

# INSPECTION REPORT

**NORTHBOURNE CHURCH OF ENGLAND PRIMARY  
SCHOOL**

Deal

LEA area: Kent

Unique reference number: 118689

Headteacher: Mrs J True

Lead inspector: Paul Missin 19227

Dates of inspection: 4<sup>th</sup> to 6<sup>th</sup> October 2004

Inspection number: 267067

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

## INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Type of school:	Infant and junior
School category:	Voluntary controlled
Age range of pupils:	5 to 11 years
Gender of pupils:	Mixed
Number on roll:	129.5 (full time equivalent pupils)
School address:	Coldharbour Lane Northbourne Deal Kent
Postcode:	CT14 0LP
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Appropriate authority:	The Governing Body Northbourne CEP School
Name of chair of governors:	Ms G. Jones
Date of previous inspection:	March 1999

## CHARACTERISTICS OF THE SCHOOL

Northbourne CE Primary School is in a rural location within the Regeneration area of the old Kent coalfield. The school is smaller than most other schools and there are 27 more boys than girls in the school. There are more boys in each class except in Year 5. Eleven boys and eight girls attend the Foundation Stage part-time. All pupils are taught in classes with more than one age group. Most pupils are from the white British ethnic group. There are no pupils who are in the early stages of learning to speak English as an additional language. There are 50 pupils on the school's special educational needs (SEN) register which is well above average. Two pupils have statements of SEN. This is broadly average. The most common areas of need are specific learning difficulties and moderate learning difficulties. Mobility in this small school is high. A significant proportion of the pupils joining the school other than at the time of first admission have SEN. At the time of the inspection, two teachers were employed on temporary contracts. One permanent member of staff was absent on maternity leave and another was taking a travelling sabbatical. The school received Investors in People Award in 2004. Although there is some yearly variation, when they enter the school, most pupils are achieving standards that are below average for their age.

## INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Members of the inspection team			Subject responsibilities
19227	Paul Missin	Lead inspector	Mathematics, history, geography. Pupils' personal, social, health and citizenship.
9691	Jon Vincent	Lay inspector	
15271	Brian Farley	Team inspector	English, information and communication technology, religious education, physical education. Special educational needs.
18083	Judith Howell	Team inspector	Science, art and design, design and technology, music. Children in the Foundation Stage.

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## PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

### OVERALL EVALUATION

**Northbourne CE Primary School is a good, effective school** in which pupils make good progress. The school meets the needs of the high proportion of pupils with SEN well and, from a generally below average level when they enter the school, most pupils reach broadly average standards by the time that they leave. The good teaching and the very good response of pupils to their learning help to promote this good achievement. The leadership and management of the Headteacher are good and she is well supported by other senior staff. The school provides good value for money.

The school's main strengths and weaknesses are:

- The good leadership and management of the Headteacher give the school a clear educational direction.
- By the time they leave the school, most pupils are reaching standards in mathematics and history that are above those expected for their age. However, standards in writing in Year 2 and in science in Year 6 are below average.
- Provision for children in the Foundation Stage and for pupils with SEN is good.
- Pupils' behaviour is good and their attitudes and the relationships in the school are very good.
- The school has a very strong ethos in which all pupils are valued and nurtured within the context of a Christian family atmosphere.
- The curriculum is well planned and is effectively supported by imaginative innovations and enhancements.
- Pupils' written work is not consistently well presented and recorded.
- The opportunity for pupils to develop their writing skills is sometimes limited by the over use of photocopiable worksheets.

The school has made good overall progress since the last inspection. Good progress has been made in addressing the key issues from the last inspection relating to introducing schemes of work, clarifying the roles of the curriculum co-ordinators and in improving communication with parents. The broadly average standards have been maintained, except in science in Year 6 where standards have dropped significantly. The good teaching profile has been maintained and the proportion of very effective teaching has been increased despite having some temporary teachers in post.

### 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	E	C	E
mathematics	B	E	C	D
science	C	E	C	E

*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.*

**Achievement is good overall.** Pupils make good progress in the Foundation Stage and in Years 3 to 6, and satisfactory progress in Years 1 and 2. Pupils with SEN achieve well and make good progress towards their own learning targets. Higher attaining pupils in science in Year 6 are not being consistently challenged.

There is a significant variation in the results of national tests each year. This is because of the small size of the year groups and the effect of the number of pupils joining the school with SEN. The trend in the results of recent Year 2 national tests have shown that standards are rising at a rate which is in line with that nationally but largely at a below and well below average level. In Year 6, standards have varied significantly between average and below average levels. The current inspection findings are that pupils in Year 6 are attaining standards in mathematics and history that are above average and standards in science that are below average. In Year 2, standards are above average in

reading and below average in writing. Children in the Foundation Stage reach above average standards in their personal, social and emotional development, knowledge and understanding of the world and in their creative development. Across the school, pupils attain average standards in all other subjects which were inspected. Pupils' written work is not consistently well presented and recorded.

**Pupils' personal qualities including their spiritual, moral and social development are good.**

Their attitudes to school and to each other are very good and their behaviour in class and around the school is good. Pupils are eager and enthusiastic and are fully committed to their own learning. These strengths have a positive impact on the progress they make. Attendance is average and punctuality is good.

## **QUALITY OF EDUCATION**

**The quality of education is good overall.** Teaching is good in the Foundation Stage and in Years 3 to 6 and satisfactory in Years 1 and 2. Strengths in teaching are in the positive way in which pupils are supported and encouraged, the enthusiastic and innovative way in which some teachers implement the curriculum and the detailed assessment procedures. A weakness is the over-use of photocopiable worksheets. Pupils with SEN receive good support from teachers and their assistants. The whole school curriculum is carefully planned and is enriched well through visits and visitors. Care and welfare provision is very good and enables the school to provide a safe environment for its pupils. Links with parents, the local community and other schools are now good.

