

INSPECTION REPORT

BARMING PRIMARY SCHOOL

Maidstone

LEA area: Kent

Unique reference number: 118508

Headteacher: Mr M PJ Whitwood

Lead inspector: Mr D Shepherd

Dates of inspection: 18th - 21st October 2004

Inspection number: 266368

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

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INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Type of school: Primary
School category: Community
Age range of pupils: 4 -11 years
Gender of pupils: Mixed
Number on roll: 403

School address: Belmont Close
Barming
Maidstone
Kent
Postcode: ME16 9DY

Telephone number: 01622 726472
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Appropriate authority: The governing body
Name of chair of Mr A Stagg
governors:

Date of previous 21st - 24th June 1999
inspection:

CHARACTERISTICS OF THE SCHOOL

Barming is larger than other primary schools with 403 pupils on roll. Nearly all pupils are of white United Kingdom heritage. Six pupils are from other white backgrounds and seven from Asian backgrounds. Ten pupils speak English as an additional language. Two are at the early stages of learning English. Just over six per cent of pupils are entitled to free school meals, which is below the national average. Sixty-four pupils are on the school's register for special educational needs, none of whom has a statement. This is less than in most schools. The main needs are moderate learning difficulties, speech and communication difficulties, severe learning difficulties and social, emotional and behavioural difficulties. Pupils' attainment on entry is average. Staff mobility is low. One teacher has left the school during the past two years. No teacher has joined the school during this period. The rate at which pupils join and leave the school during the year is low.

In 2003, the school was awarded a Schools Achievement Award for improving standards. During the same year, the school won a competition, Safety in Action, organised by the borough council. This competition consisted of a number of scenarios that present potential dangers to pupils and, working in groups, they had to decide how to act in a safe manner in relation to each scenario. Scenarios included the dangers of, for instance, talking to strangers and fires in the home.

INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

| Members of the inspection team | | | Subject responsibilities |
|--------------------------------|-------------------|----------------|--|
| 2905 | David Shepherd | Lead inspector | Foundation stage, mathematics, design and technology, physical education, religious education |
| 19653 | Libby Dickson | Lay inspector | |
| 16084 | Margaret Coussins | Team inspector | English, art and design, music |
| 32483 | Kate Chandler | Team inspector | Information and communication technology (ICT), geography, history, special educational needs, English as an additional language |
| 32522 | Nova De Souza | Team inspector | Science, personal, social and health education |

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PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

OVERALL EVALUATION

Barming Primary School provides a satisfactory education for its pupils. Pupils' achievement is satisfactory overall, but there are weaknesses in some lessons. Standards are at expected levels for the pupils' ages in most subjects inspected. Teaching and learning are satisfactory. Leadership and management are satisfactory. The school provides satisfactory value for money.

The school's main strengths and weaknesses are

- All pupils achieve well in speaking and listening, and in writing by Year 4, because the teaching is good
- Many of the higher-attaining pupils do not achieve as much as they could because, in some lessons, teachers' expectations are not high enough
- Pupils have too few opportunities for problem-solving work in mathematics and for investigations in science, which lowers achievement
- The school looks after its pupils well and takes good care of them; as a result, pupils' attitudes and behaviour are very good
- A few teachers do not mark pupils' work well enough and do not indicate to them what they have to do next to improve; not enough use is made of assessment data when planning lessons
- Management does not make best use information gained from checking on the quality of teaching to raise standards
- Links with parents and the community are good

Improvement since the last inspection is satisfactory. Over the past five years, standards in English, mathematics and science in Year 6 have remained at similar levels. The achievement of pupils and the quality of teaching and learning are similar to the last inspection. Leadership and management are similar to the last inspection. The school has dealt with most of the weaknesses reported at the last inspection but, in some lessons, teachers' expectations of pupils' achievements are still not high enough. Standards in problem-solving in mathematics and investigative work in science are still lower than they should be. The school has done well to maintain the positive environment for learning.

STANDARDS ACHIEVED

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

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 throughout the school is satisfactory. The results of the 2003 and 2004 National Curriculum tests are lower than those of previous years. The school reports these last two cohorts of Year 6 pupils were not as capable as previous ones. It is likely that this accounts for the decline in standards. Over the past five years, the trend of improvement in national test results is similar to the national trend. Inspection evidence shows that, in the current Year 6, standards in English, mathematics and science are at expected levels. Throughout the school, however, standards achieved by many higher-

attaining pupils are lower than they should be. Pupils do not have enough opportunities to solve problems in mathematics and science, which lowers achievement. In 2003, standards in the National Curriculum tests at the end of Year 2 were below average in reading, writing and mathematics when compared with similar schools. Nonetheless, the trend of improvement in the Year 2 results is above the national trend. Standards in Year 2 pupils' writing have improved since 2003 and are now above expected levels. Standards in the teacher assessments in science in 2003 were well below average. Inspection evidence shows that standards in science are improving in Year 2, but they are still below average. In spite of the mixed picture in Year 2, pupils' achievement is satisfactory overall. Throughout the school, standards in information and communication technology (ICT), history, geography and religious education are at expected levels. Standards on entry to school are average overall. Children in the reception classes make satisfactory progress and reach the standards expected by the time they start in Year 1.

Provision for pupils' personal development, including their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development, is good. Pupils' attitudes and behaviour are very good. Attendance is well above average and punctuality is very good.

QUALITY OF EDUCATION

The quality of education provided by the school is satisfactory.

Teaching and learning are satisfactory. Teachers provide pupils with good help when they are stuck. In the best lessons, pupils carry out practical activities that are linked to their experiences. Teachers ask pupils searching questions and this helps them to learn well. Lessons are taught in a calm and orderly atmosphere with pupils' behaving well and being very responsive to their teachers. Teaching is often linked well to the pupils' personal experiences. Good use is being made of the data projectors to help make teaching clear. In some lessons, however, teachers did not provide sufficient challenge for higher-attaining pupils in particular. Part of this weakness, particularly in mathematics and science, was a lack of activities that required pupils to think for themselves. Pupils' work is not marked well enough overall, and pupils are not clear enough about what they have to do to improve. Assessment data is not used well enough to help teachers plan lessons. The curriculum is satisfactory. Levels of care for pupils are good. The school has good links with parents and the community.

LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

The leadership and management of the school are satisfactory. The headteacher provides satisfactory leadership. He provides a clear view about what the school should be aiming for, but has not yet ensured that all staff have high enough expectations of pupils' achievement. Subject leadership is satisfactory overall. Standards and teaching are monitored, particularly in English and mathematics, but the actions resulting from this are not focused enough on how to raise standards. Governors are supportive of the school and governance is satisfactory.

PARENTS' AND PUPILS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

Parents and pupils hold positive views about the school. Although a few parents made some criticisms about the school's work, none was shared by a significant number of other parents.

