

INSPECTION REPORT

LYNSTED AND NORTON PRIMARY SCHOOL

Sittingbourne

LEA area: Kent

Unique reference number: 118343

Headteacher: Mrs Carol Wakelin

Lead inspector: John Messer

Dates of inspection: 16 – 18 February 2004

Inspection number: 256811

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

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INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Type of school:	Primary
School category:	Community
Age range of pupils:	4 to 11 years
Gender of pupils:	Mixed
Number on roll:	97
School address:	Lynsted Lane Lynsted Sittingbourne Kent
Postcode:	ME9 0RL
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Appropriate authority:	The governing body
Name of chair of governors:	Mr Martin Swainson
Date of previous inspection:	28 September 1998

CHARACTERISTICS OF THE SCHOOL

This community primary school has four classes and is smaller than most primary schools. A small minority of children come from the village but most come from further afield. The pupils' socio-economic backgrounds are mixed. Nearly all are from White English speaking families, although a small number are from ethnic minority backgrounds and a small proportion come from travelling families. All pupils speak English as their first language. Children arrive at school at widely varying stages of development. Some are exceptionally advanced in their learning but a significant number have poorly developed early learning skills – overall, attainment on entry is below average. Well over a third of pupils are entered on the school's record of special educational needs, which is well above average. An average proportion of pupils, around 12 per cent, claim entitlement to free school meals. The proportion of pupils who enter or leave the school part-way through this stage of their education, around 20 per cent, is high. The school received a 'School Achievement Award' in recognition of its improved performance in the national tests for pupils in Year 6 in 2002.

INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Members of the inspection team			Subject responsibilities
15477	John Messer	Lead inspector	The Foundation Stage English French Information and communication technology Art and design Design and technology Physical education
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PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

OVERALL EVALUATION

This is a good school, which provides an effective education for its pupils. Teaching is mostly good and as a result pupils learn successfully. Pupils' achievement is good. Attainment on entry is below average but most pupils attain average standards by the end of Year 2. There is an exceptionally high proportion of pupils with special educational needs in Years 4, 5 and 6, and as a result the standards that pupils attain by the end of Year 6 are below average. However, pupils make good progress and the school provides good value for money. The leadership and management of the school are good and the governing body provides effective support.

The school's main strengths and weaknesses are:

- Most of the teaching is good and this helps pupils to achieve well.
- The headteacher provides strong and effective leadership.
- Classroom assistants are well qualified and make an important contribution to the quality of pupils' learning.
- Pupils are very well-behaved and their attitudes to learning are very good.
- The achievements of all pupils are celebrated and all are fully included in every aspect of school life.
- The school has introduced exceptionally good systems that measure pupils' achievement and help to set clear targets for future learning.
- The particular learning needs of each individual pupil are catered for well and provision for pupils with special educational needs is very good.
- Governors have a very good understanding of the school's strengths as well as areas for development but do not always communicate these clearly enough to parents.
- Lesson planning is not always sufficiently precise and this leads to inconsistencies in the quality of teaching and learning in some year groups, particularly in English and science.

The school has improved significantly since the last inspection. The school's performance in national tests is better now than it was. The standards that pupils attain by the end of Year 2 in reading, writing, mathematics and science have all improved. Across the school, standards are higher in information and communication technology and in religious education. The quality of teaching has improved significantly. The school has successfully addressed the key issues raised in the last report, although shortcomings in teachers' lesson planning have not been fully resolved. The school is now more effective than it was in 1998.

STANDARDS ACHIEVED

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

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

Pupils' achievement is good. Pupils achieve well in the Foundation Stage and most attain the early learning goals by the end of reception. Pupils continue to achieve well in Years 1 and 2 and most attain average standards by the end of Year 2. Although pupils achieve well in Years 3 to 6, standards by the end of Year 6 are below average and this is reflected in national test results. Pupils' good achievement is not always mirrored in test results because for many the starting point of their learning is low or the continuity of their learning has been interrupted. The grades in the table above comparing this school with others do not present an accurate picture of the school's

accomplishments. The groups of pupils that took the national tests in 2003 and in 2002, comprised a high proportion of pupils with special educational needs. Also, each year group is very small so that statistical comparisons should be treated with great caution. A more informative picture of the school's performance is indicated by the progress that the school has helped pupils to achieve.

This shows that pupils in Year 6 in 2003 did well in relation to their previous attainment and that the school helped pupils between Year 2 and Year 6 to make progress in their work above the national average.

Pupils' personal qualities are very good; their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development are good. They have very good attitudes to their work and are confident. Behaviour is very good. Relationships are very good, and pupils work and play happily together. Attendance is good.

QUALITY OF EDUCATION

The school provides a good quality of education. The quality of teaching is good. Teachers work hard to provide a good quality of education and to promote effective learning. There are examples of imaginative teaching in all classes and this promotes high levels of motivation. Skills are taught systematically. In a few classes teachers' lesson plans are sometimes not clear about what pupils are expected to learn. This results in less purposeful lessons, which slightly reduces the quality of learning. Pupils' very positive attitudes to work, and their very good behaviour, support learning well. Classroom assistants make a strong contribution to the quality of teaching and to the school's effectiveness. The good quality of care and guidance help to foster self-esteem and confidence, which contribute to pupils' successful learning. Accommodation and resources are satisfactory.

LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

The leadership and the management of the school are good. The headteacher's strong and effective leadership helps to ensure that the school runs efficiently. There is a strong sense of teamwork and a shared commitment to continuing improvement and raising standards further. The governing body is effective and gives good support. Finances are managed well and are directed towards the most important areas of priority. The chair of governors has produced an excellent analysis of how this school compares with similar schools. However, the school does not communicate its strengths and weaknesses clearly enough to parents and this causes undue anxiety among parents about national test results. Responsibility for managing the curriculum has been delegated appropriately to subject leaders, but several have been in post for a very short time and have not yet had time to have a major impact on raising standards, especially in information and communication technology and religious education.

PARENTS' AND PUPILS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

The overwhelming majority of parents who returned questionnaires expressed satisfaction with the education that the school provides for their children. However, a small minority indicated that they were unhappy with provision and a substantial number considered that parents were not consulted sufficiently about school issues. A minority have a limited understanding of the school's strengths and weaknesses. Pupils are very pleased with their school and are proud to be members of the school community. They would like more free time, a more interesting playground and more colourful classrooms.

IMPROVEMENTS NEEDED

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

- Improve lesson planning so that it always clearly sets out what new skills, knowledge and understanding the teachers intend to teach the pupils in each lesson.

- Communicate clearly to parents what are the school's strengths and weaknesses and how the school knows they are strengths and weaknesses.