## **LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT**

**Leadership and management are good.** The Headteacher provides the school with effective leadership. Strengths are the way in which she encourages innovation, maintains the very strong school ethos and ensures that the school's improvement is well planned through a detailed and relevant development plan. She is well supported by other senior staff. All staff are well involved in, and informed about, the development of the school. Governance is satisfactory. Several governors are new to their roles. A strength is the close working relationship between the Headteacher and the chair of governors. Governors are meeting all statutory requirements.

## **PARENTS' AND PUPILS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL**

Parents and pupils have positive views of the school. Parents now appreciate the school's successes. Most agree that their children are making good progress and feel comfortable about approaching the school when necessary. Most pupils like coming to school and name an adult whom they could go to if they felt distressed.

## **IMPROVEMENT NEEDED**

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

- Raise the standard that pupils achieve in writing in Year 2 and in science in Year 6.
- Improve the presentation of pupils' work.
- Further improve the quality of pupils' written work across all subjects by reviewing the use of photocopiable worksheets.

## **PART B: COMMENTARY ON THE INSPECTION FINDINGS**

### **STANDARDS ACHIEVED BY PUPILS**

#### **Standards achieved in areas of learning, subjects and courses**

Achievement is good across the school. It is good in the Foundation Stage and in Years 3 to 6, and satisfactory in Years 1 and 2. Overall, standards are average across the school but the high proportion of pupils with SEN achieve well and make good progress towards their own learning targets.

#### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- In Year 6, pupils attain above average standards in mathematics and history.
- In Year 2, pupils reach standards that are above average in reading but below average in writing.
- Across the school, most pupils achieve well and make good progress in their learning
- The good provision for pupils with SEN mean that their needs are met well.
- Standards in science in Year 6 are also below average.

#### **Commentary**

1. Several factors specific to this school significantly influence pupils' achievement and the results of the national tests. The small year groups in the school make test data unreliable and caution needs to be exercised when they are analysed. The school has a higher than average proportion of pupils with SEN. On average, it is 39 per cent but significantly higher in some year groups. Several pupils have significant language and behaviour difficulties. This limits their capacity to reach national standards in the tests. Mobility in the school is high. Analysis of the trend has shown that a significant number of pupils who join the school already have SEN. Although boys have out performed girls in recent national tests, no significant gender differences in attainment were evident during the inspection.
2. Children in the Foundation Stage are on line to attain broadly average standards by the time they begin Year 1. Children are likely to exceed the expected standard in personal, social and emotional development, knowledge and understanding of the world and in their creative development. Standards are likely to be average in communication, language and literacy and mathematical development. There was insufficient evidence for a judgement to be made about children's physical development. Considering the short time that some children have been in school and their attainment on entry, most are making good overall progress in their learning.
3. Trends in the results of the national tests for seven-year-olds show that overall standards have been rising in line with the national rate but at a level which is consistently below, and sometimes well below average. The preliminary results for 2004 show that the proportion of pupils reaching average standards was highest in reading and lowest in writing and mathematics. The proportion of pupils reaching the higher levels was closest to average in writing but below and well below average in other subjects.

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

Standards in:	School results	National results
reading	14.8 (13.9)	15.7 (15.8)
writing	13.4 (12.6)	14.6 (14.4)
mathematics	15.6 (15.0)	16.3 (16.5)

*There were 25 pupils in the year group. Figures in brackets are for the previous year*

4. The findings of this inspection are that standards in Year 2 are above average in reading, below average in writing and average in all other subjects which were inspected. This is similar to the judgements of the last inspection except that, in 1999, standards were average in reading. Standards in reading are above average because pupils are given good opportunity to read regularly and teachers ensure that they have effective strategies to tackle unknown words. The quality of pupils' written work is limited by the inconsistent application of handwriting and presentational skills.
5. Trends In the results of the national tests for eleven-year-olds have shown a significant variation in standards achieved between different years and across different subjects. Standards have ranged from broadly average to below and well below average. The preliminary results for 2004 show that standards are likely to be average in English, below average in mathematics and well below average in science. The proportion of pupils achieving the higher Level 5 is likely to be above average in English, average in mathematics but well below average in science.

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

Standards in:	School results	National results
English	26.6 (25.6)	26.8 (27.0)
mathematics	27.4 (25.0)	26.8 (26.7)
science	28.4 (25.6)	28.6 (28.3)

*There were 18 pupils in the year group. Figures in brackets are for the previous year*

6. The findings of this inspection are that standards in Year 6 are above average in mathematics and history, below average in science and average in all other inspected subjects. Since the last inspection, high standards have been maintained in mathematics, standards have remained the same in English but have dropped significantly in science. Standards are high in mathematics as a result of the impact of grouping pupils by ability and the work done across the school to promote pupils' problem solving skills. Standards are high in history because of the depth to which topics are studied and the interesting approach to the subject adopted by several teachers. Standards are lower in science because investigative skills are insufficiently developed and there is some lack of challenge for higher attaining pupils.
7. Pupils with SEN make good progress and achieve well for their capabilities. This is because support is carefully planned and used to ensure that teaching is effective. They have good attitudes to learning and get on very well with their classmates.
8. Overall, pupils' achievement is good. This confirms the opinion of most parents in their questionnaire and at their pre-inspection meeting. There is a significant variation in the standard attained by different groups of children when they enter the school. The attainment on entry, which is judged to be below average, includes reference to the significant number of pupils who join the school later who have SEN. The high proportion of pupils with SEN consistently make good progress towards their own learning targets. They are well supported in class and all adults manage them sensitively and work to improve their concentration and to raise their confidence and self-esteem. Children achieve well in the Foundation Stage. This is because of the carefully matched curriculum and the good levels of support and encouragement provided by the class teacher and her assistants. Across all subjects achievement is satisfactory in Years 1 and 2 but good overall in Years 3 to 6. Here it is good in English, mathematics and history and satisfactory in all other inspected subjects. The needs of higher attaining pupils are met satisfactorily across the school, except for science in Years 3 to 6. The identification of pupils with particular gifts and talents is at an early stage of development.

