the inspection, it was not possible to gather enough evidence to judge standards in all subjects, although some good quality work was seen in history and geography, where pupils demonstrated good subject knowledge. No apparent differences in achievement were seen between boys and girls, or between pupils from different ethnic backgrounds.

7. Pupils with learning difficulties achieve well and make good progress towards their individual targets. This is largely because of the good support they receive and the careful planning of work to meet their individual needs. The small number of pupils for whom English is an additional language also make good progress. The good achievement throughout the school results from a number of factors: the richness of the curriculum, the good quality teaching, the strength of subject leadership and the detailed planning and effective use of assessment data to ensure that challenging work is provided for all pupils.

Pupils' attitudes, values and other personal qualities

Pupils' attitudes, behaviour and personal development are very good. Attendance and punctuality are also very good. Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good.

Main strengths and weaknesses:

- Very good attendance and punctuality.
- Very good behaviour and attitudes.
- The very high interest pupils show in their work.
- Pupils' high self-esteem and confidence.
- The very good relationships between pupils and staff, and between pupils themselves.

Commentary

8. Pupils' attitudes to school are very good. Each day, they look forward to a variety of interesting activities. This instils in them a love of learning. Older pupils interviewed during the inspection reported that they work hard and that lessons are fun. Pupils in Year 3 talked enthusiastically about the range of activities offered and the clubs they attend. Pupils in Year 5 were enthralled by their 'Victorian day'. They joined enthusiastically in the role-play, developing a good understanding of the different ways of learning and teaching in the Victorian period, and of how teachers ensured good behaviour.
9. The youngest pupils put heart and soul into the Nativity performance for parents and friends. They had learned their parts well, and spoke and sang fluently and confidently. Pupils are very proud of their role as members of the school council. They take their responsibilities very seriously and feel that their contribution to the school is valued. For example, the recent *Friendship Stop* in the playground was their suggestion, and pupils make use of it to meet new friends and develop confidence.
10. Pupils' very good behaviour was to be seen throughout the school. It is sustained, even in the small number of lessons where teaching does not fully engage the pupils. Pupils are thoughtful, perceptive and mutually respectful. They have no concerns about bullying. Their maturity contributes to the good quality of their education, and time in lessons is rarely lost through pauses or distractions.
11. The school very successfully develops pupils' personal qualities and social achievements, though occasional opportunities are missed to capitalise on their exceptional poise and confidence. For example, in assemblies seen during the inspection, pupils were attentive and reverential, played the guitar and sang, though they were not invited individually to read aloud, or to lead prayers. Pupils' spiritual experiences and responses are developing in the school's creative arts programme. Pupils and staff agree that their recent performing arts week added a new dimension of spirituality to the curriculum. Pupils and parents are very generous; each year they raise significant amounts of money for local and national charities.
12. Staff and other adults are very good role models. The very good relationships between adults and pupils promote strong moral values in all year groups. All pupils understand and apply concepts of right and wrong. At the playground *Friendship Stop*, they put into practice the slogan 'You can't say you can't play', by inviting individuals to join their games. A recycling group for pupils in Years 3 to 6 monitors old and new environmental issues: the group leads recycling projects for paper, printer cartridges and mobile telephones. Pupils in all year groups are involved in a variety of everyday duties in their classrooms. In Years 3 to 6, pupils volunteer for election as class representatives on the school council. Pupils in Year 6 have whole-school responsibilities as house captains and, identified by coveted tabards, as lunchtime monitors in the dining hall and playground.
13. Pupils are fully aware of the small number of rules and sanctions that reinforce good behaviour. When working in groups, either small or large, pupils happily exchange ideas and share materials. For example, in several good science lessons seen during the inspection, pupils shared materials well and discussed their ideas and findings in a mature way. In dance, pupils worked collaboratively to develop sequences and valued the evaluative comments made by their peers. Pupils are friendly and respectful to their peers and teachers, and are very relaxed and adept with visitors.
14. In all year groups, boys and girls show a keen interest in performance, sport and other activities, and work and play amicably together, though many pupils chose to work in single sex groups in practical lessons seen during the inspection. Pupils have good understanding of western culture, and are respectful of other cultures. They have had some experience of Indian food and dance, and links are established with a local mosque. However, they have limited understanding of cultures, faiths and social conditions in the wider world, and particularly in the developing world.

Attendance in the latest complete reporting year (%)

Authorised absence	
School data	4.3
National data	5.4

Unauthorised absence	
School data	0.2
National data	0.4

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

Ethnic background of pupils

Categories used in the Annual School Census
White – British

Exclusions in the last school year

No of pupils on roll	Number of fixed period exclusions	Number of permanent exclusions
346	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

The school provides a good quality of education. Teaching is good, though there are inconsistencies. Examples of very good teaching were seen throughout the school but a small proportion was unsatisfactory. The good curriculum is enriched by a very good range of after-school clubs and activities. The overall quality of care is very good and the school has very good links with parents and the community. The quality of education is similar to that reported in the previous inspection.

The quality of teaching and learning is good.

Main strengths and weaknesses:

- Teaching that focuses closely on the needs of individuals.
- The use a range of stimulating and imaginative strategies that fully engage pupils.
- Effective questioning skills.
- Good use of assessment.
- Inconsistency in the quality of teaching.

Commentary

Summary of teaching observed during the inspection in 44 lessons

Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very poor
3 (7%)	6 (14 %)	21 (47 %)	11 (25%)	3 (7 %)	0	0

The table gives the number of lessons observed in each of the seven categories used to make judgements about lessons; figures in brackets show percentages.