PART B: COMMENTARY ON THE INSPECTION FINDINGS

STANDARDS ACHIEVED BY PUPILS

Standards achieved in areas of learning, subjects and courses

From their earliest days in school to the time they leave, pupils achieve well. Most pupils attain average standards in reading, writing, and science by the end of Year 2 and standards that are above average in mathematics. Although pupils' achievement is good in Years 3 to 6, most are unlikely to attain average standards in English, mathematics or science by the end of Year 6. This is because there is a high proportion of pupils with special educational needs and also because many pupils have had their learning interrupted by moving school.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Pupils' achievement is good but this is not always reflected in test results because for many the starting point of their learning is low or the continuity of their learning has been interrupted.
- Pupils attain standards in mathematics that are above average by the end of Year 2.
- The school's performance in national tests is better than it was at the time of the last inspection in English, mathematics and science.
- Pupils with special educational needs achieve well.

Commentary

1. The school has introduced good systems to collect data about pupils' achievement and this data is used well to set appropriately challenging targets for further learning. Inspection findings and the school's data show that pupils achieve well and make good progress towards their targets.
2. Many pupils enter the school with standards of attainment that are below average. They achieve well in the reception class and most are likely to attain the learning goals in most areas of learning by the end of the reception year.
3. Pupils continue to achieve well in Years 1 and 2. By the end of Year 2 most are on course to attain average standards in reading, writing and science and standards that are above average in mathematics. These findings were largely reflected in the national tests and assessments for pupils in Year 2 in 2003. The school's performance was well above average in mathematics and science, above average in reading and average in writing. The very small groups of pupils that take the tests tend to result in wide fluctuations in performance from year to year, and statistical comparisons should be treated with great caution. Standards are higher now than at the time of the last inspection in reading, writing, mathematics, science and information and communication technology. The trend in the school's performance over the last five years has been above the improving trend nationally.

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

Standards in:	School results	National results
reading	16.6 (15.7)	15.7 (15.8)
writing	14.6 (15.1)	14.6 (14.4)
mathematics	17.9 (17.5)	16.3 (16.5)

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

4. Although pupils continue to achieve well in Years 3 to 6, the standards they attain are generally below average in English, mathematics and science. There are clear reasons for this. Nearly

half the pupils in the current Year 6, as in last year's Year 6, have special educational needs. There is also an exceptionally high proportion of pupils with special educational needs in Years 4 and 5, and pupils in Year 5 have had the continuity of their learning disturbed by many changes in teaching staff. Furthermore, a very high proportion of pupils in Years 4 and 6 have entered the school partway through this phase of their education and others have left. This high rate of mobility has interrupted the continuity of pupils' learning. The school's assessment statistics show that those who stay in the school from reception through to Year 6 tend to do better than those who join the school after the reception year.

5. The test results for pupils in Year 6 are much better than they were at the time of the last inspection, particularly in English and science. However, the trend in the school's performance over the past five years has been below the national trend due to the increasing proportion of pupils with special educational needs, particularly in Year 6. Standards have improved in information and communication technology; they were below average and are now broadly average. Standards have similarly improved in religious education. Pupils' very positive attitudes to work and their very good behaviour help to promote effective learning and good achievement.

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

Standards in:	School results	National results
English	24.7 (25.7)	26.8 (27.0)
mathematics	24.9 (25.6)	26.8 (26.7)
science	26.6 (27.9)	28.6 (28.3)

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

6. When compared with schools that had pupils' with similar prior attainment in Year 2, this school's performance in the national tests for pupils in Year 6 in 2003 was average in mathematics and below average in English and science. The school's value-added measure for pupils' performance between Year 2 and Year 6 was above the national average, indicating that pupils are doing better than expected given their prior attainment. This is confirmed by the school's own assessment systems which show that pupils are achieving well from their widely varying starting points and that they have made good progress.
7. Pupils with special educational needs are set targets for improvement that are clear, specific and suitably challenging. Pupils achieve well and make good progress towards their targets. This is because support for these pupils is well managed, and dedicated and well-trained support staff are deployed efficiently. The support for these pupils is a strength of the school. The leadership has created a culture of attending sensitively to the needs of all pupils. As a result all groups of pupils achieve well. No pupils are excluded from this ethos of success. For example, the pupils from travelling families are helped to achieve well. Also the special attention paid to boosting boys' literacy skills helps to promote their good achievement so that they achieve as well as the girls.

Pupils' attitudes, values and other personal qualities

Attendance is good. Punctuality is mostly satisfactory although a few pupils persistently arrive after the start of morning school. Pupils' attitudes to school and their behaviour are very good. The personal development of pupils, including their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development, is good throughout the school.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The personal development of pupils is a strength of the school.
- Attendance is good.

- Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development are good.

Commentary

8. The personal development of pupils is a high priority across the school and underpins all activities throughout the school day. Throughout the school, pupils are encouraged to understand what they are doing, even recognising the different styles of learning they use. As they progress through the school, more and more opportunities are presented to them to enable them to show initiative and take some responsibility for their learning. Homework is often an open-ended task where pupils use and apply the skills they are learning in specific subjects. Homework ranges from younger pupils writing book reviews to pupils in Year 6 completing a project on any country of their choice. There are very large elements of choice and personal responsibility in such activities. The emphasis on personal responsibility is evident across the work of the school. As a result, pupils develop a clear awareness of what is acceptable behaviour and conform to the high standards set by all adults. Pupils of all abilities are very interested in their lessons and in the extra activities offered by the school. They are confident learners with high self-esteem.
9. Attendance is good. It was broadly in line with the national average for the last complete academic year but has improved by almost one percentage point for the current academic year as a result of the school's focus on attendance issues.

Attendance

Attendance in the latest complete reporting year (%)

Authorised absence		Unauthorised absence	
School data	5.1	School data	0.4
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.

Exclusions

There were no exclusions in the previous academic year.

10. Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development are good. They are encouraged to reflect quietly on the wonders of the world and to consider beauty in paintings and music. They have opportunities to take responsibility and show initiative in wider aspects of the life of the school. They volunteer readily for tasks around school and look forward to the opportunity to become School Councillors in order to have a direct influence on school development. They are very involved in choosing which charities the school will support and have been responsible for arranging and running fund-raising events themselves. In religious education lessons and in geography they learn about the beliefs and values of other cultures. They study Aboriginal art forms, for example, and stories from African folklore. Pupils show pleasure in the achievements of other pupils in their class and are always polite, to each other and adults, including visitors. They are considerate to one another, whether by helping willingly with learning, in taking care of younger pupils or being aware of children who may be feeling left out in play activities. They reflect thoughtfully on social issues, such as care for the environment. The school is a very supportive, cohesive community.

QUALITY OF EDUCATION PROVIDED BY THE SCHOOL

The quality of education provided by the school is good. The teaching provided by both teachers and classroom assistants is a particular strength.

Teaching and learning

Teaching and learning are good in the Foundation Stage and mostly good in Years 1 to 6 but the quality of teachers' lesson planning is uneven. Assessment systems are used well to identify individual learning needs. The quality of teaching is markedly better than at the time of the last inspection; there is now a much higher proportion of good and very good teaching.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Teaching is good and there are examples of particularly imaginative teaching in all classes that supports learning well.
- Good foundations for further learning are laid in the reception class.
- Classroom assistants are highly skilled and make a strong contribution to the quality of teaching and learning.
- Pupils with special educational needs receive very good support and learn effectively.
- Teachers' lesson plans do not always specify what it is intended that pupils will learn and this results in some inconsistencies in the quality of teaching and learning.
- Teachers do not always insist on accurate spelling and neatly presented work.

