

INSPECTION REPORT

**BOUGHTON-UNDER-BLEAN
METHODIST PRIMARY SCHOOL**

Faversham

LEA area: Kent

Unique reference number: 118705

Headteacher: Mr. Hugh Greenwood

Lead inspector: Marianne Harris

Dates of inspection: 21st – 23rd June 2004

Inspection number: 265786

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:	Voluntary Controlled
Age range of pupils:	4-11
Gender of pupils:	Mixed
Number on roll:	205
School address:	School Lane Boughton-Under-Blean Faversham Kent
Postcode:	ME13 9AW
Telephone number:	01227 751431
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Appropriate authority:	The governing body
Name of chair of governors:	Mrs. Annette Garner

Date of previous inspection: 19th October 1998

CHARACTERISTICS OF THE SCHOOL

Boughton-Under-Blean is an average sized primary school that was initially set up by the Methodist Church. As a voluntary controlled school it works within a broadly Anglican ethos with a Methodist presence on the governing body. The school is situated in a small village near Faversham and caters for pupils from the local, socially mixed area, and children are of generally average ability when they join the school. There are no pupils at an early stage of learning English. The proportion of pupils who are eligible for free school meals is slightly below average, and the percentage of pupils who have special educational needs, including those with statements is average. Many of the pupils with special educational needs are autistic.

INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Members of the inspection team			Subject responsibilities
23288	Marianne Harris	Lead inspector	Foundation Stage; science; religious education
9569	Jan Leaning	Lay inspector	
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23487	Patricia Kitley	Team inspector	Special educational needs; English; geography; history; citizenship

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PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

OVERALL EVALUATION

Boughton-Under-Blean Methodist Primary School provides a satisfactory standard of education and is improving. Standards are average overall and pupils' achievement is satisfactory. Teaching and learning are satisfactory. Leadership and management are satisfactory and improving because of the introduction of the new leadership team. Pupils are enthusiastic about learning and behave well. The school provides satisfactory value for money.

The school's main strengths and weaknesses are

- Relationships throughout the school are very good
- Pupils achieve well in science, geography and religious education and reach standards that are above those expected nationally
- Children in the Reception class do not make enough progress
- There are very good links with the local community and this benefits pupils
- The organisation of the school day does not make the best use of valuable teaching time
- Work is marked with encouraging comments, but there is little indication as to how pupils could improve their work
- Pupils are enthusiastic about learning

There has been satisfactory improvement since the time of the last inspection in 1998. The quality of teaching overall has improved, and standards are beginning to rise, especially in information and communication technology. However, provision for children in the Reception class is still not good enough and this remains a weakness within the school. This has been identified and strategies are in place to improve provision.

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	B	C	C
mathematics	B	B	C	C
science	B	C	B	A

*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.*

Inspectors judge pupils' achievement by looking at the progress they make over their time in school, as well as how they do in lessons. **Pupils' overall achievement is satisfactory.** When children join the school they are of average ability and they make steady progress during their time in school, except in the Reception class where progress is hindered because children do not make enough progress in all areas of learning. By the time they join Year 1 most children are likely to reach the expected goals for children's learning in communication, language and literacy and in mathematical development, although very few will exceed them. However, few will reach the expected goals in the other areas of learning, although this has been identified by the school and strategies are being put into place to remedy the weaknesses in the Reception class. National test results, in 2003, for pupils at the end of Year 2, showed that standards in writing and mathematics were average, but below average in reading. The school identified this as a weakness and standards of work seen, by the end of Year 2 are in line with those expected. The 2003 test results for pupils at the end of Year 6 were average in English and mathematics, but well above average in science. This accurately reflects the standards seen in work during the inspection. Pupils with special educational

needs, and those of higher ability, achieve satisfactorily. Standards in religious education and geography are above average and pupils achieve well.

Pupils' personal qualities are good. The school provides well for pupils' personal development and, as a result, pupils are enthusiastic about learning. Attendance is above average and pupils arrive at school on time. Relationships throughout the school are very good and pupils work together effectively. **Provision for pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good** and this contributes to their positive attitudes to learning.

QUALITY OF EDUCATION

The quality of education provided by the school is satisfactory.

Teaching and learning are satisfactory overall. Teachers make good use of resources, but time is not always used effectively, so some lessons are too long. Assessment is satisfactory. Targets are set in English and mathematics and pupils know what they are aiming for, but this initiative is relatively new and has not had time to raise standards. Work is usually marked with encouraging comments, but there are very few indications of what pupils need to do to improve their work. The curriculum is broad and balanced with good opportunities for pupils to learn outside of lessons. However it is unsatisfactory for children in the Reception class. Induction procedures for children joining the Reception class are satisfactory, and pupils are well prepared for when they move to their secondary school. Good care is taken of the pupils and staff make sure that the environment is safe for all pupils. The very good links with the local community are of significant benefit to the pupils.

LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

Leadership and management are satisfactory. The headteacher has been in post for a short while and is leading the school well. The governors are supportive of the school and are beginning to have a strong influence on the direction in which it is going. They fulfil their statutory duties well. The introduction of the Leadership Team involves more staff in leading the school forward, but has not had time to raise standards overall, although the drive to improve reading standards has been successful.

PARENTS' AND PUPILS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

Parents have positive views of the school and are confident that it is doing a good job. Pupils have similar positive views and enjoy coming to school. They know that their views are listened to and that there is an adult to whom they can turn if they have any worries.