IMPROVEMENTS NEEDED

The most important things the school should do to improve are

- Raise the achievement of higher-attaining pupils

- Provide more opportunities for pupils to work independently, and to use their initiative to solve problems in mathematics and carry out investigative work in science
- Improve marking and use assessment data more effectively to help teachers plan lessons
- Ensure that information gained from checking on the quality of teaching is used to raise standards

PART B: COMMENTARY ON THE INSPECTION FINDINGS

STANDARDS ACHIEVED BY PUPILS

Standards achieved in areas of learning and subjects

Pupils' achievement is satisfactory and, by Year 6, standards in most subjects are at expected levels.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- In some lessons, higher-attaining pupils do not achieve as much as they could
- Standards in speaking and listening are above expected levels
- Standards in problem solving in mathematics, and investigative work in science, are below average
- Standards in writing in reception to Year 4 are above expected levels
- Standards in science are below expected levels at the end of Year 2

Commentary

Foundation Stage

1. Most children join the reception classes with levels of attainment similar to those found nationally. However, a significant proportion starts with lower levels than this and some exceed these levels. Most make good progress in their personal, social and emotional development and in their speaking and writing skills because of the good teaching they receive in these areas. As a result, their achievement in these areas is good and they reach standards that are above expected levels. They receive satisfactory teaching in other areas, and start in Year 1 with attainment in mathematics, knowledge and understanding of the world, creative development and physical development that is at the expected levels for their age. Their overall achievement is satisfactory.

Key Stage 1

2. In the 2003 National Curriculum tests for pupils at the end of Year 2, standards in reading, writing and mathematics were below average when compared with similar schools. This cohort of pupils was not as capable as previous cohorts but their achievement was satisfactory overall. These results were lower than the previous year in reading and mathematics, but higher in writing. Overall, the trend of improvement over the past five years has been above the national trend, especially in writing. Standards in science were well below average and pupils' achievement was unsatisfactory. The reason for this is that teachers do not have sufficient expertise to teach and assess science well. The following table shows the results from the 2003 tests in reading, writing and mathematics.

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

| Standards in: | School results | National results |
|---------------|----------------|------------------|
| Reading | 15.9 (16.2) | 15.7 (15.8) |
| Writing | 15.3 (14.7) | 14.6 (14.4) |
| Mathematics | 16.6 (16.9) | 16.3 (16.5) |

There were 60 pupils in the year group. Figures in brackets are for the previous year.

3. In the 2004 National Curriculum tests, standards in writing improved, whilst those in reading remained at a similar level and those in mathematics declined. Inspection evidence indicates that standards in speaking and writing in the current Year 2 are above expected levels and pupils achieve well. Standards in reading and in most aspects of mathematics are at expected levels and pupils' achievement is satisfactory. Standards have improved

because the quality of teaching in Years 1 and 2 includes a number of good features that are helping to raise standards. Pupils are receiving good help in their work when they are stuck and teachers ask them good questions that probe their understanding and extend their learning. However, overall the teaching is satisfactory. Standards in science are still below expected levels and pupils' achievement is unsatisfactory, although some improvements in the subject can be seen. For example, some lessons are linked closely to pupils' experiences as they investigate healthy food and drink. Overall, teachers lack sufficient expertise in the subject to teach it effectively. Standards in ICT, history, geography and religious education are at expected levels. Pupils' achievement in these subjects is satisfactory.

Key Stage 2

4. In the 2003 National Curriculum tests for pupils at the end of Year 6, standards in mathematics and science were average when compared with similar schools. Standards in English were below average. Overall, this cohort of pupils gained below average results when they were in Year 2, and so their achievement by Year 6 was satisfactory. The trend of improvement over the past five years is broadly similar to the national trend. The following table shows the results in English, mathematics and science for 2003.

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

| Standards in: | School results | National results |
|---------------|----------------|------------------|
| English | 26.6 (29.4) | 26.8 (27.0) |
| Mathematics | 27.0 (28.0) | 26.8 (26.7) |
| Science | 28.9 (29.7) | 28.6 (28.3) |

There were 57 pupils in the year group. Figures in brackets are for the previous year.

5. It is likely that the results of the 2004 National Curriculum tests for pupils in Year 6 are average in English, mathematics and science. Inspection evidence indicates that standards in English, mathematics and science in the current Year 6 are at expected levels. This is because teaching and learning in Year 6 are satisfactory overall and pupils' achievement is satisfactory. Setting arrangements in mathematics are not having the intended impact on raising standards. This is because pupils' work is not targeted well enough at their levels of attainment. Pupils achieve well in speaking and listening and standards are above expected levels. Standards in ICT, history, geography and religious education are at expected levels and achievement in these subjects is satisfactory. Overall, pupils' attainment in problem-solving in mathematics and investigative work in science is below expected levels because pupils are not given enough opportunities to carry out tasks such as these.

Whole-school issues

6. In some lessons, many higher-attaining pupils do not achieve as much as they could. This is because the work set for them is often too easy and does not require them to think hard enough or work solutions out for themselves. An exception to this is in Year 6 in mathematics where higher-attaining pupils are given some tasks that challenge their thinking and help them to learn well.
7. The achievement of pupils who have special educational needs is satisfactory overall. These pupils make good progress towards the targets set for them in their individual plans, but the work completed when they are withdrawn from lessons for additional specialist teaching does not always link closely enough to the work in the classroom. As a result, these pupils are not always able to contribute or take an active part in all lessons and this slows down the progress they make in the lessons they have missed. Very few pupils are at

the early stages of learning English as an additional language and they make satisfactory progress.

Pupils' attitudes, values and other personal qualities

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

Main strengths

- Pupils like coming to school, are very interested in their lessons and are keen to do well
- Relationships across the school are very good; pupils work well together and care for one another
- Pupils' personal development is good overall, with particular strengths in their moral and social development

Commentary

8. Pupils' attitudes to school are very good. They work hard in lessons and apply themselves conscientiously to any tasks set for them. Where the teaching is good, and captures their interest, pupils are particularly enthusiastic and very keen to do well. They co-operate well with one another and easily become engrossed in their work. Older pupils respond very well when intrigued by a subject and when given the opportunity to discover something for themselves. This was clearly illustrated in a Year 5 lesson when pupils worked intently and assiduously, devising questions to display on a website about school life in Ancient Greece. All pupils spoken to during the inspection like being at school and parents confirm this in their answers to the pre-inspection survey.
9. Pupils' behaviour is very good. Pupils are well aware of how teachers expect them to behave and most conform to these high expectations and behave very well. The exceptions occur when pupils are not well managed and, as a result, become inattentive and restless. Behaviour in the playgrounds is lively and can be boisterous. Pupils play happily with one another and, after play time, go back to class sensibly. Bullying is not seen as a problem by either parents or pupils. Pupils were confident in telling inspectors that staff would sort out any reported incidents immediately and that they have been told not to 'suffer in silence' if they are being bullied in some way.
10. Pupils' personal development is good overall, mainly due to the school's very good provision for their moral and social education. Through interesting visits and participation in activities after school, pupils develop relationships with each other in different settings. Year 6 pupils enjoy a residential visit to the Isle of Wight, where involvement in challenging activities encourages team spirit and co-operation. Throughout the school, pupils learn to work successfully in pairs and groups. There is some encouragement for them to be enterprising and independent in their own learning, but overall many opportunities are missed to develop these activities further. Pupils become increasingly mature and responsible throughout their time in school. Older pupils, in particular, are very sensible in carrying out their various duties, whether operating the sound system in the hall or in keeping areas of the school tidy.
11. The school provides some good opportunities for spiritual awareness through assemblies, religious education and, occasionally, other lessons. Assemblies encompass a strong Christian ethos and are used well to build up pupils' understanding of significant values, such as friendship and 'being a good neighbour'. The school encourages pupils to understand the importance of helping others and to recognise the needs of people less fortunate than they are. They take part in a number of fundraising events for charitable causes, such as Congo Action and the local children's hospice, which are generously supported by parents. Pupils' cultural development is satisfactory overall. In geography and

history, pupils are introduced to different cultures. However, there is less evidence to show that the school teaches pupils about the rich ethnic mix of traditions and cultures in Britain today. This is a similar picture to the last inspection.