15. Teaching is good. Nearly a quarter of lessons seen were judged to be very good or excellent. However, there are inconsistencies. The quality ranges from excellent to unsatisfactory, and there is a striking contrast between the imaginative and challenging teaching styles seen in the majority of classes and the mundane teaching observed in others. Good teaching was seen in almost all year groups and in the Foundation Stage, English, mathematics and science. Owing to the focus of the inspection, not enough evidence could be gathered to judge teaching in all subjects. The school recognises the need to share the most effective teaching practice that already exists. Features of the small number of unsatisfactory lessons included a lack of clarity in the tasks, slow pace, ineffective teaching methods and lack of challenge. As a result, pupils did not make enough progress in these lessons.

16. In the outstanding teaching seen during the inspection, pupils were engrossed in their work and made very good progress. Pupils were captivated by the inspiring and highly effective range of stimulating teaching strategies. For example, pupils in Year 6 made very good gains in their understanding of the conventions of journalistic writing because of the teacher's use of role-play and the rapid pace of the lessons. In Year 5, pupils were enthralled by the experience of dressing as Victorian children and having a Victorian mathematics lesson, which was well linked to their current work. The tasks and activities were sensitively matched to the pupil's stages of learning, including those with SEN. As a consequence, pupils made very good progress in their understanding of the properties of geometrical shapes and used mathematical language well.

17. Teaching in the Foundation Stage is consistently good. This is because teachers have wide experience of young children, and expectations are high. Support staff are used effectively to give children additional help and guidance. Lessons include a very good balance of teacher-directed and child-initiated activities, and often embrace children's ideas and initiatives. Teachers plan very well together, ensuring consistency and a systematic approach to learning. These characteristics featured in the good and very good teaching seen throughout the school. For example, in one such very good lesson, in Year 1, pupils made very good progress in recognising and making repeating patterns in mathematics, as a result of stimulating teaching and the imaginative use of resources.

18. In several science lessons, the well-paced and challenging teaching captured the pupils' interests, and they achieved well because they were fully involved in practical work that related to their everyday lives. Similarly, in English and physical education, effective planning, a brisk pace and well judged questioning challenged pupils of all abilities.

19. The quality of teaching for pupils with SEN is good. In the lessons observed they received well-tailored support directed at improving their learning. Tasks were very well matched to pupils with different learning needs, and clear targets were set for them. As a result of the good support they receive from teachers and learning assistants, the pupils achieve well. Information and communication technology (ICT) is used well to support some teaching and learning, but it is not used systematically throughout the school and its use depends on the confidence of the teacher.

20. Teachers generally plan a good range of activities which enable pupils to develop their skills, knowledge and understanding systematically over time. During the inspection, teachers planned their lessons well, with clear objectives and challenging tasks that matched pupils' different learning needs. A particular feature of the good and very good teaching was very effective and skilful questioning. In several lessons, pupils made good gains in their learning because of the teachers' use of role-play. For example, Year 6 pupils chuckled with delight as the support teacher stole 'Santa's beard' and made off with it. They were then fully engaged in writing an account of the event in journalistic style and achieved well. The same spirit was shown in other good lessons in several subjects, where pupils showed enjoyment and determination to achieve well. This was due largely to good planning and interesting activities.

21. In almost all lessons, teachers insist on very good standards of behaviour. They are skilled at promoting equality of opportunity. They value the contribution of all pupils and direct their questions to as many as possible during lessons. Activities are planned at different levels to make it possible for all pupils to achieve well. Teachers encourage pupils to discuss their work in pairs and groups and also to work independently.

22. In the large majority of lessons, teachers question pupils skilfully, taking careful account of how different individuals learn, and they repeat concepts that have not been fully understood. However, a weakness in the less effective teaching is that the questions are not always pitched at the pupils' level of understanding. In some cases, the questions were suitable for higher attainers only, and other pupils were unable to respond. Teachers generally make effective use of day-to-day assessment as an integral part of teaching and learning. For example, teachers use information collected on individuals to plan tasks which are well matched to pupils' needs. Marking shows that teachers often give good guidance for pupils to improve. Assessment procedures are very good in the Foundation Stage, where lesson planning includes challenging but well-focused questions and very good sessions to talk about what children have learned.

The curriculum

The quality of the curriculum throughout the school is good. Provision for extra-curricular activities is very good, and a major strength. The accommodation at the school is of a very high quality, and staffing and resources for learning are good.

Main strengths and weaknesses:

- A broad and rich curriculum, which includes French and Spanish.
- A very good range of out-of-school activities.
- Good provision for personal, social and health education (PSHE).
- Very good accommodation and good resources, though there are limited learning opportunities in the outdoor space for children in the Foundation Stage.
- Lack of a systematic approach to planning for cross-curricular links.

Commentary

23. The school provides an interesting range of learning opportunities that are well planned to meet the different needs of the pupils in Years 1 to 6, as well as those children in the Foundation Stage. Statutory requirements are met in respect of the National Curriculum and religious education and collective worship. All pupils at the school have full access to all the experiences on offer. The curriculum is well managed and regularly reviewed, and this results in clear action plans to guide improvement and change. The school's strategies for literacy and numeracy have been effectively put into practice. The English curriculum offers good opportunities for the development of communication and literacy skills. The numeracy curriculum is helping to keep standards in mathematics above average across the school.

24. Enrichment is particularly good. Pupils have the opportunity to learn a foreign language from their earliest years in school. Well-planned extra-curricular activities are strengths of the provision. Pupils eagerly attend the many after-school clubs, which foster learning, particularly in sport.