Commentary

Summary of teaching observed during the inspection in 26 lessons

Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
0	4	19	1	2	0	0

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

11. Teaching is good for children in the reception class. Here, the warm relationships that have been developed help children to gain confidence. Most lessons are well planned and so learning is purposeful. Children are often engaged in exciting practical activities, such as cooking or finding out how to make lemonade. They have fun and enjoy their learning. There is a strong emphasis on developing language, literacy and numeracy skills as well as social and personal skills. Planning is mostly good, but planning for the activities that take place in the outside area does not always include explicit targets for learning. Consequently, learning in this area is not always sufficiently purposeful. Elsewhere, learning is generally effective. Good foundations for further learning are laid in the reception class and children are well equipped to tackle the National Curriculum subjects in Year 1.
12. Teaching and learning in Years 1 to 6 are mostly good. There is evidence of particularly imaginative teaching, as when pupils in Years 1 and 2 'visited' Australia. They prepared well for their visit by using the Internet to research climate and to find out about the people. They used computers to make their flight tickets and passports, studied Aboriginal art and tried to play the didgeridoo. A great deal of effective learning was accomplished on many fronts, including reading, writing and mathematics. Teaching is especially good where particular and specific new skills are taught. A very good lesson in information and communication technology in Years 3 and 4 helped pupils to learn how to use spreadsheets and illustrate data in many different ways. Here there was a clarity about the teaching because the planning included precise details of what the teacher intended to teach the pupils. Expectations were high and learning was brisk because explanations were clear. Teachers

skilfully use a projector, which is linked to their laptop computers, to display information clearly and to enhance their lessons. Presentations using the data projector are especially good and tend to assist pupils to concentrate well and learn effectively.

13. Classroom assistants make a particularly good contribution to pupils' very effective learning. A very good science lesson on evaporation for pupils in Years 5 and 6 was meticulously prepared, and planning included the key vocabulary that was to be introduced. Staff were deployed well so that an adult was working with each of three ability groups. The classroom assistants demonstrated skilled teaching strategies, such as posing thought-provoking questions and being sensitive to which pupils needed further explanation. There was a good balance of practical work and gaining information from a video. All groups were challenged appropriately so that they all made very good progress. Good opportunities were provided for the pupils themselves to assess their learning and so recognise how successful they had been. A serious approach to learning was generated and all staff maintained high expectations of the quality of work that they required.
14. The teaching of pupils with special educational needs is good. This is because pupils have been assessed accurately, using outside agency support where necessary, and their individual education plans are targeted carefully to help them learn. Most teachers use a wide range of successful strategies to motivate, involve and challenge pupils, and regularly monitor the progress pupils are making towards achieving their targets. However, in a few cases, teachers do not include in their planning the key words that they intend to introduce in lessons and they do not always explain new vocabulary at the beginning of lessons. Consequently, pupils do not always have the necessary support they need to learn new words. Records are well maintained and regularly updated. Teachers and teaching assistants work together very well as teams and, consequently, pupils receive very good support. Teachers are sensitive to the needs of all groups and all are helped to learn effectively.
15. Across the school, teaching is particularly effective where planning includes precise details of what new learning will be taught during the course of the lesson. Teaching is less effective when the planning does not specify what new skills, knowledge and understanding will be taught. In an English and a science lesson inadequate planning contributed to a lack of clear focus, a lack of clarity about what was to be taught and, in consequence, insufficient learning. The school has good systems to monitor the quality of teaching and learning, and the headteacher in particular evaluates teaching well. The strengths and areas for development in teaching have been clearly identified and good advice is provided to teachers on how to improve their practice.
16. The work that pupils produce is often of good quality, but not always neat and often includes careless mistakes. Teachers do not always show pupils how to present their work neatly. Teachers are sometimes too tolerant of carelessness. However, much of the work is well presented and there are examples of especially painstaking work in Years 5 and 6.

The curriculum

The curriculum is broad and balanced and all statutory requirements are met in full. Good extra-curricular provision enriches the curriculum. The accommodation is satisfactory. Staffing is good and other resources are satisfactory.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The curriculum is planned well so that learning progresses systematically.
- There is a strong emphasis on meeting individual learning needs and provision for pupils with special educational needs is very good.
- The curriculum provided for children in the reception class is good but the outside learning area is not always used effectively.

- The school provides a good range of extra activities to enrich the curriculum.
- The provision for personal, health, sex education and citizenship is very good.
- Pupils are prepared well to tackle the next stage in their education.
- The classroom assistants are deployed well to support learning.

Commentary

17. The curriculum is broadly based and meets the requirements of the National Curriculum and other statutory requirements for religious education and collective worship. The quality and range of learning activities are good. The national strategies for literacy and numeracy have had a positive impact on pupils' achievement. The school now has clear long- and medium-term planning frameworks in place for all subjects and these give good guidance to teachers and promote the systematic teaching of skills, knowledge and understanding. However, in some subjects, particularly history and geography, the school recognises that the planning for progression in pupils' skills is not yet fully established, so the National Curriculum in these subjects is not always covered in depth.
18. A range of appropriate visits make learning more interesting and meaningful for pupils. For example, pupils go on a residential visit in Year 6. This provides good opportunities for adventurous activities and promotes social development well. Good links are made between different subjects and this contributes to a cohesive curriculum. For instance, in a geography lesson, pupils in Years 5 and 6 successfully applied the note-taking skills that they had learnt in English. Information and communication technology is often taught as part of other subjects. It is taught effectively, and planning for developing computer skills progressively is well established. The school recognises that the time allocated to teaching the National Curriculum in Years 3 to 6 is below the recommended minimum and is working to rectify this.
19. The needs of all pupils, including higher-attaining pupils and pupils with special educational needs, are catered for very well and, consequently they all achieve well. Pupils with special educational needs are fully involved in lessons. This is because the good levels of extra adult support they receive enable them to succeed. In addition, teachers usually plan easier tasks for these pupils so that they can complete them on their own and, consequently, improve their ability to work independently. The provision outlined in Statements of Special Educational Need is fully in place and is reviewed annually. Good systems ensure that all pupils are fully included in all aspects of school life. The provision for gifted and talented pupils is good. A specific gift or talent has been identified for each pupil. Work is suitably challenging for higher-attaining pupils and some have the opportunity to take part in 'master classes' designed to challenge them appropriately.
20. The curriculum for the children in the reception class is good. The teacher plans a wide range of stimulating activities to enable the children to learn effectively. Curricular planning closely follows national guidelines and this helps to promote a good balance between all six areas of learning. The outside learning area has not been fully developed as an effective learning resource but the school has good plans in hand to make improvements. There is very close liaison between the reception teacher and the Year 1 and 2 teacher. Consequently, they know the pupils particularly well and transition between the two classes is good.
21. A good range of extra-curricular activities, including sports, arts and music clubs and musical performances, enrich the curriculum. Pupils play football, hockey, cricket, netball, learn to garden, swim and take part in musical activities. They also participate in an especially worthwhile 'help yourself' club. This is designed to assist pupils with any extra help they might feel that they need. Pupils attend if they want any specific help from a teacher with any aspect of their work. The club is well attended and supports learning well. The school provides very well for pupils' personal and social development. There is a strong emphasis on fostering self-esteem and confidence. There are very good procedures to help pupils in their understanding of the dangers of drugs and there is a good sex education programme. The School Council is well established and lessons include topics on issues concerning care of our environment and

recycling that help to promote a very good understanding of citizenship. The school works closely with the secondary schools that the pupils transfer to and puts into place the necessary support to enable a successful transition for pupils. Local sixth formers organise good sports tournaments for pupils from the consortium of local primary schools.