12. Attendance is well above national figures and pupils come to school on time. The school monitors attendance carefully and is quick to follow up any unexplained absences. As a result, there was no unauthorised absence last year, and the rate of attendance was much higher than the national average. This reflects an improvement on attendance at the time of the last inspection.

Attendance in the latest complete reporting year (%)

| Authorised absence | | Unauthorised absence | |
|--------------------|-----|----------------------|-----|
| School data: | 4.1 | School data | 0.0 |
| National data: | 5.4 | National data | 0.4 |

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

13. There were no exclusions during the past year.

QUALITY OF EDUCATION PROVIDED BY THE SCHOOL

The quality of education is satisfactory. Teaching and learning are satisfactory. The curriculum is satisfactory. The school provides a good range of additional activities for pupils. The care and welfare of pupils are good. The support and guidance given to pupils are satisfactory. Links with parents, the community and other schools are good.

Teaching and learning

Teaching and learning are satisfactory. Assessment is unsatisfactory.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Teachers and teaching assistants provide good support in lessons to help pupils learn
- A few teachers do not mark work and assess pupils' standards of attainment well enough, indicating to them how to improve
- Teachers do not hold high enough expectations of the standards higher-attaining pupils can reach
- In the best lessons, teachers question pupils well to help them learn
- Lessons are taught in a calm and orderly atmosphere that helps pupils learn
- Pupils are not given enough opportunities to work independently and solve problems themselves

Commentary

14. Throughout the school, teaching and learning are satisfactory. Approximately four in ten lessons were judged at least good. This is lower than the national average. More specifically, some of the weaknesses identified in the teaching are the reasons why standards are not higher than they are. The proportions of teaching and learning at each level are similar to those reported at the last inspection. The following table shows how lessons were judged during the inspection.

Summary of teaching observed during the inspection in 56 lessons

| Excellent | Very good | Good | Satisfactory | Unsatisfactory | Poor | Very Poor |
|-----------|-----------|----------|--------------|----------------|--------|-----------|
| 1 (2%) | 2 (4%) | 18 (32%) | 34 (60%) | 1 (2%) | 0 (0%) | 0 (0%) |

The table gives the number of lessons observed in each of the seven categories used to make judgements about lessons; figures in brackets show percentages where 30 or more lessons are seen.

15. There are a number of strengths in the teaching. Many teachers ask pupils searching questions that help identify what pupils know and extend their learning further. During the inspection, this occurred in a number of lessons in literacy, numeracy and geography. In the best lessons, teachers planned practical activities for pupils that captivated their imaginations and helped them learn well. For example, in an excellent Year 2 mathematics' lesson, the teacher provided pupils with dice of single digit, two digit and three digit numbers that pupils threw in order to identify odd and even numbers. The pupils enjoyed this activity as they worked in pairs and learnt extremely well as a result. The context of some lessons is very close to their experience and this helps to attract the interest of pupils. For example, in a Year 1 lesson in design and technology, the teacher asked the pupils to plan a healthy sandwich from a selection of ingredients that had been prepared. The pupils enjoyed planning what to include in their sandwich and enjoyed more eating it afterwards!
16. Lessons are well organised and well prepared. This helps to create a business-like atmosphere in lessons. Teachers manage pupils' behaviour well and pupils, in their turn, are very responsive to their teachers. They are keen and settle down quickly to their work. They enjoy many of the activities that are planned for them. For example, they particularly

enjoy practical activities, such as lessons in using computers, art and design, design and technology and physical education.

17. Most teachers, ably helped by teaching assistants, guide pupils well in their work. They help them when they are stuck and this helps them learn well. Teachers mark pupils' work and include comments that encourage pupils. However, in a few cases, these comments do not indicate to pupils what is good about their work and what they need to do to improve. As a result, marking does not help pupils to improve and raise standards. Some work set for higher-attaining pupils is too easy for them and does not encourage them to think hard enough. Pupils with special educational needs are sometimes set work that is too hard for them because teachers have not assessed what they have learnt before planning the lesson. These weaknesses are preventing standards from rising in a number of subjects, such as mathematics and science.
18. The teaching of pupils with special educational needs is satisfactory overall. These pupils are taught well to reach the learning targets that have been set for them in their individual programmes of work. However, some of this teaching takes place during lessons in other subjects and these pupils miss out on some lessons because they have been withdrawn for specialist teaching. The teaching of pupils with English as an additional language is satisfactory.

The curriculum

The curriculum is satisfactory overall. The school provides a good range of activities outside lessons. Accommodation and resources for learning are good.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Extra-curricular provision is good
- Targets for pupils who have special educational needs do not link closely enough with classroom teaching and, as a consequence, this slows down the progress made by these pupils in a number of lessons
- Higher-attaining pupils are not provided with enough opportunities to solve problems in mathematics and carry out investigations in science

Commentary

19. The curriculum meets National Curriculum requirements. In addition, French is taught to pupils in Years 5 and 6. Pupils are taught a systematic programme of personal, social and health education. This includes provision for sex and relationships education and drugs education. National strategies for literacy and numeracy are used well. National guidance for the teaching of other subjects and for pupils in the reception classes is used well in the planning of lessons. The time allocated to subjects is in line with national guidance. The curriculum is of similar quality to the last inspection.
20. The school provides a good range of interesting activities and clubs at lunchtimes and after school. There are good opportunities for older pupils to develop their musical talents through the choir and recorder groups. A range of sporting activities such as tag-rugby, football, netball and cricket make a good contribution to the development of pupils' physical skills. A thriving chess club, open to pupils from Year 2 upwards, meets each week. A lunchtime club, `Talk All Sorts`, takes place. Local speakers are invited to talk to pupils and answer their questions. There is a broad and varied range of visitors to the school. Pupils also have good opportunities to visit places of interest, such as Manston and the National Gallery. Each of these activities is incorporated well into the curriculum. The first residential visit for Year 6 pupils took place over a weekend this year.
21. Provision for pupils with special educational needs is satisfactory overall. The school makes good use of outside agencies, such as occupational therapists and speech and language therapists, and also provides additional support through an outreach worker from the local special school. Teachers devise individual plans for these pupils based on the advice received from outside agencies to meet

pupils' needs. The specialist teacher and experienced teaching assistants work with individuals or small groups of these pupils to help them achieve the targets that have been set for them in their plans. This help provides pupils with good opportunities to build their self esteem and develop their social skills. However, some of the work set for pupils when they are being taught by specialists does not link closely enough with the work going on in the classroom. As a result, pupils miss out on certain lessons and are not always able to take an active part in future lessons.