25. Provision for pupils with SEN is good. Teachers set individual targets which are well focused and regularly and consistently monitored, and in the lessons there is a genuine emphasis on inclusion. Pupils who are gifted or talented are also well provided for. They have IEPs with targets which identify ways in which their abilities can be challenged and extended. The very small number of pupils with English as an additional language are effectively supported in lessons, so that they achieve as well as other pupils in the class.

26. Provision for the development of pupils' personal skills is very good. A clear programme has been established that successfully addresses a wide range of personal, social and health issues and enables pupils to make good progress in their personal development. Pupils are well prepared for their next stages of learning, particularly in the Foundation Stage, where the preparation is highly effective.

27. The school is aware of the need to develop more cross-curricular aspects of the curriculum. Plans are rightly in place to increase the use of ICT across the curriculum and to develop a range of enrichment projects to further improve learning opportunities.

28. The accommodation is a particular strength. The new building and the light and spacious specialist rooms for music and drama are well used. A strong feature is the good quality of the displays, which are attractive, informative and often interactive. They add to the welcoming and stimulating environment and reflect the richness of pupils' learning. The large outdoor space employs some innovative ideas, which include quiet areas and landscaping. It gives the school some very good teaching areas for several subjects, including physical education and games, as

well as aspects of geography and science. However, the limited learning opportunities in the outdoor area for the Foundation Stage hinder children's development in all the Learning Goals. Good quality learning resources are used well in all areas of the school. There is an effective team of staff, who are well qualified to meet the demands of the curriculum.

Care, guidance and support

Procedures to ensure the care, welfare, health and safety of pupils are very effective. The caring environment has a very positive effect on the standards pupils achieve. The school provides very good support, advice and guidance for pupils, and consistently monitors their achievements and personal development. Pupils are fully involved in the work of the school.

Main strengths and weaknesses:

- The caring and well-informed headteacher, who is responsible for child protection.
- Teachers and other adults who know the pupils well, and respond quickly to their needs.
- The high value the school places on pupils' views.
- An effective school council.
- Very good induction procedures which ensure that pupils joining the school are warmly welcomed into all year groups.

Commentary

29. Teachers and support staff have a very good understanding of the school's procedures for child protection. Classroom teaching assistants are conscientious and attentive, and assure pupils' welfare at lunchtime in the dining hall and playground. The school's health and safety policy is based on the local authority's recommended policy, including risk assessments and procedures for ensuring the safety of pupils on site and during out-of-school visits. The school building and grounds are maintained in fine condition, and present no apparent risk to health and safety.

30. Pupils in all year groups are relaxed and happy in the school community. They receive very good individual care and support from the headteacher, class teachers and teaching assistants. Teachers have good knowledge of their pupils' extensive social development, but little information is formally recorded. Teachers assess pupils' academic needs well during lessons. They have good questioning skills, and vary questions to ensure that all pupils are engaged in, and challenged by, the set tasks. This was clearly seen in several very good lessons, including science, when groups of higher attaining pupils were asked searching questions about their understanding of forces, and how the data could be used to support their findings.

31. Pupils enjoy completing occasional questionnaires about school life. They know that their opinions can influence day-to-day decisions. Pupils benefit significantly from a school council that gives them good opportunities to discuss school issues. For example, the council is currently working on an information booklet for new pupils. The minutes and decisions are shared with all pupils, ensuring that everyone is fully involved.

32. The school council is very influential, and is allocated an annual budget. Pupils chair and minute meetings, and the council has originated many interesting ideas, including the playground *Friendship Stop*.

33. The quality of care is very good, and a very effective induction system settles children quickly into the Foundation Stage. Pupils joining other year groups adapt easily and happily to the school's routines. Although new pupils settle easily and happily at King's Hill, members of the school council are writing a Welcome Book to add a pupil-to-pupil dimension to the school's very good induction programme. Very good procedures in Year 6 prepare pupils for the 11+ examination, and for subsequent transfer to secondary schools.

34. Pupils enthusiastically collect awards of merit stickers and house points. Each term, houses compete enthusiastically for the championship cup. At weekly Celebration Assemblies, the headteacher awards certificates for outstanding individual achievement, effort and good behaviour. A special table at Friday lunch is reserved for pupils nominated by lunchtime assistants for being especially helpful during the week in the playground or dining hall.

Partnership with parents, other schools and the community

The school has very good links with parents and the local community, and good links with other schools and the community.

Main strengths and weaknesses:

- Very good information for parents.
- The priority given to the involvement of parents.
- The support and encouragement of a wide range of community activities.

Commentary

35. Parents' views were very positive at the pre-inspection meeting, and in most responses to the pre-inspection questionnaire. During the inspection, parents confirmed their keen support for the school, and their children's delight in attending each day. Many parents and friends provide valuable help in lessons to groups of pupils and to individuals. Wherever possible, parents' skills and interests are used to broaden the curriculum. The parent-teacher association, Kings Hill School Friends (KHSF), organises very popular social and fund raising events and contributes significantly each year to the school budget. Recently, KHSF purchased outbuildings to increase the school's storage facilities. The association continues to subsidise swimming costs and provide an annual grant to each class for discretionary expenditure.

36. Each term, parents receive brief outlines of the work planned for their children. At three consultation evenings each year they have adequate time to review their children's progress and to discuss future targets. Annual written reports to parents are of good quality, showing in some detail what children know and can do, and detailing areas for development. Additionally, reports confirm the date of the next consultation evening, and the child's next class and teacher. Colourful weekly newsletters are informative about school events and important dates, and are often refreshingly joyous and light-hearted. The prospectus and the governors' annual report to parents for 2003 conform with statutory requirements and contain much useful additional information.