IMPROVEMENTS NEEDED

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

- Provision for children in the Reception class
- Alter the length of some lessons so that teachers are able to make the best use of valuable teaching time
- Ensure that all work is marked effectively so that pupils know what they need to do to improve

PART B: COMMENTARY ON THE INSPECTION FINDINGS

STANDARDS ACHIEVED BY PUPILS

Standards achieved in areas of learning and subjects

Pupils reached standards in national tests that are in line with those expected, except in reading for pupils at the end of Year 2. These results are reflected in the work seen during the inspection, except in reading, where standards are now in line with those expected nationally. Achievement overall is satisfactory.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Standards in reading are rising for pupils in Years 1 and 2
- Pupils achieve well in science
- Standards in religious education and geography are above average
- Children in the Reception class do not make enough progress and their achievement is unsatisfactory

Commentary

1. When children join the school they arrive with average skills, knowledge and understanding. At the end of the Reception year most of the children will reach the expected goals for children's learning in communication, language and literacy and in mathematical development. However, many of the children will not reach the expected goals in the other areas of learning because there have been too few opportunities for them to experience the whole range of activities that are normally expected. Activities have not been provided that cover all areas of learning, therefore, their achievement is unsatisfactory overall.
2. In the 2003 tests for pupils at the end of Year 2, results were in line with those expected nationally, except in reading where results were below average, and had fallen from those in the previous year. This represents satisfactory achievement overall, given that most children come into school with average ability. In work seen during the inspection, standards are in line with those expected, including those in reading because of the effort the school has put into raising reading standards.
3. In the 2003 tests for pupils at the end of Year 6, results were in line with those expected nationally in English and mathematics, and above average in science. This was reflected in the work seen during the inspection. Overall, this represents satisfactory achievement for pupils, and very good achievement in science, especially when compared to the teacher assessments of the same group of pupils when they were in Year 2. Standards in geography and religious education are above average and pupils achieve well in these subjects. In other subjects, where judgements could be made, standards are in line with those expected.
4. The trend in results over the recent past, for pupils at the end of Years 2 and 6, is broadly in line with that seen nationally. Pupils with special educational needs, and those who are of higher ability, achieve satisfactorily as work is matched to their needs.

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

Standards in:	School results	National results
reading	15.1 (16.4)	15.7 (15.8)
writing	14.7 (14.9)	14.6 (14.4)
mathematics	16.4 (16.7)	16.3 (16.5)

There were 31 pupils in the year group. Figures in brackets are for the previous year.

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

Standards in:	School results	National results
English	26.8 (28.4)	26.8 (27.0)
mathematics	27.2 (27.7)	26.8 (26.7)
science	29.8 (29.1)	28.6 (28.3)

There were 34 pupils in the year group. Figures in brackets are for 2002.

Pupils’ attitudes, values and other personal qualities

Pupils’ attitudes, values and other personal qualities are good. Behaviour is good and relationships within the school are very good. Provision for pupils’ spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good overall. Attendance and punctuality are good.

Main strengths

- Very good relationships ensure that pupils' confidence and self esteem is developed well
- Pupils display good attitudes and behaviour around the school
- The school council is successfully giving all pupils a voice
- Good opportunities are provided for social, moral and cultural development

Commentary

5. Most pupils are enthusiastic about their school, they are courteous and polite to each other and to the adults who provide very good role models. Pupils say their teachers are fair and kind and this leads to an atmosphere where they can develop their individual strengths and self-esteem. Many pupils, especially in Year 6, have responsibilities around the school, they act as buddies to younger pupils and ensure no one is feeling left out in the playground.
6. Pupils' attitudes to school and to their learning are good. They settle quickly to work, listen carefully and concentrate well on their tasks. Good behaviour is supported by the school's strong moral code and a clear and consistently applied behaviour policy. There is no racial harassment, no bullying was seen, and parents and pupils say that teachers generally manage reported incidents promptly and effectively. Pupils work and play very well together and develop good levels of independence. They show respect for the school environment and handle resources with care. There have been no recent exclusions in the school.
7. The school council operates in a democratic way and pupils' ideas are listened to: changes such as healthier snacks at playtime have resulted from these discussions. There are plans to provide suggestion boxes in each classroom to make it easier for pupils to communicate their ideas and worries to the school council in a confidential manner. Pupils are very enthusiastic about this development and understand that they can express their ideas without the fear of being teased by others.
8. The strong moral code supports pupils’ understanding of the difference between right and wrong. Pupils have a good understanding of what is acceptable at school. The standards of care make a good contribution to the school's positive ethos. They are given good opportunities for social interaction and their cultural development is extended well by the many visits and visitors and by the good use that is made of the local environment. In religious

education, pupils study the religions and cultures of other faiths and pupils in year 2 were thinking about all the things they have to be thankful for and writing good prayers about them.

9. Attendance is good. The school successfully ensures that almost all pupils attend regularly and on time. Parents make every attempt to ensure that their children arrive on time to school and very few pupils are late. This is due, mainly to the congestion in the very narrow streets surrounding the school and every attempt is being made to encourage punctuality.

Attendance in 2002/2003 (%)

Authorised absence		Unauthorised absence	
School data	5.0	School data	0.1
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.

QUALITY OF EDUCATION PROVIDED BY THE SCHOOL

The quality of education provided by the school is satisfactory overall. Teaching, learning and assessment are satisfactory. The curriculum is satisfactory with good opportunities for pupils to learn outside of lessons. The pupils are well cared for and the links with parents and the community are effective and contribute to the satisfactory progress that the pupils make.