**Pupils' attitudes, values and other personal qualities**

Pupils' behaviour overall is good and their attitudes are very good. Their attendance is satisfactory and punctuality is now good. Their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good overall.



## Strengths and weaknesses

- The school successfully promotes good attendance levels and parents ensure the punctual attendance of their children.
- Pupils demonstrate a good interest in school life in and the range of activities provided.
- Pupils' freedom from bullying and from other forms of harassment is very good as a result of the very good systems that the school has in place.
- Pupils' willingness to be enterprising and to take responsibility is very good.
- Pupils' confidence and self-esteem are good.
- The school promotes good relationships between pupils and adults.
- Pupils have a good understanding of the need to distinguish between right and wrong.

## Commentary

### Attendance

9. Attendance is satisfactory and in line with the national figures. A more rigorous approach to monitoring attendance has been adopted since the last inspection. The school ensures that parents and carers appreciate the importance of the prompt and regular attendance of their children at school. These efforts are very effective and, as a result, there is no unauthorised absence. During interviews and discussions with pupils, it was very evident that they enjoyed school and their lessons. There was one fixed period exclusion in the last year. Punctuality has improved since the last inspection.

#### *Attendance in the latest complete reporting year (%)*

Authorised absence		Unauthorised absence	
School data	5.6	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.*

#### *Ethnic background of pupils*

Categories used in the Annual School Census
White – British

#### *Exclusions in the last school year*

No of pupils on roll	Number of fixed period exclusions	Number of permanent exclusions
129	1	0

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

10. The very good attitudes and relationships between pupils and their good behaviour contribute to the impressive sense of community in the school. Pupils show very good interest in their lessons and strive hard to achieve the expectations of their teachers. The caring atmosphere that permeates the whole school has a positive effect on pupils' learning. Pupils understand the school rules and do their best to keep them. Behaviour is sometimes very good and is consistently good throughout the whole school. All the adults lead by example and older pupils also set good examples for younger ones. The culture promoted by the school is one of a large and happy family where everyone is valued and respected. Both parents and pupils confirm how much they enjoy and benefit from this caring environment.
11. Pupils have many opportunities for taking on additional responsibility and they respond very well to them. The school council has two representatives from each class who meet regularly and discuss and debate the various suggestions they receive. Although the council has only been in place for two terms, it is already proving effective in contributing to improvements to school life. The 'house' system rewards and encourages initiative and responsibility. Pupils vote for their

house captain and monitors are appointed for routine duties ranging from PE monitors to classroom duties. Pupils spoken to during the inspection confirmed that they had many opportunities to undertake extra duties.

12. Older pupils are quick to help their younger schoolmates should the need arise. Boy and girl pupils of differing ages interviewed during the inspection displayed mature, articulate, confident and responsible attitudes. Weekly assemblies are held during which pupils' successes are celebrated. The school successfully encourages the pupils' personal and social development.
13. Pupils understand the differences between right and wrong and demonstrate this by their attitudes and actions in school. They have a good level of respect for the feelings and values of others and this is continually fostered by the family atmosphere of the school. Pupils spoken to during the inspection said there was no bullying in school and none was seen during the inspection. However, there was some discussion about what constituted bullying and pupils agreed that sometimes boisterous playground behaviour could be misconstrued. During the inspection, the supervising teacher spotted an incident in the playground and some sensitive counselling quickly dispelled any risk of harassment. The pupil involved understood and accepted that his intended actions were unacceptable and, more importantly, the reasons why.
14. Overall, the spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of pupils is good. Moral and spiritual development is encouraged in many ways. The links with the neighbouring church and the involvement of the Rector in assemblies assist the awareness of pupils. Leaders from other local churches also take part in school assemblies. Multicultural awareness is promoted by the very strong links with a primary school in Kandiga, Ghana. Regular correspondence between both schools ensures that pupils have a very good insight into the differing lifestyles of other cultures. This knowledge is re-inforced by displays in the school. This awareness of other cultures has helped to address the unsatisfactory aspect of multicultural awareness highlighted in the last inspection report. Outside visits are made to theatres and museums and pupils have visited a synagogue.

## **QUALITY OF EDUCATION PROVIDED BY THE SCHOOL**

The quality of education provided by the school is good. Strengths are the good, effective teaching and the well planned and enriched curriculum. Care and welfare procedures are very good. The school develops an effective partnership with parents and the local community.

### **Teaching and learning**

The overall quality of teaching and learning and assessment is good. Teaching and learning are good in the Foundation Stage and in Years 3 to 6, and satisfactory in Years 1 and 2.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- Teaching and learning are particularly strong in Years 3/4 and 4/5.
- In the best lessons, teachers are very enthusiastic, show very good subject knowledge and make their subjects come alive.
- Teaching in the Foundation Stage and for pupils with SEN is good.
- The over use of photocopiable worksheets sometimes limits the development of pupils' writing and recording skills.

### **Commentary**

15. Overall, the quality of teaching and learning is good, as it was at the time of the last inspection. This confirms the positive view of most parents and pupils. In their respective pre-inspection questionnaires, most considered that teachers expect pupils to work hard. The current positive teaching profile has been achieved despite several recent changes of staff and teachers who are new to the school. During the inspection, one permanent Year 1/2 teacher was away from school

for a term's sabbatical leave and he was replaced by a teacher on a temporary contract. Another part-time teacher was absent on maternity leave. Teaching is consistently good in the Foundation Stage. Teaching is also particularly strong in Years 3/4 and 4/5.