37. Parents enthusiastically join family learning sessions for numeracy and literacy. A small number of parents are currently involved in a mathematics course, including opportunities to observe mathematics lessons. A recent family learning day, led by tutors from a local university, included some advanced skills teaching and poetry and art activities.

38. Parents with pre-school children are welcomed at a community parent-and-toddler group, meeting weekly in the hall. The school provides a room for community pre-natal and antenatal sessions, led by a midwife and health visitors. Several groups meet at the close of the school day, including a ballet club, a French club and an after-school care club.

39. The school makes very good use of community resources. Pupils in Year 6 enjoy an annual residential visit. Pupils in all year groups visit local places of interest, national museums and galleries in London, and the cathedrals at Rochester and Canterbury. Recent visitors from the community have included representatives of the police and fire services, and road and rail safety officers. A very good relationship is established with a local church, and two ministers are frequent and welcome visitors. Very good relationships with local businesses, large and small, attract a number of regular sponsorships. The school is consistently involved in local events, and the choir is invited to sing at many venues.

40. Teachers in the Foundation Stage provide advice and support to private nursery settings. They visit all feeder nurseries to meet children before they start at Kings Hill. Good links are established with primary schools in the consortium, and with selective and wide-attainment secondary schools. Each year, Kings Hill welcomes and mentors trainee teachers, and secondary school students on work experience programmes.

LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

The quality of leadership by the headteacher is very good, and management is good. The headteacher has a clear vision for the continuing development of the school. The school evaluates its work very well and there are very good systems for financial management. Governors are very effective, and they fulfil their statutory requirements.

Main strengths and weaknesses:

- The headteacher's clarity of vision, sense of purpose and high aspirations.
- Good management.
- Very effective governors.
- The rigorous evaluation of the education provided and its effectiveness in promoting achievement.
- Very good financial management.

Commentary

41. Strengths in leadership and management have been maintained and developed further since the previous inspection. The headteacher provides very effective leadership. Since the last inspection, the school roll has increased considerably, and the headteacher has managed the changes with skill and sensitivity. Her vision for the school is shared by the whole community. She has built a strong and cohesive staff team, all of whom have a commitment to high standards and to providing a rich range of experiences for pupils.

42. The newly appointed deputy head has clearly defined responsibilities and is developing her role well. She works very well with the headteacher and is currently focusing on how pupils see themselves as learners and the impact this has on their achievement. She is also developing her role of monitoring teaching and learning and gives very effective support to newly qualified teachers.

43. Subjects benefit from strong leadership and management in several areas of the curriculum, including English, mathematics, science, SEN and the Foundation Stage. Subject leaders develop their own action plans, which feed into the whole school development plan. These show that subject leaders have some knowledge of the strengths and areas for development in their subjects and how they can bring about improvements. They gain good information about their subjects through monitoring, planning and collecting samples of pupils' work, though they have all yet to be allocated sufficient time to monitor systematically the quality of teaching and learning in their subjects. Subject leaders maintain comprehensive subject files, which show that they have a good understanding of their roles and responsibilities. Leadership for SEN is good. Procedures are fully in line with the Code of Practice, and requirements relating to annual reviews are met.

44. Together with the headteacher and governors, staff promote a strong culture of self-evaluation and consistently strive to attain high standards in all areas of the school's work. Good procedures for performance management of staff are in place. There is a thorough record of observations, and governors monitor the system very effectively. Performance management is also in place for non-teaching staff. The school gives very good support to newly qualified teachers and to more experienced staff who are new to the school. The school makes effective use of information from tests and assessments to help strategic planning as well everyday teaching.

45. The governing body is very effective in all aspects of its work. All statutory requirements are fully met. Race equality issues are reported to the governing body and parents. Governors are very well informed and are committed to the school. They visit regularly and their strong links with subject leaders give them a picture of the school's strengths and areas for development. Governors are able to contribute effectively to school improvement planning. The school improvement plan, which is fully costed, is an effective tool for development. Developments have a clear time scale, and lucid criteria for judging success. A significant proportion of the budget is being held for the development of a new ICT suite and to cover other initiatives in the new school. The school improvement plan focuses well on raising standards further and on providing high quality learning experiences for pupils.

46. The school's approach to financial and resource management is very effective in helping the school achieve its educational priorities. Costs and outcomes are measured against a wide range of comparisons published by the local education authority. The school consults widely and considers its performance against that of similar schools. Best value principles are well established. The governors monitor the effectiveness of spending decisions.

Financial information for the year 2002 to 2003

Income and expenditure (£)	
Total income	818,996.00
Total expenditure	806,250.00
Expenditure per pupil	2,258.00

Balances (£)	
Balance from previous year	90,331.00
Balance carried forward to the next year	103,078.00

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

AREAS OF LEARNING IN THE FOUNDATION STAGE

Provision in the Foundation Stage is **good**.

47. Standards noted in the previous inspection report have been maintained. Most children are likely to achieve the Early Learning Goals by the end of their Reception Year, and one third of the children are likely to exceed them. Children enter the Foundation Stage in the September following their fourth birthday. At the time of the inspection, 60 children were in two Reception classes.

48. Children enter the Reception classes with average attainment overall, and with specific strengths in personal, social and emotional development and speaking and listening. The school has not identified any children with SEN in the Foundation Stage.

49. Teaching is good, with very good features. These include very effective use of time and support staff, consistently high expectations of behaviour, and very good assessment procedures. Leadership and management are good in the Foundation Stage, where the co-ordinator is also the co-ordinator for special educational needs (SENCo). She leads the Foundation Stage with imagination, and is very ably supported by the deputy headteacher in the parallel Reception class. All adults in the school are very good role models, and they encourage parents to play a full part in the education of their children. Indoor accommodation is good but the limited outdoor facilities do not yet fully support all areas of learning.