22. Very few pupils are at the early stages of learning English as an additional language. Provision for these pupils is satisfactory. A visiting specialist teacher assesses the English language learning needs of these pupils and provides them with good individual teaching. In Year 5, a teaching assistant works alongside the specialist teacher and learns how best to teach these pupils when the specialist teacher is not available. This enables the school to provide a consistent and effective approach to helping these pupils speak English.

23. Provision for higher-attaining pupils is unsatisfactory overall. Many activities that are planned for them are too easy. In particular, these pupils are not provided with enough opportunities to use their initiative and work independently. They are not encouraged to solve enough problems in mathematics and science.
24. The school's accommodation is safe, attractive and well resourced. Outdoor areas are extensive and very well maintained providing for a wealth of outdoor learning opportunities. They include good-sized playing fields alongside hard playgrounds, quiet areas with seating and also a separated attractive wild area. Indoors, classrooms are well organised, teaching rooms well resourced and there are additional areas for resources and small group work in each part of the school.

Care, guidance and support

Provision for pupils' care, welfare, health and safety is good. Provision of support, advice and guidance is satisfactory. The school acts on pupils' views well.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The school is a caring community and staff show good concern for pupils' welfare
- There are effective arrangements to help new pupils settle into school
- The school does not use data well enough to help pupils improve

Commentary

25. Pupils are well looked after during the school day. The school has good procedures for dealing with and recording accidents and injuries, and for looking after pupils who are unwell. There are two fully trained first-aiders and all staff have been trained in aspects of first aid. The school has satisfactory child protection procedures. Staff understand how to deal with any child protection issues. All necessary health and safety arrangements are managed well. Thorough risk assessments are carried out to ensure activities are safe. Regular fire drills and electrical checks are carried out. The buildings and grounds are well maintained and cared for. The school is a clean and orderly environment for children, pupils and adults.
26. Pupils feel safe and have good induction procedures to ensure they settle into school happily, and get off to a good start in their education. The school acknowledges pupils' efforts and achievements, both in and out of school, at weekly celebration assemblies. Pupils say that any behaviour problems are sorted out and any bullying is successfully dealt with. The result is happy, well-adjusted pupils who enjoy coming to school.
27. Pupils say they feel confident in approaching members of staff with any worries or problems they may have and feel confident that these will be dealt with quickly and sensitively. Through the school council, the school effectively seeks the views of its pupils. Amongst the suggestions raised and acted upon were the posters, designed by individual pupils, displayed on the playground, reminding pupils how to behave. The school regularly consults pupils about the school rules. Lessons in personal, social and health education often provide the forum for pupils to discuss school rules.
28. The personal support and guidance pupils receive is satisfactory overall. Pupils with special educational needs receive good guidance through the individual programmes of work that are set for them. Other pupils are set learning targets, mainly in literacy and numeracy, in order to help them achieve well. These targets are useful, but do not link to any long-term targets that are based on pupils' performance overall. The school does not have a clear longer-term strategy for raising achievement based on the analysis of the end-of-year assessments and tests. Some of the shorter-term targets are selected at random and do not link to improving pupils' performance through the levels in the National Curriculum. Provision in this aspect is similar to the last inspection.

Partnership with parents, other schools and the community

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

Main strengths

- The school involves parents well and provides them with good information to help them with their children's learning
- Parents contribute well to the school

Commentary

29. As at the last inspection, parents have positive views about the school, and are appreciative of its work. They feel their children enjoy school and are expected to work hard and behave well.
30. Parents give good support to the school and to their children's education. They fulfill their responsibilities by ensuring their children attend school regularly and on time. There is almost full attendance at the parents' meetings held twice a year. A hard working and active parent teacher association organises social and fundraising events to provide additional resources for the school. For example, it subsidised football and netball kits for pupils and provided outdoor equipment for the playground. A number of parents help in classrooms, accompany classes to swimming lessons and help on educational visits. At home, most parents give good support to their children by listening to them read and ensuring their homework is completed.
31. The school provides a good range of information for parents. Regular newsletters as well as notices on the school notice board give clear information to parents about school activities. Twice-yearly parents' evenings and good quality written annual reports keep parents well informed about their children's progress. In response to parental suggestions, the school now sends out information sheets to inform parents about what their children will be studying each half term. These contain helpful suggestions to parents about activities that might help their children's school work as well as a number of websites where more information can be found.
32. Links with the community are good. The school uses the local area as a learning resource to enrich the curriculum, for example in geography and art. As part of their recent study of the World War II, Year 5 pupils received a visit from a group of local veterans. The school has established close links with the local church and works hard to raise money for local charities. Each year pupils donate harvest gifts to the town's Salvation Army and the choir sings at the local hospital at Christmas. The school recently celebrated its 150th anniversary and invited local people to join in its celebrations. Its facilities are well used by local organisations and for adult education classes.
33. The school has good links with local schools. Pupils are involved in sporting events with other primary schools in the area. A good range of curriculum links have been established with a number of local secondary schools in mathematics, design and technology, ICT and sports. Staff from the secondary schools share their expertise with the school staff. As part of these links, pupils take part in activities run at the secondary schools.

LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

Leadership and management are satisfactory overall. The leadership of the headteacher and subject co-ordinators is satisfactory. Management is satisfactory. Governance is satisfactory.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The headteacher has a clear view of how he wants the school to improve, and provides good support for the staff
- Staff work well in year group teams and induction procedures for new staff are good
- The school improvement plan contains appropriate priorities to improve provision, but action is not tightly focused on raising standards and success is not monitored systematically
- Performance data are analysed to check on the school's work, but are not used sufficiently to set targets in order to raise standards
- Governors are enthusiastic and provide good support for the school

Commentary

34. The leadership of the headteacher ensures that the school provides a caring, safe environment where pupils' attitudes to learning are very good and parents are happy with the work of the school. The headteacher knows the pupils and parents well and has a good relationship with them. He is very supportive of the staff and they work together well as a team. Induction procedures for new staff are good and they quickly settle into school routines and procedures. The improvements in writing in Years 1 and 2 have been significant since the previous inspection. However, with the exception of writing, the lack of rigour in checking on the quality of teaching and learning means there is insufficient focus on raising overall achievement in subjects such as mathematics and science. The headteacher and key staff monitor teaching and learning in these subjects but the follow-up procedures are not always rigorous enough to ensure that weaknesses in teaching are tackled and improved.
35. The school improvement plan outlines the school's priorities, but gives insufficient information as to how developments will lead to improvements in standards. Action plans for improvements in subjects are generally focused on provision and not on raising standards for specific groups of pupils. Performance data is analysed but the information is not used well enough to set targets for pupils who could be achieving higher levels. The leadership and management of special educational needs are satisfactory. The co-ordinator of special educational needs works closely with the specialist teacher and monitors the progress pupils with special educational needs are making towards the targets on their individual plans.
36. Governors are good supporters of the school. The governing body has a range of experience, with some governors who have served the school for a number of years and some who are very new to the role. Some are frequent visitors to the school, are knowledgeable about its work and have been successful in working with key staff to identify priorities for improvement. Each governor takes responsibility for linking with a class and some work in a closer way with subject leaders on curriculum issues, such as in mathematics. This has helped to inform the governors of the strengths and weaknesses of the school and of what is needed to move the school forward. However, governors are not sufficiently aware of the impact of some actions taken. The governing body has identified useful areas for improvement in its work in a draft of a four-year action plan to ensure greater accountability for standards in the school.