Teaching and learning

Teaching and learning are satisfactory overall, except for children in the Reception class because they do not make enough progress. Assessment is satisfactory with clear targets being set for English and mathematics. Marking is encouraging but does not always give pupils a clear indication of how to improve their work.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Resources are used effectively
- Pupils understand their targets in English and mathematics
- Teaching assistants are used well to support pupils with special educational needs
- All staff insist on a high standard of behaviour and this results in calm lessons where all are included effectively
- Some lessons are too long
- Children in the Reception class do not make enough progress

Commentary

10. The quality of teaching and learning overall is satisfactory. Pupils are interested in learning and enjoy working together in lessons. Teachers use resources well so that all pupils can participate fully in all activities. For example, in a good science lesson when the teacher used cards to help pupils understand that foods low in fat and salt, for instance, are healthier options when choosing a menu. Teaching assistants are used effectively to support pupils with special educational needs, so that they too can be fully involved in lessons.
11. Children in the Reception class have not benefited from satisfactory teaching and this has resulted in a curriculum that has been too narrow. This weakness has been identified by the

headteacher and effective strategies have been put in place to improve teaching and learning in the Reception class.

12. Planning is thorough. Much work has been carried out to improve planning, but some lessons are too long and the tasks expand to fill the time available. When this happens, lessons lose pace and pupils become fidgety and do not concentrate as well as they can. However, teachers insist on a high standard of behaviour and expect pupils to work together well and share ideas. Pupils enjoy researching in small groups and cooperate well.
13. Work in books is usually marked with encouraging comments and praise for effort. Although this does much to raise the self-esteem of pupils, it is not as helpful as it could be, because teachers do not always indicate to pupils how to improve their work. In discussions, pupils are very positive about the targets they have been set in English and mathematics and enjoy reviewing their mathematics targets on specified days. They say that this helps them know how to improve, but marking is not always helpful to them.

Summary of teaching observed during the inspection in 21 lessons

Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
0	0	12	9	0	0	0

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

The curriculum

The curriculum is satisfactory for pupils in Years 1 to 6, with good opportunities for extra-curricular activities. The curriculum for children in the Reception class is unsatisfactory. Accommodation and resources are satisfactory.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The curriculum for the children in the Reception class is unsatisfactory. It does not provide full access to the six areas of learning
- The curriculum and pupils’ learning needs are effectively supported by teaching assistants
- The school offers a good range of extra curricular activities outside lessons

Commentary

14. Until recently the curriculum in the Reception class has been unsatisfactory because teachers have only planned the work in communication, language and literacy and mathematics. The other areas of learning have not been covered in enough depth. The very recent changes to the planning mean that children now have a more balanced curriculum, but these have not yet had time to have an effect on the overall quality of education in the Reception class.
15. The curriculum in Years 1 to 6 supports the achievement of all pupils. The new planning framework ensures that most work is appropriately matched to the needs of groups and individual pupils. However, the organisation of the school day into four periods does not always allow teachers to make the best use of the improved planning and the teaching time. Some lessons are too long, for example English and mathematics sessions, and this results in tasks being extended to fill up the time available. When this happens the pace of lessons slows down and some pupils lose interest and concentration.
16. The curriculum is well planned to ensure that relevant links with other subjects are made, but the short term focus on enrichment days and weeks for some subjects means that skills are not taught systematically in art, music, design and technology.

17. Teachers and support staff are aware of the needs of pupils identified as requiring additional help, including the more able, gifted or talented. The inclusion co-ordinator carefully oversees the provision for these groups of pupils. A specialist programme is provided for the large number of pupils identified in the school with autistic spectrum disorders. Speech and language therapy, plus other support, is provided by visiting specialist teachers. However, a lack of flexibility in planning means that the frequency of withdrawal from lessons can disrupt the continuity of learning for some pupils.
18. The school uses the local environment well to enhance its own resources and to make lessons in subjects such as history and geography more relevant and stimulating. Pupils have opportunities to take responsibilities and this has a positive effect on their self esteem. There are good sporting links with other schools and pupils have access to a wide variety of recreational clubs and activities that take place outside lessons.
19. The accommodation and resources are satisfactory overall, although the classrooms are spread out over a wide area, with many classes being housed in temporary accommodation. This is not ideal as some classrooms do not have toilet facilities, and pupils have to go outside to get to assemblies, lunches and physical education lessons. This is far from satisfactory in the rain or cold weather.

Care, guidance and support

The school makes good arrangements for the care, welfare and safety of the pupils and this support is at the heart of the school's ethos. The school seeks and values the pupils' views and the very good relationships between pupils and adults ensure pupils are confident that they will be carefully looked after.