16. Currently, in Years 1 and 2, teaching and learning are satisfactory in all subjects which were inspected. In Years 3 to 6, teaching and learning are good in English, mathematics and history and satisfactory in all other inspected subjects. In English, teachers show good, confident subject knowledge and have high expectations of what pupils can achieve. They use imaginative teaching styles and resources to interest and challenge pupils. In mathematics, teachers adopt a practical approach wherever possible, which ensures that pupils have good opportunities to learn through 'hands-on' experiences. They use real life problem solving situations well to challenge pupils. In history, teachers' enthusiasm and interesting activities enthuse the pupils and bring the subject to life well.
17. The quality of teaching and learning in the Foundation Stage is good. Strengths include the effective teamwork between teachers and assistants which ensures that each day's activities are well organised and run smoothly. All of the adults who work in Year R are knowledgeable about the curriculum for Reception children and are particularly adept at encouraging them and engaging them in learning. As a result, children acquire new skills, knowledge and understanding at a good rate and develop their capacity for concentration. The planned activities provide good opportunities for children to work and play both collaboratively and independently. Assessment procedures are good. Clear records are maintained of the progress that children make in their learning.
18. Across the school the most significant strengths in teaching are the way that teachers manage pupils and create effective learning environments in their classes. The specific focus of the lesson is consistently shared with pupils and the firm but sensitive way in which pupils are treated helps to secure their commitment to their own learning. Teachers use questions effectively and most lessons are taught at a brisk pace. Good opportunities are provided, in whole class discussion and in short paired conversations with a partner, to develop pupils' speaking and listening skills. Teachers' planning is detailed and shows clearly the work planned for pupils of different abilities in the class. Some shortcomings in teaching are the way that some lessons do not fully engage pupils and the lack of pace and productivity, particularly when pupils write accounts of what they have done. Another weakness evident across most subjects was the overuse of photocopiable worksheets by teachers. This limited the opportunities for some pupils to develop their writing and recording skills sufficiently.
19. A history lesson to pupils in Years 4/5 illustrated several other features of very good, effective teaching and the positive impact of the teacher's enthusiasm and innovative approach to the subject. Pupils were studying life in Tudor times. The teacher skilfully set the current lesson in the context of what pupils had learnt before and immediately got their attention by saying that in this lesson they were all going to be Tudor people. Pupils' attention was drawn to a large picture showing a Tudor street scene and pairs of pupils were asked to 'be' characters from the scene. The teacher emphasised the importance of 'getting into' the characters and empathising with them. Time was given for them to talk about who they were, and what they might be, and discussions were very helpful and productive. A street was prepared in the classroom and they all had great fun in meeting each other and explaining who they were. The pickpockets, the card cheats and the people in the stocks were particularly engaged. The lesson finished with opportunities for pupils to write at length about their characters and others they had met. Pupils made good progress in their appreciation of Tudor life.
20. Teachers and learning support assistants work well together to provide for pupils with SEN. Pupils are generally taught in their classes, but are also sometimes withdrawn from lessons by learning support assistants for more intensive learning. This is when there is a need for close focus on specific learning such as writing in literacy or the development of social skills. Pupils' progress is assessed and recorded with reference to the learning targets set for them. However, pupils and class teachers are insufficiently involved in the setting of personal targets for learning in individual education plans. Resources for teaching pupils with SEN are used well.

21. Assessment procedures are good and reflect the work which the school has done in this area recently. The introduction of an integrated curriculum planning and assessment programme has been managed well. The assessment co-ordinator has a clear view of assessment procedures across the school and has successfully given this aspect a high profile in the school. A good range of data is collected. These include information from national and other standardised tests and subject assessments made by teachers. The data are collected and are used well to create the ability groups in mathematics and to identify those pupils who need further support. Data are also used to set learning targets in reading, writing and mathematics. These are shared with pupils and their parents and are clearly matched to National Curriculum criteria. This is giving the school a good view of the progress pupils make as they move through the school. A minor weakness is that information on a year group level is not used clearly enough to evaluate overall achievement trends or to set overall achievement targets for school improvement planning.

## **The curriculum**

Curriculum provision is good overall. Provision for pupils' learning outside of the school day and the development of their interests is good. The accommodation and resources of the school provide satisfactory support to meet the needs of the curriculum.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- The overall breadth of curricular opportunities is good. The school continually seeks to develop and improve what it offers.
- There is good provision for pupils with SEN and for children in the Foundation Stage.
- A good range of activities and clubs provide curricular enrichment.
- Accommodation and resources have been improved since the previous inspection and more improvement is planned.

## **Commentary**

22. The school has a curriculum that meets statutory requirements and ensures that pupils have access to a good range of interesting and worthwhile activities. This was also the view of most parents in their pre-inspection questionnaire. The curriculum is effective because it helps pupils to achieve a reasonable level of independence in learning. There has been a good improvement in the curriculum and its planning since the previous inspection. The school meets the requirements for collective worship and RE and for the recommended time allocated to teaching.
23. The school embraces curriculum innovation well. New initiatives are thoroughly researched and applied sensitively to the school's situation. Recent developments have included the introduction of a computerised whole school planning and assessment package. This has been introduced well and is beginning to enable teachers to plan their work in a way that links subjects across the curriculum. Work on the use of different learning styles has given teachers an insight into the way in which pupils learn in different contexts. Another innovation is the introduction of specific whole weeks of pupils' activity on features such as media, creative arts, science and sports. The impact of these initiatives is carefully analysed.
24. The school works hard to ensure that all of its pupils have equal access to the full range of opportunities that it offers. It reviews its curriculum regularly, and carries out analysis of pupils' attainments to identify where curriculum improvement is necessary. It has more recently established strategies for the identification of gifted and talented pupils so that their specific needs can be met.
25. The school provides pupils with a good range of activities that enhance their learning. For example, visitors have contributed to their understanding of local history, the church, science, and Africa. Depending upon their age, pupils have heard about the work of the fire service, have had input from a tennis coach and have enjoyed the presentations of a storyteller. Visits have been made to places such as Greenwich Observatory and Maritime museum, Hastings, the Kent County