Financial information for the year April 2003 to March 2004

| Income and expenditure (£) | | Balances (£) | |
|----------------------------|---------|-------------------------------------|--------|
| Total income | 888,875 | Balance from previous year | 39,670 |
| Total expenditure | 894,749 | Balance carried forward to the next | 33,796 |
| Expenditure per pupil | 2,248 | | |

37. Budgets are set in accordance with statutory requirements and financial management is good. The local education authority carried out an audit two years ago and all the recommendations made in this report have been implemented. Day-to-day management of financial matters and the general smooth running of the school are undertaken by the welcoming and efficient office staff. Governors apply the principles of best value satisfactorily when purchasing goods and services. However, governors have not made a strong enough link between spending and standards of achievement.

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 classes is satisfactory and similar to that reported at the last inspection. When children start school, overall attainment is as expected for their ages and, by the end of the reception year, most children achieve the nationally expected standards in all areas of learning, and some exceed them. Standards are highest in personal, social and emotional development and writing. Leadership and management are satisfactory. A clear overview of the quality of provision, through joint planning and good deployment of teaching assistants, has created an environment of trust where children feel secure. Teaching and learning are satisfactory overall. Staff provide a good balance between activities that they plan for the children and those they allow children to plan for themselves. Good links have been established with local nursery schools, especially at the time when children are due to start school.

Personal, social and emotional development

Provision in personal, social and emotional development is good.

Main strengths

- Children's attitudes to learning and their behaviour are good and this helps them achieve well
- Adults create a safe and secure environment in which children play and work together well

Commentary

38. Children start school with average levels of attainment in their personal, social and emotional development. They achieve well because teaching and learning in this area is good. By the time they leave the reception classes, most children exceed the standards expected in this area of learning. When they start in the reception classes, most children quickly adapt to the established routines of the school and form good relationships with the adults with whom they come into contact. Many good opportunities are provided for children to work and play in small or larger groups. They respond well to these opportunities and make useful contributions with confidence. Children play with others and take turns well, especially when playing in Miss Muffet's cottage. The majority of children choose their activities well. Their attitudes to learning are good and they enjoy learning. Most children behave well and follow clearly established class rules.

Communication, language and literacy

Provision in communication, language and literacy is satisfactory.

Main strength and weakness

- A wide variety of activities is provided for children to develop their writing and this helps them achieve well
- Some children do not listen well enough in whole-class activities

Commentary

39. Children start school with average levels of attainment in communication, language and literacy. Their achievement is satisfactory overall, and good in writing. Teaching and learning are satisfactory overall, and particularly good for writing. Teachers plan good writing activities for children that are matched to their ability levels. Good use is made of the role-play area and various indoor and outdoor activities to encourage children to write. Children take part enthusiastically in these activities and are helped well by adults. Most children describe clearly what they are doing, especially they are playing in the in Miss Muffet's cottage. However, many do not always listen well

to each other and to their teachers. For example, during a story at the end of the day, a number of children interrupted their teacher and called out responses when they were not invited to do so. They were focused on what they wished to say and not on listening to each other. Often they talk at the same time as others. Adults do not correct this well enough and pupils' achievement in this aspect is not as high as in their writing. Nonetheless, their achievement is satisfactory. Most children reach the expected standards in communication, language and literacy and many exceed them in writing.

Mathematical development

Provision in mathematical development is satisfactory.

Main strength

- Adults promote mathematical language well

Commentary

40. There is satisfactory provision of a range of mathematical activities. These enable children to count accurately, for example, starting with registration and counting how many pupils are absent. Opportunities are created for the children to explore mathematical experiences on their own, as in the role play area, when they set the table for four people and put out the correct number of knives, forks and plates. All the children can recognise numbers and count up to five and others up to twenty matching number to objects confidently. They use mathematical language, such as 'bigger', 'smaller', 'more' and 'less', when in the role play area. They use smiley faces to show their likes and dislikes, for example when discovering how many children like tea. Their achievement is satisfactory. Children are working at the expected levels and achieve the standards expected for their age in their mathematical development. Teaching and learning are satisfactory.

Knowledge and understanding of the world

Provision in knowledge and understanding of the world is satisfactory.

Main strength and weakness

- Good opportunities are provided for using computers, but lower-attaining children do not receive enough help when they are stuck and their achievement in this aspect is unsatisfactory

Commentary

41. Achievement is satisfactory overall. Most children reach the standards expected for their age in their knowledge and understanding of the world. Teaching and learning are satisfactory. Children have good opportunities to use computers during the day. Most are confident using the mouse and the directional keys on the keyboard. They are familiar with the programs used and follow instructions well. However, some lower-attaining children do not achieve satisfactorily because they do not ask for help when they do not know what to do next. Most children build and construct models using a variety of blocks and construction kits. Good opportunities are provided for children to learn about the natural world around them. For example, they look at worms and talk with their teachers and teaching assistants about how they move under ground.

Physical development

Provision in physical development is satisfactory.

Main strength and weakness

- Children have good opportunities for balancing, walking and jumping, both within the indoor and outdoor planned activities
- A few children do not always behave well enough during indoor physical development lessons

Commentary

42. Most children reach the standards expected in their physical development and their achievement is satisfactory. Teaching and learning are satisfactory. Children walk, run and jump with confidence. They play well with larger apparatus in the outdoor area. Most are aware of the need for space for themselves and others and move about safely. In a physical education lesson, they balanced on one foot and threw and jumped over small beanbags competently. The over-exuberance of a few children sometimes causes them not to listen well enough and get into mischief. On these occasions, these children do not achieve as well as they could.

Creative development

Provision in creative development is satisfactory.

Main strength

- The children are competent in exploring colour and texture

Commentary

43. Teaching and learning in this area are satisfactory. Children are provided with good opportunities to use paints and other materials for creating pictures. They work in groups and create pictures using different coloured felt tip pens. They also experiment in using different textures such as pasta, shells, corks and fabrics when decorating a large number three. Their fine motor skills are well developed for their age. Many use pencils, glue sticks and scissors well. Some children painstakingly ensured that their decorations on the number three did not go outside the lines. Children enjoy singing and readily join in familiar nursery songs, such as 'Polly put the kettle on' and 'I hear thunder'. Their achievement in this area is satisfactory and, by the time they start in Year 1, most children reach the standards expected in this area.