Main strengths

- Procedures for child protection, health and safety, attendance and behaviour management including procedures to prevent bullying, are in place and work well
- Parents are confident that their children are cared for very well and say that they are encouraged to become mature
- Pupils are very positive about their experience in school and say that there is always an adult to talk to
- The school has good arrangements for pupils transferring to secondary schools

Commentary

20. Pupils' health safety and welfare are carefully monitored by means of good routines and practices. All staff are familiar with Child Protection procedures. Health and safety are monitored rigorously with regular risk assessment in place. Appropriate checks of items such as electrical and physical education equipment and regular random fire drills are carried out and recorded, ensuring that pupils are working in a safe environment. Pupils are encouraged to attend school regularly and parents and pupils understand the importance of regular attendance. During the day pupils are supervised well and three people trained in first aid provide good care for pupils who are hurt or unwell at school.
21. Almost all pupils praise their teachers and the help and guidance they receive. Targets are set in English and mathematics and this helps the pupils know what they are aiming for. Pupils speak enthusiastically about reviewing their targets, especially in mathematics, on a regular basis and say that this helps them improve their work. However, on a day-to-day basis, marking is not always good enough to help pupils improve their work.
22. Pupils know the staff well, are confident in approaching them, and know that they will be listened to. When there are personal difficulties, the school has good liaison with parents and others such as the school nurse and community policeman to help resolve them. The family liaison officer attends part time and supports individual pupils well. Pupils enjoy the many school visits and visitors and these enhance their learning opportunities well.
23. Pupils go to eight secondary schools and links with the main secondary schools to which they transfer are good. They have an induction day, visit for other activities and teachers from the secondary schools visit Year 6. Curricular and other records are passed on and pupils say they are confidently looking forward to moving on. Many pupils come to school from the on-site playgroup and links with this are satisfactory. Induction procedures for children into the Reception class are satisfactory.

Partnership with parents, other schools and the community

The school has good links with parents most of whom appreciate the regular and effective communication and the school's welcoming approach. Links with the community and with other schools are very good.

Main strengths

- Links with the community successfully enhance pupils' opportunities
- The school continues to foster good links with parents
- Parents receive good information from the school

- The very active Parent Teacher Association supports the school well

Commentary

24. The school provides a very good focus for the village and school community. The breakfast and after school clubs provide good facilities for around twenty children, with games, quizzes and a 'book night' and links with the on site playgroup ensure that transition to the school is managed smoothly. Pupils take part in science activities with Kent College and are developing information and communication technology links with a local secondary school. 400 entries were received for the annual 10K race which the school organises and this raised over one thousand pounds. Parents and friends held a very successful Xmas craft workshop, the children made everything that was sold. Parents and others are involved in using the school computer facilities and day workshops are very well received. Pupils enjoy being in the 'majorettes' and these are very popular in local carnivals and at other events. Staff from the local Hawking Centre visit and the school is supporting a kestrel. Charity collections have created a school garden for Ngazi primary school in Malawi and an oil press for their village. The school is looking to establish 'pen pal' links with the children at the school. Local clergymen come into school and conduct assemblies and pupils take part in inter-school sports activities. Provision for pupils transferring to the local secondary schools is good.
25. The school recognises the importance of working closely with parents and most parents are generally pleased with the care and education their children receive. Parents' views identify many strengths. They are confident that their children like school, behave well and are making good progress. Many parents give good support to their children, they help in school, on visits and with the after school activities and are clearly guided in the best way to help.
26. Parents are pleased with the information they receive which includes regular meetings, newsletters and information about the work their children will be doing. Most parents' attend the parents' evenings to find out about their children's progress. Annual reports are satisfactory but do not give enough information about what pupils should focus on to improve and parents say that they are too general. The school already has these under review. The school quickly addresses any concerns that parents raise and parents say that staff are approachable and that they feel welcome in school.
27. The successful Parent Teacher Association raises substantial funds for the school and just a few of the things provided include audio equipment, funds for playground seating and equipment, part funding for the hall extension and books.
28. They are also involved in helping to raise money for charities including Seeds for Africa, help for a school in Malawi, National Children's Homes and Jeans for Genes. This support effectively supplements the school's provision.

LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

The leadership and management of the school are **satisfactory** overall. The headteacher leads the school well and the governors fulfil their statutory responsibilities. Senior staff are beginning to play a key role in raising standards, but initiatives are new and have not yet had the opportunity to have a positive impact on provision.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The headteacher has a clear idea of the school's new direction
- The school aims successfully to ensure all pupils are included and have access to the education offered
- The School Improvement Plan is focusing upon appropriate areas for improvement
- The improved monitoring procedures are not yet resulting in higher standards
- The professional development of all staff is well supported