22. The school's accommodation is satisfactory. There is sufficient space both inside and outside the building and adequate resources to support teaching and learning. The school is bright, attractively decorated and clean. The playground has been improved with the building of a splendid pirate ship. However, there is no covered area for the reception children to play. Staffing is good, with an appropriate range of experience and expertise.

Care, guidance and support

The school meets a very high standard in the care, welfare, health and safety of its pupils. It provides good support, advice and guidance, based securely on the monitoring of their achievements and personal development. The school is good at seeking the views of pupils and acting on them.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The high quality of a wide range of care and welfare initiatives in the school maximises the learning opportunities for all pupils.
- Pupils with special educational needs are supported well.
- The very good relationships throughout the school support the personal and social development of pupils well.

Commentary

23. The school has a range of high quality initiatives to maximise the benefit pupils can gain from the educational opportunities offered by the school. The most productive of these initiatives is 'brain gym', in which different exercises raise pupils' alertness when they may be feeling jaded. It focuses their attention on the change from one type of activity to another, or calms them after a period of physical activity. The staff are well trained in the techniques and it makes an effective contribution to the attitudes of pupils to their learning. The school has recognised that some pupils learn better aurally, some by visual means and others through physical activity. The school also increases the awareness by pupils about their preferred method of learning and how to make the most effective use of this. Teachers often plan lessons that include opportunities for learning through these distinct styles. Pupils know about the different learning styles and begin to identify, and respond to, their own needs. Effective child protection arrangements are in place and all statutory checks are completed appropriately.
24. The school cares well for pupils with special educational needs. Their work is regularly monitored to ensure that they are making progress towards the targets set for them. There is a termly review of special educational needs provision, with contributions from several outside agencies, in addition to the school's own reviews. Having identified pupils' particular needs, the school has developed a range of high quality intervention strategies to address them. For example, pupils with identified needs in speech and language development are well supported by staff who have received additional training in this area.
25. Throughout the school, pupils are very well known by all members of staff. The reception teacher and her support assistant visit children in their homes before they start school and this helps to form a special bond between home and school. Individual pupils are listened to and the school council is well established. Wherever possible, the school responds positively to pupils' proposals, giving them some responsibility for their implementation. The high

quality of the assessment procedures in the school for mathematics and English, and the use

which is made of the information, enables early identification of any difficulties pupils may be experiencing in these subjects.

Partnership with parents, other schools and the community

The school has established good links with nearly all parents. It has good links with the local community and other schools and colleges.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The information provided for parents about their children's progress is good.
- The school values the views of parents and responds positively to them.
- Links with other schools contribute well to the quality of the school's educational provision.
- The school strives hard to communicate effectively with parents but a minority of parents do not fully understand the complexities of performance data because it has not been explained to them in enough detail.

Commentary

26. Information about how their children are coping at school is very accessible to parents. All staff are available in the playground at the end of each day to talk to parents, or a more formal meeting can be arranged if a parent prefers. Consultation evenings are held twice a year and take place over a week to enable parents and teachers to have a longer conversation than is the case in many schools. Parents have access to all data held by the school on their children's performance and both the pupil's current performance and targets are discussed with parents at consultation evenings. The parents are given a very clear picture of their children's progress by regular consultation evenings and detailed reports.
27. The school has good links with other schools, particularly through the Rural Swale Cluster. This link is of benefit to all pupils in the school as the Cluster works on common areas for development, sharing expertise for the benefit of all. There are also good links with at least two local secondary schools. A teacher from one of these schools has taught a course of French to pupils in Years 5 and 6 as part of their preparation for transition to secondary school. The school uses the area surrounding the school well to support the curriculum and people who live in the community contribute their expertise regularly to further enrich the experiences of pupils.
28. The school has compiled a comprehensive questionnaire for parents, tailored specifically to this school. As a result of the parents' responses the school has re-organised some after-school activities and has developed a new homework policy. In addition, several parents reported instances of the school working with them to respond to specific circumstances applying to their children. Occasionally, the school's response to situations is not fully understood by parents. A minority of parents feel that the school should do more to prepare pupils to take the eleven-plus test. The inspection is satisfied that the school has dealt with the situation satisfactorily, but further effort is needed to convince parents. Also, the school's 'value-added' rating is above national averages, which confirms that pupils are achieving well. A minority of parents do not understand this and remain unconvinced about the school's relatively good performance. This is because the raw data is, quite understandably, taken at face value; it is not fully explained to parents or to the community at large. The governors' detailed analysis of performance data could be made more available to parents.

LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

The leadership and management of the school are good. The headteacher has a clear vision for developing the school and for ensuring that each individual learns successfully. The work of the governing body is good and the chair of governors provides able and effective support.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The headteacher and governors analyse performance data in great detail to evaluate the school's accomplishments and to reveal any areas for improvement.
- The headteacher provides strong leadership and clear direction.
- Financial management is good.
- The management of provision for pupils with special educational needs is very good.
- The school does not do enough to explain fully its strengths and weaknesses to parents.
- The school provides good value for money.

Commentary

29. The headteacher has introduced an excellent computerised system that analyses the performance of each individual child and shows whether that individual is making enough progress or not. The system produces targets for each individual, which the school has set at ambitious levels for most pupils, but are adjusted to take into account any special factors that may affect an individual's achievement. The system reveals who has met or exceeded the targets and who has not. The system is used well to identify pupils who need extra support and these pupils join small teaching groups where their particular needs are addressed.
30. The governing body has a very good understanding of the school's strengths and weaknesses. Governors are ably led by the chair, who has conducted an excellent analysis of the school's performance compared with other schools. Using a government website, he has established that the school performs relatively well and that its costs compare favourably with other schools. The analysis shows, for example, that whilst staffing costs are relatively low, the school's expenditure on classroom assistants is relatively high. This illustrates the school's policy of employing as many adults as possible to compensate for the high level of pupils with special educational needs and to maintain a good ratio of adults to pupils. Governors also challenge the school to account for its performance. Many visit regularly and so are in a strong position to confirm the implementation of their policies and the decisions they have made. Governors join with teaching and support staff to review and develop the school improvement plan each year. This good practice helps them to develop a very good understanding of areas of strength as well as areas for improvement. Governors also join staff for in-service training days where they become conversant with current educational issues and school initiatives. As a result their decisions are always well informed.
31. Financial management is good and all spending decisions are carefully considered. The governing body have accrued a substantial contingency reserve to enable the school to maintain staffing at current levels, despite fluctuations in pupil numbers that result in wide variations in income. Other resources have been set aside to improve the outside learning environment for the youngest children. The school also intends to spend money on improving the lavatories. The governing body is rigorous in seeking best value for money. It has, for example, found the most cost effective way of buying financial services, grounds maintenance and electrical work. The governing body is keen to maintain a broad curriculum and to encourage pupils to be confident learners. This aim underpins much of its decision making and helps to maintain the school's clear direction.