PERSONAL, SOCIAL AND EMOTIONAL DEVELOPMENT

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

Main strengths and weaknesses:

- Very good individual care and support.
- Very effective induction procedures.
- The priority given to independent learning.

Commentary

50. Children's attitudes and behaviour are exemplary and relationships are excellent. The school's very good induction programme includes a home visit for each family. At the beginning of term, parents are encouraged to stay with their children for the first two days. Children are very keen to attend, and they settle quickly into the Reception classes. They soon become very productive and highly motivated. Teachers and support staff plan interesting activities each day, with increased challenges as the week progresses. Children know that specific tasks must be completed in each half-day session. Without prompting, they match these tasks to activities selected from either classroom. Their concentration is very good, and their social skills are very advanced. Relationships are based on mutual respect and close co-operation between children and adults in both classes. All adults carefully assess learning by asking children about their work.

COMMUNICATION, LANGUAGE AND LITERACY

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

Main strengths and weaknesses:

- Excellent teaching of phonics.
- Underdeveloped handwriting skills.

Commentary

51. Children are articulate, confident speakers. They ask sensible questions and give detailed explanations about their work. They listen carefully to all adults and to each other, and retain what they have learned. Children enjoy looking at books, and respond imaginatively when questioned about their 'reading'. Children of average attainment can recognise a few familiar words. All adults are highly skilled at teaching phonics. Consequently, children independently use phonic knowledge to extend their written vocabulary. During the inspection, a parent helper explained the meaning of 'list', and led children in writing lists of Christmas party food and games. Most children can write their first names but do not always correctly form the letters. Some grip their pencils close to the point and cannot see what they are writing; others use their pencils at unsuitable angles and cannot apply consistent pressure to the paper. Adults rarely correct either group.

MATHEMATICAL DEVELOPMENT

Provision in mathematical development is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses:

- A very wide range of mathematical activities.
- The early identification of gifted and talented children.
- Work that is not always closely matched to individual needs.

Commentary

52. Children's mathematical language is very good. They know the names of many two-dimensional shapes and of some three-dimensional shapes, including cylinder and cube. During the inspection, children of average attainment explained 'heavier' and 'lighter' in terms of the numbers of cubes needed to achieve balance on simple scales. They understood that their teacher was taller than the inspector! Gifted and talented children were practising mental calculations to 99 as part of their special provision. However, a lower attaining child working with numbers to 20 did not fully understand numbers to five. Mathematical development is fully integrated with all areas of learning, including ICT.

KNOWLEDGE AND UNDERSTANDING OF THE WORLD

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

Main strengths and weaknesses:

- Teachers' very high expectations of children's computer work.
- Limited outdoor facilities.

Commentary

53. Children of average attainment can identify a battery, a bulb and a switch. They know that all three are necessary components of a torch. They know that electricity is dangerous. During the inspection, a child said 'If you touch electricity you might explode!' Children know many disparate facts about the world. For example, they know that they will see a giant Christmas tree in Trafalgar Square, and that the weather is hot in Australia at Christmas, and cold in the Antarctic. However, they also believe that Australia is somewhere in England, and that camels might be found in the Antarctic. They have very limited knowledge of the local environment. Although Foundation Stage children have good access to the school's resources, their own designated outdoor area does not yet include a sandpit or a garden. Many children have good computer skills, and all staff are very good at teaching ICT. During the inspection, children designed and printed excellent full-colour Christmas posters asking for help in finding the absent Rudolph. Many children have advanced keyboard skills. A higher attaining child explained fluently how printing could be activated through the keyboard or through an icon.

PHYSICAL DEVELOPMENT

Provision in physical development is **satisfactory**.

Commentary

54. No physical development lessons were seen, and no overall judgement is made in this area of learning. However, children's fine motor skills are very good. During the inspection, they meticulously decorated large numerals by applying adhesive to the outlines and then laying very small silver stars carefully in place. No stars were face down, and no adhesive was spread on adjacent areas of the work. Children have some understanding of healthy lifestyles. They know that fruit is an important part of their diet. They always remember to wash their hands after using the toilet.

CREATIVE DEVELOPMENT

Provision in creative development is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses:

No significant strengths or weaknesses are identified in this area of learning.

Commentary

55. During the inspection, the Reception classes played a full part in a lower-school nativity play for parents. The children sang tunefully, and with excellent diction. During a recent performing arts week, they used simple notation in composing original music, and fully understood the dynamics of *high*, *low*, *fast* and *slow*. To stimulate children's writing, teachers often link creative development to literacy activities. During the inspection, children made attractive snowman Christmas cards for their parents. They were provided with pre-cut snowman shapes, although many were clearly capable of cutting their own.

SUBJECTS IN KEY STAGES 1 AND 2

ENGLISH

Provision in English is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses:

- Good teaching.
- Effective subject leadership and management.
- Underdeveloped presentation, spelling and handwriting skills.

Commentary

56. Pupils achieve well and standards are likely to reach levels that are above national expectations by the end of the Years 2 and 6 in speaking, listening, reading and writing. Standards are higher than those reported in the previous inspection. Pupils' speaking and listening skills are well developed. The school has recently focused on the use of drama and role-play in English lessons, to help pupils learn different ways of speaking for different purposes, and this has had a positive effect on pupils' attainment. Pupils build effectively on the good communication skills promoted in the Foundation Stage. A strong feature of lessons is the way in which teachers provide opportunities to extend pupils' vocabulary. Pupils of all abilities are given time and encouragement to express themselves clearly and to understand words that are not familiar to them. Pupils with SEN achieve well throughout the school because they benefit from close support and targets that are tailored to their individual needs. Gifted and talented pupils also receive additional well-focused support to help them to do as well as they can. They express their ideas well and have well-developed vocabulary. The school council provides good opportunities for older pupils to speak out and share their ideas in a very responsible way.