Commentary

29. The headteacher has been in post since September 2003 and has brought a new momentum for improvement. He has a clear idea of developing the school and wants to raise standards by improving the staff and governors' ability to evaluate the quality of education and take effective action. The incorporation of key staff, such as the Inclusion Manager, into the Leadership Team has successfully built a new management team structure. This is involving more staff in raising standards in the school. The new structure is offering a regular forum for the sharing of ideas. The daily business briefing sessions have improved communications and led to more focussed staff meetings.
30. The School Improvement Plan gives a very clear idea of where the school is seeking to improve and how this could be achieved. The priorities are few in number but have wide reaching implications. For example the focus upon reducing the gap between boys' and girls' achievement in reading and writing has led to better training for learning support assistants and more use of information and communication technology as a learning tool. Governors and management staff regularly review progress towards the key improvement objectives. Coordinators are becoming more effective because they are more involved in planning and reviewing the initiatives to raise standards in their own subjects. The recently improved opportunities for monitoring work and classroom teaching have resulted in greater consistency in classroom practice in English, mathematics and supporting children with special educational needs. For example, there is now greater uniformity in the presentation of work, the approach to spelling and the sharing and reviewing of learning intentions. However, these are all too recent to have had a positive impact on standards.
31. In terms of the standards reached by pupils, the headteacher has a clear idea of what the school does well and where it needs to improve, in comparison to national standards and similar schools. Through the analysis of results and interim performance data weaknesses in planning for English and mathematics have been highlighted and planning has been adjusted to meet the specific needs of each group of pupils.
32. All staff have good opportunities for training and professional development through peer support, on-site and national courses and involvement with cluster schools. Learning support assistants are valued. They are able to develop their specific skills by partnering teachers in subject leadership. They are taking greater responsibilities within the school as part of the school's response to workforce reform.
33. Governors are committed to supporting current new initiatives to improve standards within the school. They continue to value the school's traditional role within the local community. Collectively the governors have a satisfactory understanding of the strengths and weaknesses of the school. During the past year the sub-committee structure has been revived and committees have now begun to meet regularly. Governors have taken responsibility for monitoring the performance of the school and each oversees an area of the curriculum. They analyse the school's national test results, agree targets for the school and set appropriate performance management objectives for the headteacher. The Chair of Governors and headteacher meet regularly to review the work of the school and to follow up parental issues, such as home/school books and improvements to reports. Governors have addressed most of the key issues from the previous inspection. Work on assessment is continuing.
34. Financial management is good. The monitoring of the budget and decision making which supports the school's educational priorities ensures that the school is able to maintain the improvements outlined in the school's improvement plan. The governors have, appropriately, reserved some money to help finance a new build within the school.

Financial information for the year April 2003 to March 2004

Income and expenditure (£)	
Total income	530,695
Total expenditure	505,473
Expenditure per pupil	2,465

Balances (£)	
Balance from previous year	7,287
Balance carried forward to the next	32,509

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

AREAS OF LEARNING IN THE FOUNDATION STAGE

Provision for children in the Reception class is unsatisfactory overall. This is due, mainly, to historical factors, where provision has not been well planned. It is only recently that all areas of learning have been provided for and assessments have been carried out. When children come into school they have average skills, knowledge and understanding, but do not make enough progress in all areas of learning, so their achievement is unsatisfactory overall. When they join Year 1, most children will have achieved the expected goals for their learning in communication, language and literacy and in mathematics, but not in the other areas of learning. The leadership and management of the Foundation Stage have not been satisfactory. The headteacher has identified the weakness and taken appropriate steps to improve provision, As a result the quality of teaching and learning seen during the inspection was satisfactory. However, the changes are too recent to have significantly improved the overall quality of education and the children have not made enough progress during their time in the Reception class.

Personal, social and emotional development

Provision in personal, social and emotional development unsatisfactory.

Main strength and weakness

- Children behave well and work together effectively
- Too many activities are adult led and this restricts the opportunities that children have to become independent

Commentary

35. Staff in the Reception class set high expectations for children's behaviour and this results in a calm atmosphere in the classroom and children who behave well. They enjoy coming to school and settle quickly to routines, playing together well and working hard. However, many activities are adult led and there are too few opportunities for children to choose their own activities and become independent. This results in them being too dependent on adults in the classroom to tell them what to do, and spontaneous play, where children can use their imagination in lively situations, are too infrequent.

Communication, language and literacy

Provision in communication, language and literacy is satisfactory.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Children listen attentively and speak clearly
- Early reading and writing skills are regularly taught
- There are too few opportunities for children to experience role-play

Commentary

36. Teaching and learning in communication, language and literacy is satisfactory because basic skills have been taught systematically. Children learn to read using a published scheme and are keen to share books with adults, both at school and at home. In large group discussions the children are confident speakers and listen attentively to others, making relevant responses when invited to do so. They chat happily amongst themselves and with the adults in the class. Letter names and sounds have been taught and this helps the children when they begin to write. However, some children are reluctant to attempt to write their names because they are

used to adults doing this for them. There are too few opportunities for the children to experience activities that encourage them to make up their own stories and act out their experiences.

Mathematical development

Provision in mathematical development is satisfactory.

Main strengths

- Children learn to count confidently to ten and beyond
- Children learn a variety of mathematical language
- Activities are enjoyable

Commentary

37. Mathematical activities are enjoyable for all children as they are interesting and all can participate. The children all count confidently to ten and beyond and understand what each number means. They are beginning to add up and sing number rhymes to support their learning. They learn a variety of mathematical vocabulary and, through well-planned activities, such as sandwich making, learn about shape. During this activity the children talked about the shapes they would cut out and worked together well to prepare their sandwiches. This activity was successfully linked to the children's physical development so that they could cut the bread and spread the butter and filling.

Knowledge and understanding of the world, physical and creative development

38. It is not possible to make secure judgements on other areas of learning because there has only recently been planning put in place to ensure that these areas are covered. This has resulted in provision being unsatisfactory overall. However, by looking at work on the walls and talking to staff and children it is possible to sample these three areas of learning and report accordingly. Staff now use the outside area well to promote children's **knowledge and understanding of the world**. During the inspection the children went on a bug hunt, using the grounds of the school very well to search for small creatures. There are good quality resources for designing and building and the children have a computer so that they can practise their early information and communication technology skills. Provision for **physical development** is too limited. The outside area is quite small and children have not always had the opportunity to use the area to develop their climbing and balancing skills, or to develop their running and jumping ability. **Creative development** has been similarly too limited with very few examples of the children consistently accessing activities that enable them to draw, colour, stick and paint using a variety of equipment.