Financial information

Financial information for the year April 2002 to March 2003

Income and expenditure (£)		Balances (£)	
Total income	283,518	Balance from previous year	29,606
Total expenditure	285,499	Balance carried forward to the next	27,625

Expenditure per pupil	2,835
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32. The headteacher provides energetic leadership and is involved on a daily basis in teaching groups and individuals across the school. She has established a clear vision for developing the school's particular character. There is a strong emphasis on meeting the specific learning needs of each individual and on using the different learning styles that help different pupils learn best. The school places importance on preparing pupils well so that they are alert and receptive. They use techniques to sharpen their awareness and mental dexterity. She has introduced clear planning frameworks, which help to ensure that the curriculum is taught systematically. She is supported well by teaching and support staff. There is a strong commitment to improving the quality of pupils' learning and to ensuring that each individual is helped to achieve as well as possible. There are very few teachers to whom responsibilities for curricular development can be delegated but responsibilities are shared appropriately. The curriculum is managed well, although a large proportion of subject co-ordinators are new to their role and have not yet had sufficient time to make a major impact on improving standards in, for example, information and communication technology. The more established co-ordinators have been effective in improving standards in their areas of responsibility, such as those for English and mathematics.
33. The headteacher is also the special educational needs co-ordinator and provides very good leadership and management of this major aspect of the school's work. She ensures that all pupils have been assessed accurately, using outside agencies when necessary, and that pupils have targets that are relevant to their particular needs, present sufficient challenge yet are achievable. She works very closely with all colleagues and regularly monitors the use made of pupils' individual education plans. The school has reviewed the policy for special educational needs to make sure that it reflects the nationally agreed Code of Practice for these pupils. The school has very good resources, especially in terms of support staff, to support individuals. The governor with responsibility for special educational needs is well informed and regularly updates the governing body about provision.
34. The school's expenditure per pupil is below the average for similar sized schools. Taking into account the high proportion of good teaching, pupils' good achievement and the effectiveness of support staff, the school provides good value for money.

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**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The quality of teaching and learning is good and classroom assistants make a strong contribution to children's learning.
 - Pupils' achievement is good and they do especially well in mathematical development and their knowledge and understanding of the world.
 - Each day a good range of stimulating activities is provided.
 - The outdoor area has not been fully developed as a learning resource and planning for activities outside is unclear.
35. There are only nine reception year children in the Foundation Stage and so the class often works with pupils from the mixed Year 1 and Year 2 class. There is an exceptionally wide range of ability in the group and the able children are challenged appropriately when working with the older pupils. A high proportion of children start school with standards of attainment that are below, and often well below, average. However, most children are on course to attain the early learning goals by the end of reception. Teaching is imaginative and activities are varied so that children's learning is effective. The quality of teaching and overall provision have improved significantly since the last inspection; they were satisfactory and are now good. Provision is generally managed well although planning for outside activities is imprecise. No clear learning objectives are prepared for the outside activities so the learning lacks focus and sufficient purpose. The teacher and classroom assistants work well together as an effective team. The teacher has a good understanding of how young children learn best and offers good leadership. Classroom assistants are highly skilled and make a good contribution to children's learning.
36. Children achieve well in their **personal, social and emotional development** and most are likely to attain all the early learning goals by the end of reception. Relationships between adults and pupils are very good, and pupils enjoy themselves. The teacher maintains high expectations of the children's performance and of their ability to develop independence. A strength of the teaching is the way that the teacher encourages the children to make decisions by asking questions like, 'Well how *much* sugar shall we add to our mixture?' This encourages children to consider options thoughtfully and to think about the consequences of their actions. Several children are not emotionally robust and are still prone to shyness and occasionally tearfulness when things do not go according to plan but the warmth of the relationships between the children and adults helps pupils to grow in confidence. They collaborate in decision-making and co-operate amicably with each other when sharing the computer, for example. An understanding of different cultures is fostered well. Children celebrated the Chinese New Year by organising a celebratory feast of Chinese food. They found out the symbol for the year in which they were born, created a Chinese dragon dance and learned how to form the shapes of Chinese writing. The group is so small that the teacher knows each individual extremely well and is exceptionally sensitive to their individual needs. Consequently, children flourish in the stimulating learning environment provided.
37. Children achieve well in **communication, language and literacy**. Although most are likely to attain all the early learning goals, many will not. Several have exceptionally well-developed skills and demonstrate considerable proficiency in reading and writing. Early reading skills are taught systematically. The children have a favourite spelling game that helps them to use their knowledge of phonics to build simple words. A few are already reading simple books fluently and most are well on their way to developing a good range of early reading skills. The quicker

learners have developed a good understanding of alphabetical order and know how to use simple dictionaries. However, a significant number have limited listening skills and a narrow vocabulary. The teaching is effective and children achieve well but those who are still at an early stage of development cannot form letters and are unsure about which letters represent which sounds. Visits and visitors make a strong contribution to children's learning. The class visited a local farm to feed the lambs, observed chicks hatching and ducklings waddling behind the mother duck. These experiences left a strong and lasting impression on many of the children and provide good opportunities for speaking and for recording their feelings. Most children are beginning to write legibly as their spelling grows steadily closer to conventional patterns, 'my clus weoot to sey the horses' and 'I liked having a fizzey driki and biskit.' They gain confidence through writing messages on tables covered in paper and writing signs to be placed around the classroom. They have produced a good display of polar bears that are portrayed in fiction and non-fiction books and many have a good understanding of the distinction between these two forms. The reading area is exceptionally cosy and inviting with fairy lights, comfortable cushions and an attractive display of books.