57. Most pupils are confident readers and achieve well in response to good teaching. What teachers do particularly well is to introduce pupils to a good range of authors and styles of writing. However, the lower attaining pupils do not have strategies for tackling unfamiliar words and often wait for help rather than try to work out meaning for themselves. Older pupils who are not fluent readers are often able to read the text but in discussion show that they do not understand it. The small proportion of younger pupils who are not fluent readers do not always use clues from the text to work out meaning. They recognise letter sounds but are not always able to blend them to form the words. They are not able to correct themselves when their reading does not make sense.

58. Pupils' writing is developing well. Good teaching extends pupils' experience of writing styles and introduces them to some of the complex language and issues in the works of a range of authors. The quality and range of reading books in the school is good. Teachers read stories expressively and enthusiastically, which increases pupils' understanding and enjoyment of the texts. The recent focus on drama and role-play is having a positive impact on writing. The most recent national tests showed that girls performed better than boys in writing, but evidence from the inspection shows no discrepancy. The content of pupils' writing often shows flair and imagination, though their work is let down by weak spelling, handwriting and presentation. The subject leaders are aware of this and their action plan includes strategies to address it.

59. Teaching is good. Lessons are well planned and include clear objectives. Tasks are well matched to the differing learning needs of pupils, including those with SEN. A strength of the good teaching was very effective and skilful questioning which challenged pupils to think beyond the superficial. Role-play was used well to engage pupils and encourage them to participate. For example, during the inspection, pupils in Year 6 were engrossed in writing a journalistic account of a topical role-play.

60. Pupils are given good opportunities to use the literacy skills in other areas of the curriculum. They make good use of reference books to research historical topics. Drama and role-play are well used. In lessons, pupils are encouraged to discuss a range of issues and present their ideas well. They are confident in talking to visitors about their work.

61. English is well led and managed. The subject co-ordinators work well together and have a good understanding of what they need to do to bring about necessary improvements. Assessment procedures are well established and information is used to help with planning. Marking is of a good standard. Pupils are given a clear picture of what they are doing well and how they can improve their work further. The school has identified the need to provide more support for pupils who are not making good progress in reading.

Language and literacy across the curriculum

62. Pupils use their language and literacy skills well in other subjects. They are confident speakers and listen well to their teachers and to one another. The school has recently focused on the use of drama and role-play and this was used very well in a number of lessons, for example the Year 5 'Victorian day'. Older pupils confidently find information from a range of sources to support their work in history and geography. In science, history, geography and religious education pupils write in a range of styles to present narrative accounts. Pupils write fluently and express their ideas well, but their presentation, spelling and handwriting skills are weak.

MATHEMATICS

Provision in mathematics is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses:

- Good teaching.
- Effective leadership and management.
- Good use of ICT to support mental and oral skills.
- Insufficient emphasis on data handling.

Commentary

63. Pupils across the school achieve well in mathematics and, consequently, they are on course to reach standards that are above those expected for pupils in Years 2 and 6. Current standards are higher than those reported in the previous inspection. In lessons, pupils achieved well because of good teaching and exciting learning opportunities. For example, the youngest pupils in Year 1 benefited from skilled teaching as they made their own repeating patterns, using shapes. Almost all pupils in the class could name two-dimensional shapes accurately, and explain how to make a pattern of two, three or four. The use of the interactive whiteboard was a real focus for learning, and pupils were very keen to 'have a go'. This led to excitement in learning and to good progress. Similarly, pupils in Year 6 benefited from the good, and sometimes very good, teaching, which challenged them to think correctly about their answers and to develop confidence in their own ability as they explained their methods. Higher attainers in Year 6 achieved very high standards, and they were able to use calculators to find the mean average in a set of given data. Good questioning extended their understanding, and the fast pace at which they were expected to work sharpened their mental and oral skills.

64. Teachers make effective use of ICT to support pupils' learning. Pupils enjoy the good range of programs available and benefit from learning through fun as they play number games. In Year 2, for example, pupils played a multiplication game which successfully encouraged quick thinking as possible answers to questions appeared on the screen. This helped to extend their mental and oral responses significantly. Teachers also make good use of ICT during presentations, and the pupils' interest is stimulated by their opportunities to use the interactive whiteboard. Leadership of

mathematics is good. The National Numeracy Strategy has been put into practice effectively, and it is having a positive impact in lessons. There is good evidence that the monitoring of pupils' work and of teaching is helping to maintain good standards. Regular and systematic assessment of pupils' achievements enables their progress to be carefully measured as they move through the school. The mathematics curriculum is broad, balanced and relevant, though not enough emphasis is placed on data handling. There are too few instances of pupils collecting and interpreting data in the wide range of subjects they study, though this is beginning in Year 6. The co-ordinator has identified this as a weak area of the subject and plans are in place to address it in the near future.

Mathematics across the curriculum

65. Numeracy skills are used well to support some other subjects. Pupils gather data in science and geography, but do not always make the best use of it to extend their mathematical skills. Numeracy skills are used for measuring in design and technology and in physical education.

SCIENCE

Provision in science is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses:

- Good teaching, though it is inconsistent.
- Effective leadership.
- Lack of confidence by teachers during practical investigations.
- The broad range of learning opportunities.