Show, and a residential visit to the Swattenden Outward Bound centre for older pupils. There are good opportunities for pupils to learn to play musical instruments such as the flute, trumpet and piano. Improvements have been made to the curriculum to enhance pupils' awareness of living in a multicultural society.

26. The curriculum for children in the Foundation Stage is good and provides a variety of activities that stimulate their interest and motivation to learn. Activities are effectively planned within the recommended six areas of learning for children of this age. The accommodation is satisfactory for the demands of the curriculum and the needs of the children and includes their own outdoor play area with a suitable range of resources.
27. The curriculum for pupils with SEN is good. Where pupils have individual learning plans, the targets set for them are clear and achievable. These plans have suggested teaching strategies and criteria for success. In lessons, pupils are given good levels of support and encouragement from teachers and teaching assistants. A strength is the way in which pupils are enabled to take as full part as possible in the class lesson.
28. Since the previous inspection, there have been some significant improvements to the accommodation. A new building programme is planned to take place later in the year. This will provide better facilities for pupils. Space in the hall, particularly for PE, is restricted and inhibits the range of activities that can be undertaken. On-going problems with the field also restrict its use. The ratio of computers to pupils is very good and the computer suite provides an attractive learning area.

### **Care, guidance and support**

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

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- Pupils' care, welfare, health and safety are very good.
- Relationships with adults in school are very good.
- Pupils are encouraged to take responsibility in the school community.
- Induction arrangements are good.

### **Commentary**

29. The school has very good health and safety procedures in place with both formal and informal risk assessments carried out regularly. Four members of staff have appropriate first aid qualifications and the school has plans to increase this number and also to involve Year 6 pupils in some basic first aid training. There are full child protection procedures in place with the Headteacher as the designated child protection officer. Since the last inspection report, child protection procedures have been improved and are now very good, with all members of the school staff being aware of the appropriate procedures. The family culture that permeates the school ensures pupils' well being. This, coupled with the fact that the staff know their pupils very well, ensures a caring environment which encourages learning.
30. All adults who work in the school form close and trusting relationships with the pupils. Pupils with SEN are supported and encouraged particularly well by teachers and their assistants. Staff know all pupils well and provide very good role models for behaviour. Discussions with pupils show that they feel very safe and secure and would be happy to turn to any adult in school should they need help, comfort or advice. The views of pupils on the work and life of the school are encouraged both on an informal basis and through the school council.

31. The school's systems to monitor and track pupils' standards and progress are good and are appreciated by parents. Pupils' personal development is monitored on an informal basis and the support, advice and guidance on personal and social matters is very good. Induction arrangements for children starting school are good. The playgroup accommodated in the school buildings interacts regularly with all school members and, as a result, children starting school already feel confident and comfortable in their new class. Parents confirm that they appreciate these good arrangements.

### **Partnership with parents, other schools and the community**

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

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- The partnership with parents and links with the community are good.
- The Friends' Association is very active.
- The procedures dealing with complaints and concerns are good.
- There are good links with pre-school and other schools.
- The school has a genuine 'open door' policy.

### **Commentary**

32. Parents and carers have very positive views of the school and the school works well with them. It encourages them to support the school through the Friends of the School Association and to help their children with their learning. Links with parents of pupils who have SEN are good. Some parents help in school and also help supervise pupils on school trips. The Friends' Association is very active and organises many fund raising events. The association works closely with the school to realise a variety of pre-agreed projects. It has been closely involved in fund raising for the Kandiga school in Ghana,
33. The school provides a good range of information for parents and this has improved since the last inspection. Regular newsletters keep parents up to date and these are also posted on the recently launched school's website. A few parents felt that they were not well informed about their children's progress and the school is making every effort to remedy this. Letters setting out curricular details are sent to parents each term in addition to meetings devoted to curricular matters. Parents find the detailed annual reports helpful especially as they set out targets for pupils for the following year. There are meetings held in the autumn and spring terms when parents can discuss their children's progress. In addition, the school has a genuine 'open door' policy and parents and carers are encouraged to make contact with teaching staff should they have any problems or queries. Procedures for dealing with any concerns and complaints are good and parents say that they find the school very approachable. The school prospectus is informative and now fulfils statutory requirements.
34. There are good links with the 'Busy Bees' pre-school group which operates in the school building. The majority of new children attending the school come from this source and, as they already mix regularly with older pupils, their transition is seamless. Parents say their children settle into school well. There is satisfactory liaison with the secondary schools the school works with and the school makes every effort to ensure smooth progress to secondary education. Links with other schools and colleges are good. An example of this is the involvement of older pupils working on information and communication technology (ICT) projects with Sandwich Technical College.
35. The school has good links with the local community. On starting the fund-raising efforts on behalf of Kandiga School in Ghana, the Friends' Association and school ensured that the whole community became involved. This resulted in Parish collections, local public houses having collections and holding quiz nights, carol collections, poetry evenings, beer festivals and the whole local community being involved in fund-raising initiatives. The outcome of these activities resulted

in Kandiga School being able to re-roof three classrooms and commence building a day centre nursery for pre-school children. These efforts culminated in the school winning a Diocesan award of £500. The school then donated this award to Kandiga school. This gesture exemplifies the Christian culture of the school. The school also supports other charities throughout the year. Pupils have enjoyed visits to an aquarium, the Royal Observatory, and exhibitions in conjunction with their project work. Older pupils have a week's residential stay at an Outward Bound Centre. The school has a very close connection with the local church and members of the local community are invited to school events. All these links have a positive effect on the quality of education the pupils receive.