SUBJECTS IN KEY STAGES 1 and 2

ENGLISH

Provision in English is satisfactory.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Results in tests at the end of Year 6 are in line with national expectations
- Results in reading at the end of Year 2 were below average because the teaching of phonics was not implemented consistently in lessons
- A broad range of writing opportunities is linked well to other areas of the curriculum
- Leadership and management are focused on raising standards and meeting with success
- Assessment procedures are beginning to track progress from year to year

Commentary

39. Currently, standards overall are average and this represents satisfactory achievement. They remain the same as they were at the time of the last inspection. However, better attention is paid to provide challenging work for higher attaining pupils and literacy is given a high profile in the school's development plan.
40. As a result of its analysis of test results the school identified the need to improve the consistency of teaching phonics in Years 1 and 2, and to ensure that these skills are reinforced

as pupils move through the school. There is a structured reading programme where pupils work through published schemes, and there are many opportunities during the day for pupils to take part in group, paired or silent reading. Younger pupils enjoy reading to older 'buddies', and all pupils are encouraged to read to parents or carers at home. As a result of these initiatives, standards in reading have risen. However, reading diaries are used as a record of books read rather than to monitor individual progress. Book areas in classrooms have been improved with additional copies of high quality fiction and non-fiction books. The small library area is well used.

41. Drama activities and talk partners are used effectively to help both speaking and writing. Different levels of questions help younger pupils build links from shared reading texts and their own experience to their writing. This helps them to develop ideas into sentences and use new words imaginatively in stories. Older pupils are provided with a wide range of high quality fiction, poetry and plays as models for writing. By the end of Year 6, higher attaining pupils write with a confident style. Complex and simple sentences are organised well to create a sense of adventure in stories. Carefully chosen vocabulary is used formally in a letter of complaint. Work is well sequenced in subjects such as history, geography and religious education so that pupils can write at length rather than fill in worksheets. However, some average and lower attaining pupils pay less attention to the spelling, punctuation and grammar required to reach higher targets when writing independently.
42. During the inspection the quality of teaching ranged from satisfactory to good and is satisfactory overall. In the best lessons planning identifies tasks for groups and individual needs, so that pupils know exactly what they have to do. Teachers break lessons into short learning sections so that pupils are challenged, concentrate hard and achieve well. Teachers and teaching assistants provide much praise and encouragement. Lower attaining pupils, and those with special educational needs, do equally as well as other pupils because of the adult support they receive. However, feedback from groups working with teaching assistants was sometimes overlooked. In satisfactory lessons the pace of learning slowed and pupils lost their focus because the length of lessons was longer than recommended.
43. Staff have successfully introduced improvements to the way in which spelling and handwriting are developed progressively throughout the school. In most classes pupils' handwriting is fluent and legible and contributes to the good standard of presentation of their work. Marking is positive and rewards effort but does not always help pupils to understand what they need to do in order to improve. The initiatives put in place since the last inspection are having a positive impact on pupils' learning, but girls continue to outperform boys in national tests. Better systems for tracking individual pupil's progress year on year have been introduced, but have yet to close the gap between boys' and girls' achievement, or improve the marks for pupils who just miss gaining higher levels in tests at the end of Year 6.

Language and literacy across the curriculum

44. Strategies for developing pupils' literacy skills through other subjects are good. There are opportunities for account writing, reports and persuasive writing in science, history, and geography. Computers are used to research information and print brochures. Pupils make regular presentations of their research to their class. Drama and role play are used to reinforce pupils' understanding of moral and social issues in religious education. They also read the Bible, stories and poems from other cultures.

MATHEMATICS

The provision for mathematics is satisfactory.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Older pupils have good calculation strategies
- Long numeracy lessons have an adverse effect upon the pace of the lesson
- Teachers use appropriate mathematical vocabulary well
- Skills in solving open-ended problems are under-developed
- The use of targets helps all pupils understand what they are aiming for
- Learning support assistants are well trained

Commentary

45. Standards in the work seen are satisfactory overall. Results in the standardised tests at the end of Year 2 and Year 6 in 2003 were in line with national expectations.
46. The achievement of pupils in the current Year 2 is satisfactory. The achievement of pupils with special educational needs is well supported by a learning support assistant and work is set at an appropriate level. Most pupils in Year 2 can identify and sort odd and even numbers and perform calculations such as subtracting ten, in their head. The achievement of pupils in Year 6 is satisfactory. There is a high focus upon calculation and algebra and data handling. As a result pupils have good strategies for mental calculation and well developed skills in representing and interpreting information in tables and graphs. The higher attaining pupils in Year 6 are achieving well because they are catered for through higher level tasks and the regular, separate teaching of mathematics in advance of the normal Year 6 work.
47. Teaching is satisfactory across the school. The strengths in the teaching are the good use of mathematical language in explanations and insistence upon pupils using these terms in their responses. Well structured questioning ensures that pupils understand their work. Pupils have practice in solving problems through graphs and calculation but insufficient experience in solving open-ended problems where they need to think laterally and decide upon which skill to apply. Tasks are planned at different levels to meet the learning needs of all pupils but this does not always include an element of challenge for some middle attainers. Those with special educational needs are supported by learning support assistants who are well trained to provide further explanation or demonstration. Pupils are encouraged to think about their learning at the end of the lesson through the traffic light system or the “face mark”. They are encouraged to discuss what they have learnt and how to improve their work. However, teachers’ marking does not always indicate to pupils what they can do to improve their work. The school is currently trialing different ways of setting targets in order to evaluate the most effective. Pupils are enthusiastic about reviewing their targets in mathematics and feel that it helps them improve on their weaknesses.
48. The leadership of the subject, which is currently satisfactory, is becoming more effective as the coordinator has greater opportunities to develop an overview of the subject across the school. Good progress has been made in identifying gaps in learning and putting procedures in place to address these identified issues.
49. Improvement since the last inspection is satisfactory. Improvements have been made in acting upon the weaknesses that have been identified in the analysis of performance data and in the tracking of pupils’ achievement.