Commentary

66. Pupils' achievement is good throughout the school, because teaching is effective overall and the curriculum gives them good learning opportunities in practical work and investigations. Pupils in Year 2 are on course to reach expected standards, and pupils in Year 6 are likely to reach standards above those expected nationally by the end of the year. No differences were observed between the achievement of boys and girls. Current standards are better than those reported in the previous inspection.

67. In Year 6, middle and higher attaining pupils used a good range of vocabulary in their oral explanations and showed a good understanding of the work when interpreting data from their findings from a practical investigation. Expectations were high and the teaching frequently challenged pupils to draw upon their knowledge and understanding. Pupils were able to talk confidently about the variables that may have had some influence on the speed at which an object fell to the floor. Information and communication technology (ICT) was used well to extend learning opportunities and help present the findings. Pupils' good levels of understanding were reflected in their written work. Similarly, pupils in Year 5 were encouraged to produce good quality work because of the teacher's very good command of the subject and the range of practical activities which captured their interest. Higher attaining pupils made good use of ICT to record their findings. Lower attaining pupils, and those with SEN, showed confidence when talking about their work and achieved as well as others in the class. In Year 2, higher attaining pupils gave sound reasons why ice melts and, when prompted, linked fur and feathers to effective forms of insulation in animals. Lower attainers were confused in their understanding but showed confidence when giving their reasons for ice melting.

68. Pupils respond well to their teachers and show great interest in the subject. Overall, teachers make good use of scientific language and insist on the correct use of scientific terminology. Teaching is good overall, but it is inconsistent. Two lessons were very good but one was unsatisfactory. In good and very good lessons seen during the inspection, pupils benefited significantly from teaching that was well paced and engaging, and full of science that related to

pupils' everyday lives. As a consequence, pupils found the subject exciting, achieved well, and through investigative science made good gains in their understanding of forces, sound, and some of the properties of materials. Features of very good teaching included: highly focused questions which challenged pupils of all abilities to engage in investigative thought; very accurate use of assessment which enabled pupils to see how well they were progressing; and a rapid pace to the learning. Very effective use was made of additional support to help with the lower attainers. In contrast to these learning experiences, the unsatisfactory lesson seen was less engaging and slowly paced. It also showed a lack confidence by the teacher when carrying out practical investigations. A weakness in several lessons was the use of questions that did not match the learning stages of all pupils; often, the questions were pitched at the most able pupils.

69. Science is well led and managed by a well-qualified specialist. Following a thorough analysis of the most recent assessment data, she has already established a booster class for girls and identified the need to develop the pupils' ability to interpret data and write concisely, using scientific vocabulary. Marking is generally good. Pupils are given a clear picture of what they are doing well and how they can improve their work further. The subject leader has introduced some good assessment procedures, but she is aware of the need to strengthen her role further by monitoring the teaching of science throughout the school.

INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY

Provision in ICT is **satisfactory** overall but is improving at a rapid pace.

Main strengths and weaknesses:

- Teachers' good skills in ICT.
- Good leadership.
- Inconsistency in the use of ICT to support learning in other subjects.

Commentary

70. Standards are on course to reach standards expected nationally at the end of Years 2 and 6. No differences were observed between the achievement of boys and girls. The recent acquisition of laptop computers, as part of a project initiated by the local education authority, is helping to raise achievement and lift standards. For example, pupils in Year 3 are achieving particularly well because they have full access to the laptop computers in lessons. Pupils throughout the school, including those with SEN, are making good gains in their learning and are developing confidence in the use of ICT because they are encouraged to find out for themselves and retrieve information from different sources. Pupils benefit from a systematic approach to the planning of ICT and a programme of activities that ensure they make good gains in skills, knowledge and understanding.

71. Teaching is satisfactory overall, though it has many good features. Staff have good skills in ICT and all teachers have recently received training to improve their own knowledge and the effectiveness of lessons. This training has led to greater confidence when teaching the subject and an improved use of resources. However, there are times when systems fail and pupils are unable to complete their tasks; the school recognises the need to strengthen the level of ICT support.

72. Two subject co-ordinators provide good leadership because they work effectively together and have a clear understanding of the strategies needed to improve the subject. They have collaborated well to implement the ICT curriculum across the school and to ensure that the school is ready to make the most of initiatives. However, their management role has yet to be fully developed. Attainment levels are similar to those reported in the previous inspection, though the school has improved the overall provision.

Information and communication technology across the curriculum

73. Provision across the curriculum is satisfactory, though the school has yet to ensure that ICT is used systematically in all subjects and in all classes. Aspects of the subject are used well in some subjects, such as mathematics and science. For example, higher attaining pupils in Year 6 make good use of electronically generated graphs and pie charts to present findings and interpret data in science. On the other hand, ICT is not always used to help with data handling in mathematics.

HUMANITIES

Geography and history

74. There was not enough evidence to make a judgement on the provision of geography and history, but religious education has a full report. Three geography lessons and three history lessons were seen during the inspection. Teachers' planning was analysed. Pupils in Years 2 and 6 discussed their work with inspectors and explained the content of displays.