SUBJECTS IN KEY STAGES 1 and 2

ENGLISH

Provision in English is satisfactory.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Pupils' speaking and listening skills are above expected levels throughout the school
- Pupils achieve well in writing and standards are above average in Years 1 to 4
- Teachers do not expect high enough standards from higher-attaining pupils and the standards achieved by these pupils are lower than they should be
- The analysis of pupils' performance is not used effectively to raise standards

Commentary

44. Standards in English are at expected levels and pupils' achievement is satisfactory. Pupils start school with average levels of attainment in English. Inspection evidence indicates that, by the end of Year 2, standards are above average in writing and average in reading. By the end of Year 6, standards are at expected levels and pupils' achievement is satisfactory overall. However, higher-attaining pupils do not achieve as well as they should.
45. Standards in speaking and listening are above expected levels and achievement is good. Pupils speak with confidence and express themselves well. They listen carefully to their teachers and understand what to do and what is expected of them. Class discussions provide pupils with stimulating opportunities for sharing and developing their ideas. For example, in a Year 1 lesson about the story of 'The Runaway Pizza', pupils discussed well how punctuation, such as exclamation marks and question marks, helps them to understand fully the meaning of the story. They listened carefully with excitement as their teacher changed her voice in response to different punctuation. They discussed eagerly with their partners how they could repeat what their teacher had demonstrated to them. This helped pupils, especially those with special educational needs, to understand what was being taught because they were given enough time to consolidate their thinking. Pupils in Year 6 demonstrated their skills in constructive argument and debate when discussing a challenging and sophisticated text. They showed how they could accommodate the views of others in mature ways when modifying their own thoughts.

46. Standards in reading are at expected levels and achievement is satisfactory. Pupils learn to enjoy books early in their school life through sharing `Big Books` with their teachers. They read texts well together in small groups. For example, pupils in Year 3 achieved very well when reading poetry because their teacher helped them successfully to progress from reading with her help to reading independently. This enabled pupils to use the skills they had just been taught and their standards of reading were above average. Pupils' skills and understanding of books are improved by the detailed study of texts, often through a class novel. For example, pupils in Year 5 were learning about the feelings of characters in the novel, `Blabbermouth`. They achieved well as they were taught to refer to specific parts of the text to justify the reasons for their responses to their teacher's questions. They demonstrated their ability to `read between the lines` to give them a deeper understanding of the characters of the story. However, overall, pupils who are competent readers do not have enough opportunities to read a wide range of books. They read regularly for pleasure and recall enthusiastically what they have read, but they do not carry out enough research of their own using reference books and the Internet. However, overall, pupils' research skills are satisfactorily developed. Some classrooms contain very good resources for reading, which are attractively displayed to motivate and inspire pupils as readers and introduce them to a range of different types of books and a variety of authors. However, this is not the case in all classes. Pupils' progress in reading is not as rapid as it is in writing.
47. Standards in writing are above expected levels by Year 2 and achievement is good. However, pupils' progress in writing slows in Years 3 to 6 and so, by the end of Year 6, standards are at expected levels. Pupils' early writing skills are developed well. For example, pupils in a Year 1 lesson wanted to carry on writing their own endings to a story long after the lesson had finished. They were particularly keen to complete their writing because they knew they would be sharing their work with other pupils. Pupils are given good opportunities to write in a range of different contexts. For example, they write stories, poems, recipes, factual accounts and about their own feelings. Standards in spelling and handwriting are satisfactory. However, higher-attaining pupils do not write as well as they should. Their writing lacks enough flair and imagination and is often limited to ideas that have been discussed in class discussions.
48. Teaching and learning are satisfactory overall. Teachers choose an interesting range of books and other resources to make lessons interesting. The purposes of lessons are made clear to pupils so that they know what they are expected to learn. The best lessons are characterised by fast pace, excellent use of time and an infectious enthusiasm on the part of teachers. This captivates pupils and encourages them to learn very effectively. Teachers and teaching assistants help pupils effectively when they are stuck and this helps them learn well. Some teachers set targets for individual pupils based on their recent work and check that these have been met. This helps these pupils to make good progress. However, this is not the case throughout the school. In these cases, marking is encouraging but does not indicate to pupils what is good about their work or what they need to do next to improve. Consequently, these pupils do not make fast enough progress in their work. A general weakness in the teaching is that pupils, especially higher-attaining pupils, are too dependent on their teachers and they do not use their own initiative or imaginations well enough. Teachers do not expect higher-attaining pupils to use their imaginations enough and work independently, and consequently, their standards are not as high as they should be, especially in Years 5 and 6.
49. Leadership and management are satisfactory. The subject co-ordinators are knowledgeable and provide good guidance for staff. They work well together and have made a significant contribution to improving standards in writing. They have a clear idea of the strengths and weaknesses in the subject based on a detailed analysis of data. However, this information

is not being used effectively to improve standards, particularly for groups of pupils who could be achieving higher levels. The work of teaching assistants is very well managed and their impact, particularly on the achievement of pupils with special educational needs, is good. Overall, provision in English is similar to the last inspection.

Language and literacy across the curriculum

50. Reading and writing are developed satisfactorily across the curriculum. Pupils are given good opportunities to consolidate their literacy skills in history and religious education in particular. For example, pupils in Year 5 have written about how they might forgive others when they were learning about the parable told by Jesus on forgiveness and in Year 6 pupils wrote at length about the Ancient Egyptians. However, overall, pupils are not given enough opportunities to write independently following their own ideas and research. Speaking and listening skills are developed well across all subjects. Pupils' very good attitudes mean that they are attentive and listen well to their teachers. They contribute readily to class discussions in all lessons.

MATHEMATICS

Provision in mathematics is satisfactory.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Standards in number are above expected levels because this aspect is taught well
- There are some good examples of pupils solving problems but, overall, pupils are not given enough opportunities for practical work and problem solving, and so standards in these aspects are below expectations
- Pupils enjoy mathematics and work well for their teachers
- Teachers do not use the results of assessment well enough when planning lessons and this means that work is not always matched well to pupils' needs, particularly the higher attainers

Commentary

51. Inspection evidence shows that pupils' achievement is satisfactory and standards throughout the school are at expected levels. Standards are higher in number than in other aspects of mathematics. Pupils' achievement in number is satisfactory and in some cases good. Standards in problem-solving are below expected levels because pupils spend too little time on this aspect. The achievement of pupils, especially higher-attaining pupils, in this aspect is unsatisfactory.
52. Teaching and learning are satisfactory. Where teaching is good, teachers engage pupils in practical activities that help them to learn well. For example, in a Year 2 lesson, the teacher taught pupils about odd and even numbers by asking them to throw dice in games that included numbers up to one hundred and, for higher-attaining pupils, up to one thousand. However, overall, pupils do not have enough opportunities to carry out practical activities. Their work is too closely linked to a commercial scheme that encourages them to answer too many questions at a similar level of difficulty. This slows down progress, especially for higher-attaining pupils, as they spend too much time on these unproductive activities.
53. Some teachers question pupils well and this helps to identify what they already know and also extends their learning. Relationships are good. Teachers manage pupils' behaviour well and pupils respond willingly and enthusiastically to their teachers. These factors help pupils learn in a calm and orderly environment.
54. Teachers and teaching assistants provide good help to pupils when they are stuck and this helps them learn well during lessons. However, teachers do not mark pupils' work well

enough overall. They include encouraging comments in pupils' books, but do not indicate what is good about their work or what they need to do next to improve.