Mathematics across the curriculum

50. The use of mathematics across the curriculum is good. There are examples of good applications of data handling skills to information gathered in geography and science. These skills are also applied in the production and interpretation of graphs in information and communication technology.

SCIENCE

Provision in science is good.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Standards are above those expected and pupils achieve well
- Teachers have very good subject knowledge
- Work is not always marked effectively so that pupils know how to improve
- Pupils are enthusiastic about learning in lessons

Commentary

51. Pupils at the school have always achieved well in science as the subject has always had a high profile within the school. This has resulted in pupils at the end of Years 2 and 6 reaching above average standards in both national tests and in their work in class. Teachers have very good subject knowledge and this contributes significantly to the high standards.
52. By the end of Year 2, pupils have a good understanding of how to construct a fair test, and can explain what they are doing. They record their findings methodically and enjoy learning. By the end of Year 6, pupils of higher ability can discuss micro-organisms confidently and understand the links with ecology and medicine. Pupils with special educational needs are well supported so that they, too, can achieve well.
53. Teaching and learning are good because work is planned well and all aspects of science are covered in depth. Teachers have high expectations of pupils working neatly and concentrating hard in lessons, working effectively together. As a result, pupils enjoy learning and support each other. All work is marked with encouraging comments, but the marking is not as useful as it could be, because it does not explain how pupils could improve their work.
54. There has been good improvement since the last inspection because the strengths that were identified have been maintained. The subject is well led and managed within the school and the historical prominence of the subject has been maintained. The school are now beginning to analyse where there are gaps in pupils' knowledge and are making sure that any weaknesses are addressed effectively.

INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY (ICT)

Provision for ICT is satisfactory.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- ICT is successfully used for research
- Monitoring and control are underdeveloped
- There have been good improvements since the last inspection
- There is good use of ICT across the curriculum

Commentary

55. From the one lesson observed, the work seen and discussions with pupils, it is apparent that all aspects of the National Curriculum are taught. Standards in ICT are satisfactory. Pupils have greatest skill in communicating information. For example the Year 2 class had combined different coloured and styled text with pictures in information sheets which introduced visitors to Margate. Year 4 pupils used the spray effect in a graphics package to imitate the style of Georges Seurat. Pupils also successfully use the network for preparing graphs and spreadsheets and researching through electronic encyclopaedias and the internet. Pupils in Year 6 produced interesting accounts after using the internet for group research into inspirational characters such as Father Damien, Gladys Aylward and Mother Theresa. Pupils have less experience in using computers to make things happen. Year 2 pupils know how to direct the robotic toys, *Pixie* and *Roamer*, to follow agreed routes and Year 6 pupils use thermometer probes and monitoring equipment during their class trip. Overall, the aspect of monitoring and control is insufficiently developed throughout the school to meet the expected standard at the end of Year 6.

56. From the one lesson seen, no judgement can be made about the quality of teaching and learning. It is evident from the work produced and the teachers' current use of ICT for planning and administration, that teachers have increased confidence and skill in using computers. Provision is enhanced through the extra-curricular ICT club in which older children are currently revising the school's web-site under the guidance of a parent of the school and the headteacher. There have been good improvements in resources and teacher knowledge since the last inspection.

ICT across the curriculum

57. The use of ICT in other subjects is good across the school. Computers are increasingly used to support learning in mathematics and literacy in areas such as spelling and writing. Whole class use is made of the network for drafting ideas, researching information and for data handling. Good links are made with mathematics and geography in the production of computer generated graphs which have resulted from surveys of holidays and litter collection. In religious education and history the internet has been used as a research tool to find out about the Olympics, famous people and specific decades.

HUMANITIES

58. Work was sampled in **history** as no lessons were seen. It is not therefore possible to form an overall judgement about provision in this subject. Pupils in Years 1 and 2 have good knowledge of history for their ages and are developing skills that help them learn about the past. Older pupils discuss the reasons why things happened as they did. They write diary entries that show understanding of how ordinary people were affected by events, such as children in the Second World War. Good use is made of the local area to study the construction of Tudor houses and use of Ancient Greek architectural features.

Geography

The provision in geography is good.

Main strengths

- Standards are above average and pupils are achieving well
- Good use is made of the local environment to support pupils' learning
- A new planning framework promotes geographical skills through subjects in the curriculum

Commentary

59. Standards in geography have improved since the last inspection and are now above average for pupils in at the end of Years 2 and 6.
60. Pupils' sense of location begins with map work to show where they live. They draw a map of the school and understand how to use symbols in a key. They use computers to print out maps of an island on which they have marked physical features such as rivers, mountains and woodland. They decide where to locate river crossings, settlements and a harbour. Older pupils extend their map work and identify the location of litter 'black spots' around the school. As a result extra litterbins have been placed in these areas. Pupils' numeracy skills are used well to present the results of their research as block graphs.
61. Teaching and learning in the three lessons seen during the inspection were good. Following a field trip to Margate, pupils in Year 2 described physical features such as toilets, lifeboat station, railway station and pier that can be included on a map for visitors. They used their ICT and literacy skills well in brochures that promote the resort, and used old photographs to observe similarities and differences between seaside holidays now and in the past. Key words were used well in a Year 3 lesson when pupils make presentations to the class about the climate in a holiday destination and role-play weather forecasters. Effective learning took place

in a Year 6 lesson because pupils were required to think about and discuss key questions for a study of the countries involved in a European football competition.