## **LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT**

Leadership and management in the school are good. The Headteacher leads and manages the school well. Other senior staff have an important impact on the school's work. Governance is sound.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- The effective leadership of the Headteacher charts the school's improvement and has maintained the strong ethos and identity of the school.
- The school embraces change and innovation.
- There are good systems for the Headteacher and other staff to monitor and evaluate the quality of teaching and learning and curriculum provision.
- The leadership and the management of SEN provision are good.
- The school development plan is comprehensive and clear.
- Procedures by which governors monitor progress through the school development plan are not sufficiently formalised.

### **Commentary**

36. The Headteacher's leadership of the school is good. She acted decisively when she was first appointed to deal with important staffing and budget issues and she gives the school clear educational direction. She has successfully maintained the very strong school ethos which was a significant strength at the time of the last inspection. Her leadership style is one which is open to change and innovation and, as a result, possible change is researched and implemented thoughtfully and sensibly. She openly encourages and supports other staff in the school which motivates them, improves morale and secures their commitment to continued improvement.
37. The management of the school is also good. There are effective systems in place to inform and involve staff in the school's work. The role of the Senior Management Team is taken seriously and this group has an important impact on the school's work. Performance Management procedures work well and developmental targets for staff are clearly related to school improvement priorities. There are effective procedures in place to monitor the quality of teaching and learning and these are shared between Headteacher, senior staff and subject co-ordinators. This is an improvement since the last inspection.
38. School improvement planning is detailed and clear. The priorities which are identified are appropriately concerned with raising standards, development of the curriculum and improvements to the school building. A minor weakness is that there is insufficient use of test data and the published and current overall achievement targets in the drive to raise standards. Procedures for ensuring that school development planning issues are central to the school's work are good.
39. The Headteacher has managed the deficit budget situation which she inherited when she was appointed well. Some difficult spending decisions had to be taken and, with the help of a recent Transitional Grant from the Local Education Authority, the school now has a balanced budget. The impact of this is that the roll-over/contingency figure is very small and very careful monitoring of spending has been maintained. The Headteacher has worked effectively to secure funding from a variety of external sources for building improvements and has secured a major building extension planned for the spring of 2005.

**Financial information for the year April 2003 to March 2004**

Income and expenditure (£)	
Total income	350,560
Total expenditure	362,022
Expenditure per pupil	2,430

Balances (£)	
Balance from previous year	11,473
Balance carried forward to the next	11

40. Governance of the school is satisfactory as it was at the time of the last inspection. The governing body has been through a time of change and, currently, some key responsibilities are being met by people new to the governing body. A strength is the impact of the chair of governors and the close working relationship she has established with the school and the Headteacher. The committees dealing with the curriculum and overseeing the new building improvements are particularly active. Procedures for monitoring spending are beginning to be re-established following the appointment of a new chair of the finance committee. The newly established procedures for involving governors with devising the school development plan and the opportunity provided for them to meet groups of parents at the beginning of the school year are good. A minor weakness is that procedures for monitoring progress through the school improvement plan and for evaluating the success of initiatives are not carried out systematically.
41. The provision for pupils with SEN is good. The co-ordinator has a good understanding of all procedures and has outlined areas for development. She works closely with teachers and learning support assistants to ensure that provision matches the needs of pupils. Assistants are deployed carefully and are well trained to support pupils. Good use is made of ICT in the management and administration of SEN work.



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

### **AREAS OF LEARNING IN THE FOUNDATION STAGE**

The overall provision for children in the Foundation Stage is **good**.

#### **Main strengths and weaknesses.**

- Good achievement results from consistently good teaching.
- The good assessment procedures are used well to track the children's progress.
- There is very good teamwork between the Reception teachers and support assistants.
- Relationships between adults and children are very good.
- Good leadership provides clear direction for the continuing good provision.

#### **Commentary**

42. Children are admitted to school part-time in the September of the year in which they become five. Their attainment when they start school spans the full range. The current group are average. The Reception children enter a class, which contains pupils from Year 1. At the time of this inspection, the Reception children were attending part-time either for the morning or afternoon sessions. As a result, there was insufficient evidence to judge these children's achievement in each area of learning. However, the records and work completed by children who are now in Year 1 indicate that most achieved the goals children are expected to reach in their communication, language and literacy skills and in their mathematical and physical development. In their personal, social and emotional development, creative development and in their knowledge and understanding of the world their attainment is above the expected level. This represents good achievement from their mostly average starting point.
43. Indications are, from this very early part of the school year, that standards are likely to be broadly average by the time children begin Year 1. The current Reception children are likely to exceed the expected standard in personal, social and emotional development, knowledge and understanding of the world and in their creative development. Standards are likely to be average for age in communication, language and literacy and mathematical development.
44. Good leadership and management, effective planning for an interesting curriculum, combined with consistently good teaching, provide the children with interesting and varied experiences. These promote good learning and help them to make good progress. Teaching and learning are good in all areas of learning which were inspected except in communication, language and literacy and in mathematical development where they are satisfactory. Underpinning the good practice in the Reception class are good assessment procedures. These are carried out on a lesson-by-lesson basis as teachers and assistants observe and note the children's progress. These observations are used well to plan the next stage in learning for each child. Another very strong feature is the very effective teamwork between teachers and assistants, which helps all lessons to run smoothly and provides very good support and encouragement for all children. The Reception teacher provides good leadership for all adults in the department, who work very closely together to form a very effective team.
45. The strengths recognised during the last inspection have been maintained and further improvements have been made to the accommodation and the play equipment. The school now has a designated outdoor play area where the children can play with large pieces of equipment and use them for exploration and discovery. The school now has a curriculum policy for children in the Foundation Stage.
46. The school has good induction procedures for the children and their parents, which help the children to settle into school very well. The very close links with the on site privately run nursery help many children to feel secure and happy, and they quickly settle into school. The school places