55. Leadership and management are satisfactory overall. This is because teaching and learning are satisfactory and the achievement of most pupils is satisfactory. However, the achievement of higher-attaining pupils is not good enough. The subject co-ordinators carry out a significant amount of monitoring of planning, pupils' work and lessons and provide satisfactory guidance for teachers. This monitoring has identified well how provision can be improved but has not indicated enough how standards may be raised.
56. Learning targets are set for all pupils and this provides them with useful guidance about how they can improve. End of year national test data are analysed systematically by the school and this information is used well for setting performance targets at the end of Year 6. However, this data is not used well enough to set learning targets for pupils that provide challenges for the following year. As a result, teachers' expectations of pupils' achievements of these pupils are lower than they should be and standards are lower as a consequence. An exception to this is in Year 6, where the headteacher teaches a group of the highest-attaining pupils and provides them with thought-provoking and challenging work. These pupils make good progress.
57. Overall, provision is similar to the last inspection.

Mathematics across the curriculum

58. Mathematics across the curriculum is satisfactory. In geography, pupils in Year 2 identified the location of places in Struay by using co-ordinates. In art and design, pupils painted symmetrical patterns and in design and technology, pupils measured lengths in order to make their models.

SCIENCE

Provision in science is **satisfactory**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Pupils have very good attitudes and show keen enthusiasm for the subject
- Pupils do not achieve well enough in the investigative aspects of science because teachers do not have sufficient confidence in teaching these skills
- Pupils use scientific vocabulary well and the teaching of this aspect is good
- Teachers encourage pupils well in their work, but do not indicate to them well enough how they might improve

Commentary

59. Inspection findings show that standards in most aspects of science throughout the school are at expected levels and pupils' achievement is satisfactory. However, standards in investigative science are below these levels because pupils are not provided with enough opportunities to carry out their own investigations independently. Too often, teachers demonstrate an investigation to the whole class and this does not help pupils to develop the skills of being a scientist themselves. This slows down the progress made by pupils. Pupils with special educational needs work well within the mixed ability groups and achieve well.
60. Nonetheless, teaching and learning, especially in Years 3 to 6, are satisfactory overall. Since the last inspection, more emphasis is given to pupils using scientific vocabulary during their discussions and this helps pupils learn the meaning of these words. For example, in a Year 6 class, pupils spoke of 'micro-organisms', 'germs', 'dehydration' and 'waterborne contagious droplet infection'. In a Year 4 class, pupils used the words 'circuit', 'filament', and 'voltage'. Pupils' behaviour is good. Pupils enjoy science lessons and work well together. The best lessons were taught at a brisk pace and included a variety of activities in which the pupils became involved. For example, in a Year 1 class, pupils

discussed the food and drink they had during the day and related this to healthy eating and drinking. Teachers ask pupils probing questions that cause them to think. These help pupils understand what they are being taught. Pupils' behaviour is managed well and pupils are keen to learn. They quickly settle down to their work.

61. A general weakness in the teaching is that teachers rely too much on poor quality worksheets. These do not always provide pupils, especially higher-attaining pupils, with enough opportunities to use their initiative and achieve well. They often ask pupils to record their work in a very prescriptive way and this inhibits pupils' ability to think independently and make the progress of which they are capable. Teachers encourage pupils in their work. They help them well when they do not fully understand what is being taught. Work is regularly marked with ticks and crosses, and punctuation and grammatical errors are corrected. However, overall, marking lacks comments that will help pupils improve. An exception to this was in a Year 3 class where the teacher had commented, 'Do you eat mostly the same food each week?' 'Which food group should we eat in small quantities?' Comments such as these cause pupils to think further about their work and achieve at a higher standard.
62. Leadership and management are satisfactory. The responsibility for science is shared between two subject co-ordinators, who have worked hard in implementing the National Curriculum by following national guidance well. Science resources are organised and co-ordinated well. However, checking on the quality of teaching and learning in order to bring about improvements in the subject, especially in developing investigative skills, is unsatisfactory.
63. Overall, provision in science is similar to that recorded at the last inspection.

INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY (ICT)

Provision in ICT is satisfactory.

Main strength and weakness

- Teachers make good use of the computer suite to teach effectively
- Work is not always planned at pupils' levels of attainment

Commentary

64. Pupils' achievement is satisfactory overall and standards throughout the school are at expected levels. However, some higher-attaining pupils could reach higher standards. By the end of Year 2, pupils word process their work. They edit text by changing the font and colour. They use simple graphics programs. By Year 6, pupils create their own multimedia presentations. Standards are similar to those reported at the last inspection.
65. Teaching and learning are satisfactory. Teachers use the 'tutor system' of teaching effectively. This link up enables pupils to see on their own screens exactly what teachers are teaching using the master computer. Pupils respond enthusiastically to this style of teaching and, as a result, work independently more quickly and achieve well. For example, the 'tutor system' was used effectively in a Year 4 lesson to show pupils how to navigate the school website to find particular pages related to the work they were doing. This provided pupils with important skills for carrying out their own research on a variety of topics. However, the school has not yet developed a curriculum that enables teachers to plan work easily for pupils of varying abilities. On these occasions, work does not provide opportunities for pupils to reach their true potential.
66. Leadership and management are satisfactory overall. The school has an extensive and sound plan of action for the future development of the subject. This includes improved provision and the training of teachers to raise standards in the subject. The refurbished computer suite is well equipped to

provide pupils with good opportunities to learn about computers. However, there has been little monitoring of the quality of teaching and learning.

Information and communication technology across the curriculum

67. Overall, ICT is used satisfactorily to support learning across the curriculum. Teachers use data projectors in assemblies and for some whole class teaching, for example, in mathematics and religious education. In design and technology, pupils' work in Year 2 is recorded using a digital camera and stored electronically. In Year 6, pupils used laptops to enter data onto a spreadsheet and then produce graphs to show the changes in the flow rate of a river over a year.

HUMANITIES

68. Insufficient evidence was obtained to make a judgement about overall provision in **history**. Teachers' plans were inspected and a discussion was held with the subject co-ordinator. Pupils' work was inspected. Three lessons were observed. From this evidence, it is clear that the National Curriculum in history is being taught. The analysis of work in pupils' books and discussions with pupils give every indication that standards are at nationally expected levels and that their achievement is satisfactory. Pupils find history interesting and enjoyable and evidence from the lessons seen supports this view. For example, after listening to differing descriptions of Boudicca, pupils in Year 4 audibly gasped when they finally saw an image of her. Displays around school show that pupils have opportunities to go on visits to places of historical interest and that visitors also visit the school to help make history come alive for pupils. For example, photographs of a visit from a group of Normandy veterans show how pupils in Year 5 were given a good opportunity to find out about Britain in World War II from some peoples who had lived through it. Work is marked regularly but the majority of teachers' comments focus on presentation rather than attainment and give pupils little or no indication as to what they should do to improve. Leadership and management are satisfactory. The subject co-ordinator checks teachers' planning and has identified some clear areas for improvement in the subject. However, little monitoring of teaching and learning has taken place to help raise standards.
69. Insufficient evidence was obtained to make a judgement about overall provision in **religious education**. Two lessons were observed and work from a sample of pupils was inspected. A discussion was held with the co-ordinator and with a small number of pupils about what they had learnt in the subject. School documentation in religious education was inspected. The school teaches all elements of the local education authority's agreed syllabus as required by law. However, not enough emphasis is given to the teaching of world religions other than Christianity. From the limited evidence available, teaching and learning are satisfactory overall. Pupils are given good opportunities to consolidate their learning by writing down the aspects of religion about which they are learning. This also helps them to extend further the skills they have learnt in literacy. For example, pupils in Year 5 have written about how they might forgive others when they were learning about the parable told by Jesus on forgiveness. The standards of the small amount of work seen is at the levels expected in the agreed syllabus.