62. Leadership and management of the subject are effective. It has encouraged teachers' confidence to develop the scheme of work so that there are clear links with other subjects, and to support boys' writing through non-fiction texts.

Religious education

Provision in religious education is good.

Main strengths

- Pupils reach standards that are above average and achieve well
- There are good links with information and communication technology

Commentary

63. By the end of Years 2 and 6, pupils reach standards in religious education that are above those expected in the locally agreed syllabus. Pupils in Years 1 and 2 learn about the Old Testament and have studied some traditions from the Jewish faith. They have visited a synagogue to support their learning and they have a good understanding of some aspects of the Jewish religion.
64. By the end of Year 6, pupils have made good progress and show that they have a good understanding about the Sikh faith. Teachers encourage the pupils to record using a variety of formats, so that some work is written down, some is in cartoon form and some presented as posters. All pupils achieve well because work is well matched to the ability of each child and those with special educational needs are supported effectively. Throughout the school pupils learn to relate what they learn to their own lives. So, for example, pupils in Year 4 have studied the Ten Commandments and have discussed the importance of having rules in school in order to create a community that is calm.
65. Teaching and learning are good. Work is usually well marked with encouraging remarks and comments based on the learning intention of the lesson. Pupils understand how well they have done and what they could do to improve. There are good links with information and communication technology. Pupils in Year 6 have researched a variety of religious figures, such as Mother Teresa and Father Damien, and compiled accounts of their lives using the information they have gained. Pupils do not simply copy from books or the internet, they write their accounts independently and demonstrate a good understanding of the lives of these people.
66. Religious education is well led and managed. The subject is covered in depth in all classes and contributes to pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development effectively. So, for example, pupils in Year 2 have written prayers of thanksgiving that show a mature spiritual development. There has been good improvement since the last inspection.

CREATIVE, AESTHETIC, PRACTICAL AND PHYSICAL SUBJECTS

67. It was not possible to see enough lessons in art, design technology and physical education to make secure judgements and these subjects have been sampled and reported below. There were no music lessons seen and therefore no judgements have been made on this subject.
68. One lesson was seen **design technology** during the inspection. From this, the work seen and conversations with pupils, it is evident that pupils enjoy design and technology because they consider it fun. In the younger classes pupils have first hand experiences which lead towards designing and making a product, such as a fruit salad. They do not regularly evaluate their work to see how effective their product is and how it could be improved. Older pupils have

the majority of their design and technology experience during technology days. Although these are enjoyable and the pupils go through the process of designing and making, there is insufficient time for pupils to develop their skills. In Class 4 pupils have had a more sustained experience in taking torches apart to explore how they work, then designing and making their own torch. In this case pupils produced labelled designs and identified the materials needed before making. The design and technology process had not been completed by evaluating the success of the torch and deciding upon successful ideas and possible improvements. There were good links made with teaching in other areas of the curriculum such as ICT and literacy. Computer produced posters practised pupils' skill in persuasive writing to encourage others to purchase their torch.

69. No **art** lessons were observed. The work seen and conversations with pupils indicates that pupils enjoy art because it is interesting. Standards in the work seen are satisfactory overall. Time for pupils to fully develop their skills in art in the older classes is limited by the current organisation of the school day. Pupils are taught a range of techniques such as batik, pastel, pencil sketching, printing, painting and computer graphics. There is a strong focus upon studying the style of the work of famous artists and considering how colour and texture can reflect mood. In Year 1 pupils have investigated different shades of colour to judge whether they would describe them as warm or cold colours. Pupils in Year 2 have responded to the crescendo and diminuendo of Handel's Water music by painting the scenes which the music conjured up in their minds. Work in many classes has focussed around echoing the style of artists such as Rousseau, Klee, Mondrian and Van Gogh. The standard of work is higher in imitative work than when demands are made upon pupils' observation and creativity.
70. There was one lesson seen in **physical education**. This was one short session of Kwick Cricket was observed. During this session pupils showed skills in line with expectation in ball handling and batting skills. Pupils achieve above the expected level for swimming because the majority of pupils can swim 25 metres at the end of Year 4. All aspects of P.E. are taught and resources overall are good. Provision for the subject is enhanced by after school clubs for sport and dance. The recent zoning of the playground into areas for types of play encourages the development of physical skills such as skipping and balancing.

PERSONAL, SOCIAL AND HEALTH EDUCATION AND CITIZENSHIP

71. No direct teaching of personal, social and health education (PHSE) and citizenship were seen during the inspection. Appropriate time is given to sex and drugs education, and Circle Time provided pupils with opportunities to discuss issues that are concerning them. The Life Education Skills mobile classroom is booked annually so each class has one session. Pupils are encouraged, through the School council to take an active part in the running of the school. They learn about the importance of the wider community and have recently had the opportunity to talk to their local member of parliament and ask relevant questions.

PART D: SUMMARY OF THE MAIN INSPECTION JUDGEMENTS

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

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