38. Children achieve well in **mathematical development**. They are confident learners. Teaching is imaginative and effective. Rather than counting plastic cubes or counters they count and sort interesting objects, like 'Star Wars' characters or sweets. On one occasion the children established that they needed 20 sweets to give everybody in the room one each. They found that they had 22 sweets. The teacher asked, 'Will we have enough?' This was too daunting a question for most but indicated the high expectations that the teacher has of their performance. The children have a good repertoire of number songs, such as 'Five Speckled Frogs sat on a Speckled Log', that help them with developing an understanding of addition and subtraction. The computer is used well to support learning and is almost constantly in use. Much of the teaching and learning is purposeful, as when cooking each week to provide children with valuable experiences as they study recipes, measure liquids and weigh ingredients. When playing with shapes they recognise that equilateral triangles tessellate to make hexagons and when constructing models learn the names of regular three-dimensional shapes. Children are suitably challenged and make good progress so that most are likely to attain the Early Learning Goals by the end of reception.
39. Children have a wonderful time exploring and experimenting with materials as they develop a deeper **knowledge and understanding of the world**. They take care of living things through planting seeds in spring and look after a small lemon tree that is growing in the classroom. In one lesson they decided to try to make lemonade. They felt and smelt lemons. Not all were able to name the colour yellow, demonstrating poor language development. They cut the lemons in two and the more able children understood the term 'half'. They squeezed the lemons, tasted the juice and decided that sugar should be added. They concluded that sugar would dissolve better in water if they placed it in the microwave for 60 seconds. They watched the display and joined in counting down from 60. They experiment with ice and consider where they can place the ice to make it melt quicker. The teacher says, 'Well, there's only one way to find out', and the group chorus, 'Do it!' Clearly this routine of experimenting to find out how and why things happen is well established. The microscope linked to the computer was used exceptionally well to show children, on the monitor, the movements made as ice slowly melted. 'Look it's moving!' 'Why is it moving?' 'Because it's melting'. Children use the computer confidently, handle disks carefully and insert them into the correct drives. Several are so confident that they close down the program they are supposed to be using and instead find their favourite site on the Internet. Teaching is consistently good and often stimulating so pupils achieve well. Most are likely to attain the Early Learning Goals by the end of reception.
40. It was not possible to gather a great deal of evidence to support judgements on some aspects of the children's **physical development** because the weather was inclement and this restricted use of the outdoor learning environment. There was insufficient evidence to form overall judgements on children's achievement, standards or the quality of teaching in this area of learning. Children demonstrated remarkable proficiency when they joined with older pupils

for country dancing in the hall. Pupils have good opportunities to manipulate tools, such as lemon squeezers, scissors and paint brushes and most hold pencils correctly.

41. Children are introduced to a good range of activities to stimulate their **creative development**. They print with their fingers and with vegetables. They use paint, crayons and glue to create a good range of paintings and collages. Drama is encouraged in the role-play area, which was recently an enchanted castle where fairy tales were enacted using crowns, necklaces and magic wands made by the children. It is now a fabric shop where material that has been dyed and printed by the children is sold. This is a popular area where children converse freely with one another as they adopt the roles of shopkeepers or customers. A large cardboard box became a space rocket as children studied one of their favourite books, 'Whatever Next' by Jill Murphy. They study hessian and tease out the threads to see how it has been woven before having a go at weaving their own material. There was insufficient evidence to form overall judgements on children's achievement, standards or the quality of teaching in this area of learning.

SUBJECTS IN KEY STAGES 1 AND 2

ENGLISH AND MODERN FOREIGN LANGUAGE

English

Provision in English is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Pupils' achievement is good.
- Classroom assistants make a strong contribution to pupils' learning.
- The boys' writing group is successful.
- There are inconsistencies in the quality of teaching and teachers do not always pay sufficient attention to detail about accurate spelling the neat presentation of work.
- The subject is led and managed well and there has been good improvement since the last inspection.

Commentary

42. By the end of Year 2, pupils are likely to attain average standards in reading and writing. This represents good achievement as many pupils started Year 1 with standards that were below average. Overall, teaching is good although there are inconsistencies in the quality of teaching; it ranges from very good to unsatisfactory. Pupils' achievement in Years 3 to 6 is good. However, the high proportion of pupils with special educational needs in Year 6 means that the school's overall performance is likely to be below average by the end of this school year.
43. Classroom assistants take small groups of pupils for extra and additional work associated with the National Literacy Strategy. They have been trained in this work and provide effective support for those who need extra help to develop literacy skills. One assistant has been trained to use speech therapy techniques to support pupils who have problems with speaking. In one session an assistant used a hand puppet well to stimulate and maintain interest in a lesson where pupils were reading a story together and predicting what the key words, that had been covered in sticky tape, might be. The school has a large number of pupils with special educational needs and many who have fallen behind in their learning. This skilled extra input helps pupils to achieve well and in many cases to catch up with all the others.

44. Another particularly effective initiative is the boys' writing group. In response to the school's recognition that boys tend to be falling behind in their writing compared with the girls, a part-time teacher is employed to visit the school each week to take a small group of boys for writing. The teacher has been successful in developing an enthusiasm for writing and boys say that they really enjoy their special sessions. Work of good quality is produced, much of it beautifully presented and often word processed. The boys are justifiably proud of their writing.
45. There are many strengths in the teaching. A very good lesson was seen in Years 1 and 2 where pupils were making their own dictionaries. Here tasks were modified appropriately so that all pupils were challenged appropriately and all could achieve success. The more able pupils used their good vocabulary well to find words for each letter of the alphabet. The slower learners received good support as they learned about alphabetical order. In this lesson computers were used well to support pupils' learning. Although teaching is mostly good, in one lesson it was unsatisfactory because planning did not specify explicitly what new skills, knowledge and understanding are to be taught during the course of the lesson. Consequently, the lesson lacked clarity and the amount of new learning was insufficient. Also, the teacher's expectations of the quality of the work to be presented were too low. In some lessons teachers do not insist that pupils present their work neatly. Handwriting is taught regularly and most pupils are capable of writing neatly.
46. Leadership and management are good. The subject leader has a good knowledge and understanding of national initiatives and curricular developments. She maintains a sound overview of provision by sampling the work that pupils produce. The headteacher provides good support by assisting with monitoring the quality of teaching and giving teachers detailed guidance on how to improve the quality of their teaching. There has been a groundswell of improvement since the last inspection, which is beginning to show in the standards that pupils attain. Pupils' attainment in reading and writing in Year 2 is better now than it was and higher-attaining pupils are now challenged appropriately so that they achieve as well as all the others. The quality of teaching has improved; there is now a greater proportion of good teaching and a lower proportion of unsatisfactory teaching. Lesson planning has improved but the issue regarding the precision of lesson planning, in terms of stating what pupils are expected to learn from activities, remains an area for improvement.

Language and literacy across the curriculum

47. Pupils have many useful opportunities to use their literacy skills in other subjects. In religious education, for example, they retell Bible stories and in geography they write about conditions in the countries they have studied. Pupils have many opportunities to practise their reading skills when following instructions in computer program or reading problems in mathematics. Good opportunities are provided to extend speaking and dramatic skills in the termly school productions, such as *Bugsy Malone* and *Joseph*.
48. Work in **French** was sampled and the teaching seen was good. A French teacher from one of the local secondary schools visits the school to teach pupils in Years 5 and 6. The lesson observed was good and pupils learned effectively. The teaching was brisk and a great deal was imparted in a short time. The headteacher also teaches the subject in short sharp bursts. Again, the teaching is good and pupils learn how to answer everyday questions about, for example, their names, their ages, days of the week and where they live. They gain confidence in speaking, which prepares them well for transfer to the secondary school. The work is made even more purposeful by an annual visit to France where pupils practise their French in everyday activities such as shopping.

MATHEMATICS

Provision in mathematics is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- By the end of Year 2 pupils attain standards that are above average.
- Pupils' achievement is good.
- The quality of teaching and learning are good.
- The subject is managed well and good assessment systems have been introduced.