a great emphasis on the children's **personal, social and emotional development** and the teaching is very good. The effect of the good induction procedures for the children was evident in the way they were already forming good relationships with the adults and with each other. The children benefit from working alongside the older Year 1 pupils who set a good example through their own behaviour, which the Reception children copy. The children show very good levels of confidence when they tackle new learning and make choices and decisions about what they want to do. For example, when choosing an activity, they take their own named peg, attach it to a picture of the activity they want to follow and move off into groups. They are given many good opportunities to work and play together in small groups and have a good understanding of the need to listen to the contributions of others, take turns and to share resources. Overall, the Reception children are enthusiastic learners who show high levels of interest in all activities.

47. Most children start school with the expected levels for their age in **communication, language and literacy**. Their achievement is good in reading and satisfactory in writing. There is a good combination of activities that are led and directed by an adult, such as the daily phonic sessions and child initiated activities, such as role-play. Speaking and listening skills are well developed, and staff are effective in the way in which they pick up incidental opportunities for extending the children's vocabulary. Role-play is effectively used to support the development of speaking and listening skills. There is good teaching of the early reading skills and the children quickly learn to recognise and identify rhyming words by matching pairs of picture cards. The promotion of early writing skills is satisfactory and, by the time children enter Year 1, most are beginning to write independently in a variety of contexts.
48. In terms of their **mathematical development**, the children's achievement is satisfactory. The children are provided with many opportunities to learn through structured play activities such as sand and water play and first-hand experience, such as working with two and three-dimensional shapes to make repeating patterns. Most children count and recognise numbers up to ten with good levels of confidence and accuracy. The work of children now in Year 1 shows that they gain sufficient knowledge and understanding of number to explore and record patterns related to addition, including doubling numbers, such as five and five make ten. Their use and understanding of language to compare two numbers, such as 'one more than' and 'one less than' are well developed. Their previous work also showed that they had been provided with activities, which helped them to use the correct mathematical vocabulary to compare size, weights and quantities.
49. Most children are likely to exceed the expected standards in their **knowledge and understanding of the world**. The evidence of previous children's work indicates that the quality of teaching and learning is good. Children are given a wide range of activities that includes keeping a diary of the growth of a bean and investigating a range of materials. Good opportunities are provided for children to explore and actively learn by doing things. For example, the theme of 'ourselves' helped to develop the children's awareness of, and use of, the senses. Through a good session that involved children in smelling a variety of 'smell pots', they not only enjoyed trying to identify the contents but also extended their language development by describing the smells. The children are developing a good knowledge of features of places beyond their own locality, through finding out about animals that live in cold and hot countries. They use their skills to make models of houses from recycled materials and are provided with a variety of experiences such as making a fruit salad that teach them the simple rules of handling food. Religious education (RE) is taught regularly, and the children gain a good understanding of what it is like to belong to a family and learn about stories that are told in the Bible. They also visit the local church. Children's awareness of cultural traditions is appropriately enhanced through stories and role-play. The children are provided with good opportunities to develop their ICT skills and were observed using the computer confidently in the classroom to support their learning.
50. In terms of their **physical development**, it was not possible to make an overall judgement of standards, teaching or learning. However, the children were seen crawling through a tunnel confidently, together with the support assistant. With great care they also managed to balance on upturned pots and to walk steadily, holding onto the ropes attached. The children quickly learn how to use scissors for cutting. They show good control of brushes and pencils, and most manipulate small objects, such as building bricks, well.

51. In the **creative** area of learning, teaching and learning are good. Children are provided with a range of activities from which they can make their own choice. They also benefit from working alongside older pupils in Year 1. In an art lesson observed, the children were learning the techniques of mixing two colours. Great fun was had as they used their hands to mix the powder paints with water as well as putting two colours of paint on to a paper plate and mixing them to make a new colour. On the evidence of work on display the children are provided with a wide range of art and craft activities and they achieve well. They explore a range of materials, paint pictures and print with different objects. In terms of their creative role-play, the children are provided with many worthwhile opportunities to use their imagination, both indoors and outdoors. Play areas are changed regularly to keep children's interest. Children's learning is enhanced in music making when they have the opportunity to participate in whole class lessons with Year 1 pupils. The good lesson seen helped them to gain in confidence and try out new activities such as tapping out simple repeated rhythms.

## **SUBJECTS IN KEY STAGES 1 and 2**

### **ENGLISH**

Provision in English is **good**.

#### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- Standards in Year 2 are above average in reading but below average in writing.
- The good teaching and learning in Years 3 to 6 enable pupils to achieve well.
- The leadership and management of the subject are good overall.
- The over-use of commercial worksheets limits opportunities for pupils to develop their writing and recording skills.
- Pupils' written work is not consistently well presented.