Geography

Provision in geography is satisfactory.

Main strength and weakness

- The local area is used well to support pupils' learning and develop their investigative skills
- Pupils are given little guidance on how to improve

Commentary

70. Standards are at the levels expected nationally throughout the school and the achievement of pupils is satisfactory. Standards are similar to those reported at the last inspection.
71. Teaching and learning are satisfactory overall. Lessons are planned well and teachers develop pupils' correct use of geographical vocabulary through their skilful questioning. Pupils develop good skills in comparing features in different places. For example, in Year 2 they do this by learning about life on an island in Scotland and comparing this to their own lives. They learn about life in a village in Mexico and also follow the travels of Barnaby Bear.
72. Teachers make good use of the local area to help pupils learn effectively. Pupils are given good opportunities to collect data and this helps them to develop their geographical skills. For example, in Year 3, pupils record the traffic travelling along the road to Tonbridge and Maidstone when learning about how their locality is linked to other places. As a result of their visit to the River Medway, pupils in Year 6 used their observations to reflect on and discuss the possible causes and effects of changes in the flow rate of a river. Teachers make good links between geography and other subjects. For example, in Year 2, pupils have painted landscapes of the Scottish island they were studying. They had also made a model from clay identifying the physical features of the island. The use of computers was particularly effective when Year 6 pupils entered data onto a spreadsheet to produce a graph to show the changes in the flow rate of a river over a year. Teachers mark pupils' work, but their comments, while encouraging pupils, focus too much on how pupils have presented of the work. This gives pupils little indication as to what they should do to improve.
73. Leadership and management are satisfactory overall. The subject co-ordinator has produced a useful plan for the future development of the subject. Little monitoring of standards and teaching has taken place since the last inspection so the school does not have a good grasp of strengths and weaknesses in the subject.

CREATIVE, AESTHETIC, PRACTICAL AND PHYSICAL SUBJECTS

74. It is not possible to make an overall judgement on provision in **art and design**. Two lessons were observed, pupils' work was inspected and a discussion was held with the subject co-ordinator. Standards are at the expected levels for the pupils' ages. Pupils have good opportunities to learn different techniques in art and design and they work with a wide range of materials, including paints, pastels, clay, textiles, sculpture and printing. This helps their skills in two- and three-dimensional work to develop well. Teachers make good links between art and design and other subjects. For example, pupils in Year 4 used their historical knowledge to appreciate and copy art from various civilizations. They made observational pencil drawings of artefacts from Celtic times and produced print work based on Celtic jewellery designs. Leadership and management are satisfactory. Clear guidance is given to teachers to help them plan lessons. A very comprehensive record of the range of artwork pupils are taught is collated by the subject co-ordinator and this is supplemented by a useful programme of work in art and design that is to be taught in different years. Standards of art and design are at expected levels for the pupils' ages. Pupils study the work of famous artists and produce good work that depicts the different techniques and subject matter in the style of the artist studied. Good representations of the work of Seurat were seen in Year 4 where pupils had a good knowledge of the artist's style of blending component parts of one colour.

75. **Design and technology** was not a main focus of the inspection and not enough evidence was collected to judge the school's overall provision in the subject. Two lessons were observed. School documentation was inspected and discussions were held with the subject co-ordinator and a small number of pupils about their learning in the subject. The school teaches pupils how to design, make and evaluate their products as required by the National Curriculum. For example, pupils in Year 1 designed a healthy sandwich by choosing the type of bread and fillings for their sandwiches from a selection of these items that the teacher had brought in for them. Their choices reflected their likes and dislikes about food. They enjoyed eating the sandwiches they had prepared at the end of the lesson and discussed how well they had made their sandwiches afterwards. The school places a suitable emphasis on teaching pupils the skills they need for design and technology, such as how to handle tools and equipment safely and to the best effect.
76. It was not possible to observe any **music** lessons during the inspection and so no overall judgements can be made. Music has a high profile in the school. There are very good opportunities for pupils to make music using their voices and instruments. The school has a choir and pupils take part in a wide range of community activities. For example, groups of pupils sing and play instruments at the local hospital and in local retirement homes. Music makes a significant contribution to the social development of pupils in the school and helps promote their self-esteem. Leadership and management of the subject are good. Teachers are provided with good guidance about what to teach. Additional help is also provided for teachers who are not specialist in the subject. Music is well resourced and pupils have good opportunities to play a variety of instruments.
77. Only one lesson in **physical education** was observed. School documentation was inspected and discussions were held with the subject co-ordinator and a small sample of pupils about the subject. Not enough evidence was collected to make a judgement about overall provision. The National Curriculum is taught as required. The school provides a good balance of lessons between gymnastics, dance and games. All pupils have an opportunity to learn to swim and nearly all achieve the nationally expected standard in this aspect of the subject by the time they leave the school. Pupils are provided with a satisfactory range of extra-curricular activities in sport. These include tag-rugby, football, netball and cricket.

PERSONAL, SOCIAL AND HEALTH EDUCATION AND CITIZENSHIP

78. Not enough evidence was collected during the inspection to evaluate the overall provision in personal, social and health education and citizenship. One lesson was observed and a discussion was held with the subject co-ordinator. Leadership and management of the subject are satisfactory. A commercial programme of work is taught throughout the school on a fortnightly basis. Provision is made for pupils in Years 5 and 6 for the teaching of sex and relationships education and drugs education.
79. Pupils treat each other and adults with respect and help others when they can. They are becoming sensible and mature young citizens. The school council provides pupils with a useful forum for expressing their views to the headteacher and staff. As a result of some good suggestions made at the school council, the school placed posters in the playground advising pupils how to play together without hurting one another or bullying anyone. These posters also advise pupils on how and to whom to report instances of bullying or health and safety issues.

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 | 5 |
| 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 (ethos) | 3 |
| Attendance | 2 |
| Attitudes | 2 |
| Behaviour, including the extent of exclusions | 2 |
| Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development | 3 |
| The quality of education provided by the school | 4 |
| The quality of teaching | 4 |
| How well pupils learn | 4 |
| The quality of assessment | 5 |
| How well the curriculum meets pupils needs | 4 |
| Enrichment of the curriculum, including out-of-school activities | 3 |
| Accommodation and resources | 3 |
| 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 | 3 |
| 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 | 4 |
| 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).