Commentary

75. Pupils in Year 6 are on course to reach standards that are above those expected nationally for pupils of similar age. Pupils have very good attitudes to learning. They have a good knowledge of **geography** and of the local environment, understanding the particular features of the locality. Pupils, including those with SEN, are aware of environmental issues. For example, pupils in a Year 6 lesson entered into a lively debate about the development of a holiday resort in the rainforest. Pupils made good use of their research skills to provide supporting material for their views. In this excellent lesson, pupils took the roles of different groups such as hoteliers, local councillors, and environmentalists. They had prepared computer presentations to support their arguments. In the small number of lessons seen, pupils listened very well to one another and showed good understanding of the issues involved. Pupils also have a good knowledge of **history**. Pupils in Year 6 are on course to reach standards that are above those expected nationally for pupils of similar age. They show good recall of historical facts and place these accurately in time. Artefacts are used well to develop pupils' understanding. During the inspection, pupils in Year 5 had a real taste of what Victorian schools were like by experiencing a 'Victorian day'. Teachers and pupils dressed in Victorian costume and acted out their roles during all lessons. Pupils responded exceptionally well to the traditional styles of teaching and learning, and the 'coldness' in relationships between teachers and pupils. Learning opportunities are enriched further through a programme of visits to museums and places of historical interest.

Religious education

Provision in religious education is **satisfactory**.

Main strengths and weaknesses:

- Teachers' good subject knowledge.
- Good leadership and management.

Commentary

76. Pupils, including those with SEN, enjoy their lessons. Pupils in Years 2 and 6 are on course to meet the objectives of the locally Agreed Syllabus. No differences were observed between the achievement of boys and girls. The curriculum is enriched through visits to places of interest, such as Canterbury Cathedral, and by visits from outside speakers. For example, a local minister enriches pupils' learning experiences during assemblies and religious education lessons.

By Year 2, pupils have a good understanding of the story of the birth of Jesus, and know why Christmas is celebrated. By Year 6, pupils have a good understanding of the symbols of Sikhism. They understand that these symbols are important to Sikh beliefs and the way that Sikh people live their lives.

77. Teaching is satisfactory. Planning shows that a good range of work is covered. During a lesson seen in the course of the inspection, the teacher's skilful questioning helped pupils in Year 5 to appreciate the similarities and differences between their lives and the lives of Sikh children. The subject is well led and managed by a co-ordinator who has developed a scheme of work to support the locally Agreed Syllabus. She monitors the subject by viewing colleagues' planning; she has begun to collect samples of pupils' work and is strengthening assessment procedures.

CREATIVE, AESTHETIC, PRACTICAL AND PHYSICAL SUBJECTS

78. There was not enough evidence to make it possible to report on any subjects in this area of learning. Pupils were seen working confidently and with considerable interest during one lesson in **design and technology**. Displays showed that pupils have opportunities to work creatively, and to apply their creative skills to the design and the assembly of working models. Skills in design and technology are used well to support pupils' work in other subjects, such as art and design, and science. In **art and design**, the pupils' sketches, collages, paintings, and drawings help provide attractive displays around the school. The school recently held a performing arts week in which groups of musicians visited the school. Pupils listened with interest to classical **music** as well as to Samba and Flamenco. They experienced different styles of dance and also worked on musical composition. Pupils have good opportunities to learn a wide range of musical instruments, and they sang tunefully and confidently in assemblies. During the inspection, children in Reception and pupils in Years 1 and 2 took part in a nativity play for parents. They spoke confidently, with good expression, and all contributed very well to a performance which was a very moving experience.

79. Pupils benefit significantly from a **physical education** curriculum which is broad and includes sufficient time for them to develop skills in games, gymnastics and dance, and swimming. In addition, many pupils have extended opportunities to take part in a wide range of extra-curricular activities which place a strong emphasis on competitive conventional team games and individual sports. Pupils with SEN develop confidence and self-esteem in practical sessions. No differences were observed between the achievement of boys and girls. The richness of physical education and the sports programme is reflected in pupils' good achievement in lessons and the school's success in local competitions, such as swimming galas and team games. Physical education is a strong feature of the school, and the pupils' very good attitudes in the small number of lessons seen during the inspection are reflected in the teachers' skilful and energetic approach to teaching the subject. Good teaching gave pupils good opportunities to evaluate each other's work and to refine their performances.

PERSONAL, SOCIAL AND HEALTH EDUCATION AND CITIZENSHIP

Provision in PSHE is **very good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses:

- The well planned learning opportunities for pupils to develop personal and social skills through the whole culture and ethos of the school.
- The many valuable opportunities for pupils to strengthen their self-confidence and self-esteem.
- The great respect shown to one another by pupils and adults.

Commentary

80. Pupils respond very well to the well-planned PSHE provision, which makes an important contribution to the very good standards of behaviour and to pupils' outstanding confidence and self-esteem. Pupils learn from an early age how to act with consideration and responsibility. During PSHE lessons, and circle times, teachers create good opportunities to discuss pupils' personal difficulties and concerns. These contribute well to the development of communication skills, confidence and self-esteem, and understanding of citizenship. In addition, pupils have plenty of opportunities in all years to discuss ethical and moral issues and to consider important aspects of human relationships such as friendship, loyalty and tolerance.

81. The carefully planned programmes of sex education, and of courses to emphasise the dangers of drugs and smoking, help to turn pupils into respectful, thoughtful and responsible citizens. These programmes often involve members of the local community, such as the school nurse, the local police force and the fire service. Visits from drama groups often focus on personal issues. Pupils showed a very high interest when working in groups to develop their understanding of personal issues such as bullying and race relations.

82. Awareness of community issues is raised through whole-school projects, such as the Eco School Award. This project helps pupils to develop a clear understanding of the need for re-cycling and a tidy environment. Pupils in Year 6 act as mentors, providing help and guidance to others and to adults.

PART D: SUMMARY OF THE MAIN INSPECTION JUDGEMENTS

Inspection judgement	Grade
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	2
Attitudes	2
Behaviour, including the extent of exclusions	2
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	2
Pupils' care, welfare, health and safety	2
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	3
The leadership and management of the school	3
The governance of the school	2
The leadership of the headteacher	2
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).