Commentary

49. Pupils' achievement is good in Years 1 and 2 and most are likely to attain standards that are above average by the end of Year 2. Pupils continue to achieve well in Years 3 to 6 but most standards, by the end of year 6, are likely to be below average because of the high proportion of pupils with special educational needs. However, pupils currently in Year 6 are all achieving well in relation to their prior attainment. A significant number of pupils who join the school from other schools often have gaps in their learning. This is confirmed by the school's precise assessment procedures. Some pupils still have to catch up. The school's below average performance is not a reflection on the quality of teaching that pupils are receiving now. Many of the older pupils did not benefit from the National Numeracy approach to teaching mathematics, which was introduced in this school only when the current group of pupils in Year 6 were partway through this phase of their education.
50. Overall, the teaching and learning are good. The quality is always at least good and sometimes very good. Teachers question pupils well and ensure that all are actively involved throughout the lesson. Pupils concentrate well and persevere in solving problems. Work is not always presented neatly and this contributes to careless mistakes. The work of classroom assistants is generally effective in promoting learning, but there are times when they become too involved in managing and supervising groups rather than teaching them specific skills. Although computers were used well in one class to support learning, there is scope for using computers more often in lessons.
51. Leadership and management are good. The co-ordinator monitors teaching and learning well through lesson observation and gives helpful feedback to teachers. She also monitors teachers' planning and examines samples of pupils' work to check on their progress and to identify any areas for improvement. There has been a good improvement in provision since the time of the last inspection. Although the National Numeracy Strategy was introduced later than in most schools, it has now been implemented successfully and is beginning to have a positive impact on standards. Teaching is better than it was and standards in Year 2 are better now than they were at the time of the last inspection.

Mathematics across the curriculum

52. Pupils make satisfactory use of mathematical skills in other subjects. In science, for example, they use stop-watches to time experiments and record numerical data derived from their experiments. In history, pupils study time-lines that highlight the dates of important events. However, links with information and communication technology have not been fully exploited.

SCIENCE

Provision in science is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Pupils achieve well as a result of the mostly good teaching.
- Inconsistencies in the quality of teachers' planning leads to unevenness in the quality of pupils' learning.
- Pupils in Years 1 and 2 do not produce enough written work in their books to show the results of their experiments and investigations.

Commentary

53. Pupils' achievement in Years 1 and 2 is good and most attain standards that are broadly average by the end of Year 2. Although pupils are at widely varying stages of development they achieve well in Years 3 to 6 but standards, by the end of Year 6, are likely to be below average because of the high proportion of pupils with special educational needs. The school carried out a thorough analysis of test results in Year 6 and identified that pupils were not getting enough opportunities to investigate. This has now been addressed. All pupils are now achieving well because of good teaching but some pupils still have to catch up. Pupils with special educational needs are making good progress because of the good support they receive in lessons from teachers and teaching assistants.
54. In the lessons seen during the inspection, teaching ranged from very good to unsatisfactory. Overall, teaching and learning are good. There was very good teaching and learning in a lesson on evaporation. This was because the teacher was very well organised, had clear plans that described what she wanted pupils to learn, used assessment well to plan work for pupils at different stages of learning, set challenging tasks for all pupils and used resources well. The class teacher and the classroom assistants worked together seamlessly, giving good support when it was needed but also providing appropriate challenge through effective questioning. Teaching was unsatisfactory in one lesson about air pressure and forces. The learning objectives for the lesson were unclear and the lesson was not well managed so that pupils did not learn enough. However, an analysis of the work produced by these pupils indicates that a good range of the curriculum has been covered but that pupils spend too little time on conducting investigations.
55. The reception children and pupils in Years 1 and 2 are taught together as a whole class to start off a science topic. A scrutiny of pupils' work showed that there was a limited amount of work produced by pupils in Years 1 and 2. Much of the work they produce is recorded on large scale displays but they are not recording the results of their work often enough in their books. As a result, they do not consolidate their learning effectively.
56. Leadership and management are good. The co-ordinator has been monitoring teaching and learning in lessons and giving teachers helpful feedback. A more rigorous assessment system has been put into place but it is too early yet to see the impact of this on standards. However, detailed analyses of test results have revealed that pupils need more opportunities to conduct investigations and provision has been adjusted to accommodate this. There has been a satisfactory improvement since the last inspection.

INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY

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

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The standards attained by pupils have improved significantly since the last inspection.
- Teaching and support staff share good levels of expertise.
- There are examples of very good teaching.

Commentary

57. At the time of the last inspection the standards that pupils attained were below average. Provision has improved significantly since then. There is now a much greater degree of expertise among staff, both teaching and support staff, and the equipment available has been much enhanced. Standards across the school are now average and the school is poised to make further advances. One classroom assistant has a particularly high level of expertise and regularly spends time sorting out problems and making sure that all the computers and printers are functioning properly. This helps to minimise the frustrations that can be caused when equipment does not work properly.
58. In one very good and particularly well-organised lesson for pupils in Years 3 and 4, resources were used well to provide a highly effective learning environment. The teacher had gathered together laptops to supplement the two classroom computers. Whilst he worked with pupils on the computers, teaching them new skills, the classroom assistant took the remainder of the class in a related exercise about interpreting data. The whole class were engaged productively and all showed great enthusiasm for the work. The groups are rotated each week so the whole class are taught a new range of skills regularly. The pupils learned how to enter data on spreadsheets and how to produce different types of graph or diagram to illustrate their data. The lesson progressed at a brisk pace as the teacher maintained high expectations of their ability to learn rapidly. His instructions were clear and therefore pupils quickly understood what was required. Although the pace of learning in this lesson was good, it was clear that more could have been accomplished if more computers had been available. In this class, pupils are encouraged to explore the 'Website of the Week' and to use the Internet to find out as much as they can about specific topics each week. This good practice is not spread to all classes.
59. Leadership and management are good. The subject leader has only recently taken over responsibility for the subject. He has good technical expertise and has formulated good plans for improving provision further.

Information and communication technology across the curriculum

60. Good use is made of computers to support teaching and learning across the curriculum, although in mathematics they are not used enough. Pupils learn how to enter data from science experiments on to spreadsheets and then how to illustrate the data in graphs and diagrams. They are becoming increasingly expert at deciding which form of graph or chart will be most suitable to highlight specific features of their results. They know, for example, that pie charts are often best for illustrating the results of surveys and bar charts to illustrate comparative results of scientific data. The Internet is used well for research, as when finding out about foreign countries in geography. The data projector is used well in lessons, such as English, to illustrate and highlight different aspects of the texts being studied. Transmitters are also used well to ensure that all pupils can hear teachers clearly.

HUMANITIES

Although only two lessons were seen in religious education, the subject is reported in full below. Work in history and geography was sampled and the long- and medium-term curricular plans indicate that the National Curriculum in these subjects is covered in full.

61. The work that pupils in Years 1 and 2 have produced in **geography** shows that that they have been learning about plans, maps and routes. In addition, they have been finding places on a map of the British Isles. The standard of the work produced is broadly average. In Year 3 and 4, pupils have been comparing life in two different villages but there is very little recorded work in their books. In Years 5 and 6, there is a good range of geography work in pupils' books. Most of this work focuses on a study of the contrasting locations of Lynsted and Chembakoli in India. In a successful lesson for pupils in Years 5 and 6, the quality of teaching was good and pupils were learning effectively. Resources, including a video film, were used effectively. Good use is made of information and communication technology. The Internet has been used well for research. Pupils have used this facility to find local maps, aerial views and information about the weather in Chembakoli.
62. In **history**, pupils in Years 1 and 2 have been learning about famous people, like Guy Fawkes, Florence Nightingale and Grace Darling. In Year 3 and 4 pupils have been developing their knowledge and understanding of the Romans. There was insufficient evidence to make a judgement about standards of attainment.
63. The elements of leadership and management for the subjects that were sampled were satisfactory. The co-ordinator for humanities has recently taken on her role and has not yet had time to monitor provision. However, she has already identified areas for improvement. She recognises that there is a need to review the long-term plans, in order to promote the systematic teaching of a progression of skills.

RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

Provision in religious education is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Teaching and learning are good.
- School assemblies contribute well to pupils' knowledge and understanding.

Commentary

64. Teaching and learning are good, overall. It is evident from pupils' contributions in the lessons seen and in assemblies that they are learning effectively. Pupils at varying stages of development are suitably challenged through teachers' effective questioning and the appropriate work which is set. Pupils in Years 1 and 2 have been learning about Judaism. They know about the mezuzah, Torah, Hannukah, Yom Kippur and some important stories from the Old Testament. In Years 3 and 4 pupils learn about religious books and in one good lesson learnt why the Bible is special. In a good lesson in Year 5 and 6, pupils were learning about wudu and the importance of the ritual for Muslim people. Pupils achieve well, and most attain standards that are broadly in line with the expectations of the locally agreed syllabus. This represents a significant improvement since the last inspection when work fell below the expected standard.
65. There are strong links between those aspects of the subject taught in the classrooms and school assemblies. A telling example occurred when pupils were challenged to think about the importance of faith. The teacher used good examples from science to help the pupils understand the importance of things that cannot be seen. Pupils pray respectfully and are

given the opportunity to take time to reflect sensibly. They have opportunities to visit the local church, and the local church warden and lay readers support the school well. There have been very few recent visits or visitors from other faiths.

66. The leadership and management of the subject are satisfactory. The co-ordinator has recently taken on this role. She has developed an action plan, written a new policy, which still needs to be ratified, and recognises that more enrichment of the curriculum is needed through a planned programme of visits and visitors. She has begun to monitor teaching and learning.

CREATIVE, AESTHETIC, PRACTICAL AND PHYSICAL SUBJECTS

No lessons were seen in art and design, design and technology or music. Work in art and design and music was sampled. Design and technology was not inspected.

67. Pupils are introduced to the work of a wide range of artists in **art and design**. This has stimulated an enthusiasm for the subject. Pupils study the work of Picasso, the American artist Red Grooms, Cezanne and Miro and use images created by these artists as inspiration for their own work. In Years 1 and 2, pupils study Aboriginal art forms as part of their work on art from different cultures. There is evidence of imaginative teaching. Pupils in Years 1 and 2 made ingenious pictures by assembling fruit, vegetables and recycled materials, based on their studies of Giuseppe Archibald's work. They even created a portrait by taking a photograph of themselves lying on the hall floor in an intricate pattern to represent the image of a face. Pupils in Years 5 and 6 have made studies of colour and the work of Turner. Good links are made with literature as they explore what feelings and emotions different colours evoke as, for example, 'Green-summer-Saturn-grass-vegetation-mint-go-my room-happy.' They also wrote thoughtful pieces about their reaction to Turner's paintings, including why they liked certain aspects of his work and disliked others.
68. **Physical education** is well established in the school's curriculum and pupils have opportunities to explore a good range of activities. Gymnastics, dance, games, athletics and swimming all feature in the curriculum. Hockey and cricket coaches visit the school and the school plays netball and football in mixed-gender teams, against other schools. Older pupils experience a good range of adventurous outdoor activities, including abseiling and orienteering, when they visit an adventure camp in the summer term. A good, well-managed hockey lesson in the school hall was thoroughly enjoyed by pupils during the inspection. However, the hall is small and the lack of space means that groups sometimes have to take turns and so it is difficult to ensure that all pupils are fully engaged throughout the session. Also the surface of the playground is uneven and this makes it difficult to control apparatus with precision.
69. The co-ordinator runs an after-school **music** club and, here, pupils sing enthusiastically and learn how to use tuned and untuned percussion instruments to accompany their songs. The leadership and management of music are good because although the co-ordinator has only recently taken on the role, she has good subject knowledge and has already developed an action-plan based on analysis of strengths and weaknesses in the subject. Following an audit of resources, she has bought more tuned instruments and resources designed to develop a deeper understanding of music from different cultures, including a range of CDs. Pupils have good regular opportunities to participate in musical productions and the curriculum is enriched well by opportunities to participate in, for example, a 'String Day' and a school choir. Pupils' singing in assemblies is tuneful and well pitched. They enjoy taking part in singing collectively.

PERSONAL, SOCIAL AND HEALTH EDUCATION AND CITIZENSHIP

70. Although only one lesson was seen in this area of the school's work, provision is very good. This is because the school places a very high emphasis on pupils' personal development. There are opportunities embedded in all the work of the school to enable pupils to develop into confident, well-motivated individuals who want to learn and to succeed. They benefit from an enriched curriculum that gives them good opportunities for learning beyond the classroom. There is a strong emphasis placed on purposeful learning. Pupils enjoy and benefit from the regular opportunities to participate in 'brain gym'. Pupils are able to indicate to their teacher by a red card/green card system whether they feel ready to start to learn at the beginning of the school day. This is helpful because any issues that are worrying the pupils can be dealt with quickly and they are then able to learn effectively. The provision for pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good. The consequences of this provision are seen throughout the school, where the pupils work and play together in harmony. Sound programmes for sex and drugs education are in place. A special 'Health Bus' visits the school to promote healthy life styles. The school council works well and contributes to pupils' developing understanding of citizenship. All pupils have the opportunity to contribute their views in class to their representatives and changes have taken place in school as a result of the pupils' suggestions. Pupils report back regularly to their classes. The council is well supported by a member of the governing body, a representative from the parents' association and a member of staff.

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	2
How the school's effectiveness has changed since its last inspection	3
Value for money provided by the school	3
Overall standards achieved	5
Pupils' achievement	3
Pupils' attitudes, values and other personal qualities	2
Attendance	3
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	3
Accommodation and resources	4
Pupils' care, welfare, health and safety	2
Support, advice and guidance for pupils	3
How well the school seeks and acts on pupils' views	3
The effectiveness of the school's links with parents	3
The quality of the school's links with the community	3
The school's links with other schools and colleges	3
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	4
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).