#### **Commentary**

52. Overall, standards are below average in Year 2 and average in Year 6. This is similar to the judgements made at the last inspection. Standards in the 2003 tests for seven-year-olds were below average in reading and well below average in writing although the preliminary results for 2004 indicate some improvement in reading. Trends in the results of the tests for eleven-year-olds show significant variations between different year groups. Preliminary results for 2004 indicate that standards are broadly average. The current inspection judgements are in line with the school's most recent predictions of the likely results in the 2005 tests.
53. Pupils' overall achievement, which takes account of their capabilities, is satisfactory in Year 2 and good in Year 6. Those with SEN or who are more able, achieve well for their capabilities. The high number of pupils with specific language difficulties achieve well although not necessarily reaching average standards in aspects of the subject. Analysis of the limited amount of pupils' written work in Year 2 indicates that most have, so far, made satisfactory progress. However, there is insufficient expectation that pupils should produce well presented work of good quality. In Year 6, analysis of pupils' written work reveals that they acquire and apply appropriate skills. However, lack of consistency means that their efforts do not always result in sufficiently high standards or quality. There is too much reliance upon commercial worksheets with insufficient emphasis upon extended or personal writing for a range of purposes.
54. Overall, standards in speaking and listening are average across the school. This was also the finding of the last inspection. The majority of pupils in Years 1 and 2 speak audibly, but lack the skills of developing their ideas verbally. Most listen carefully when the topic interests them and show satisfactory understanding. Pupils in Year 6 generally show understanding of the main points in a discussion. They are mostly confident in speaking, but do not always show enthusiasm in developing their ideas through discussion except, for example, when they discussed issues arising from their work on friendship.

55. Standards in reading are above average in Year 2 and average in Year 6. This represents good improvement since the last inspection in Year 2 and standards have been maintained in Year 6. In Year 2, pupils generally read accurately, and have an appropriate range of strategies to tackle unknown words. Some use more advanced skills such as the self-correction of errors by reference to the context. In Year 6, most pupils use a good range of learned skills well. Those spoken to were eager to discuss their reading and quick to respond to questions asked about texts. They have begun to use the more advanced skills of inference and deduction to work out less obvious ideas in a text.
56. Standards in writing are below average in Year 2 and average in Year 6. This was also the judgement of the last inspection. Pupils in Year 2 know that writing conveys meaning and that sentences have a logical word order. However, they do not have a well-developed understanding of the need to shape letters clearly and produce work that is legible and accurate. This hinders their ability to write fluently and intelligibly. Pupils in Year 6 write for a satisfactory range of purposes. The majority use words effectively and write with appropriate understanding of grammatical structure. Ideas are often imaginative and basic punctuation accurate. However, spelling tends to be erratic in accuracy and handwriting is not always sufficiently legible.
57. The quality of teaching and learning is good in Years 3 to 6 and satisfactory in Years 1 and 2. In Years 1 and 2, teachers provide appropriate guidance to pupils with sufficient challenge in the tasks. Shortcomings in otherwise satisfactory lessons are that pupils are not always made sufficiently aware of the teacher's expectations regarding the quality of work required of them. The result is that too many pupils produce work of mediocre value. Also some pupils have limited opportunities to engage in more extended discussion to develop their vocabulary and ideas. In Years 3 to 6, most teachers show good, confident subject knowledge and have high expectations of what pupils should achieve. They use imaginative teaching styles and resources that interest and challenge pupils. For example, one Year 4/5 lesson included group work with a video camera where pupils were filming news reporters. In this lesson, teaching was challenging and expectations were made clear. A particularly good feature was that pupils were frequently challenged to explain the thinking that led to the answers they gave to questions that he posed. Pupils' response in this lesson was good and they achieved well. Where teaching is less challenging, the introduction to lessons is too long and some pupils become restless.
58. The co-ordinator provides a good level of leadership and management. Priorities for the development of the curriculum, for example, Years 1 and 2 writing and the development of teaching and learning styles, have been identified through analysis of test data and observation of teaching. Innovation in both the curriculum and teaching methods is developing well. Since the previous inspection, there have been general improvements in some aspects of reading in Year 3 to 6. Overall, improvement in provision has been satisfactory.

### **Language and literacy across the curriculum**

59. The use of language and literacy across the curriculum is satisfactory, but not well developed with respect to literacy. There is some evidence that the over-use of commercial worksheets prevents the wider application and development of writing in different subjects of the curriculum.

### **MATHEMATICS**

Provision in mathematics is **good**.

#### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- By the time they leave the school, pupils attain above average standards.
- The grouping of pupils by ability in Years 4 to 6 and the procedures introduced to improve pupils' problem solving skills have been successful in raising standards.
- The leadership and management of the subject are good.

- The practical approach to the subject and some teachers' inventive approach enliven the subject and improve pupils' interest and commitment to their work.

## Commentary

60. At the end of Year 6, pupils attain above average standards. This was similar to the findings of the last inspection but represents a significant improvement since the 2004 national tests. This has been achieved because this is a different group of pupils with fewer significant learning difficulties which is a reflection of the priority which has been placed on improving standards in the subject. At the end of Year 2, pupils reach average standards. This judgement is also similar to that of the last inspection and also represents an improvement since the 2004 national tests. Pupils in Year 2 achieve satisfactorily whilst those in Year 6 achieve well. Pupils with SEN make good progress towards their individual learning targets.
61. Pupils' understanding and appreciation of number are developed well by Year 6 and satisfactorily by Year 2. Older pupils confidently add and subtract negative numbers and deal with numbers to two or three decimal places. Younger pupils recognise simple fractions and deal confidently with money values up to five pounds. A strength in pupils' achievement across the school is the way in which they are given good opportunities to use resources and learn through practical work. This approach is emphasised well. During the inspection, some pupils in Year 1 were reinforcing their understanding of numbers up to five as they used large toys in 'Kipper's Toy Box' on the carpet area to note how many were inside or outside the box. Others did the same with smaller models on their own tables and recorded what they found. Year 3/4 pupils who were considering what millilitre measures were like, had very good opportunities to use liquids to discover for themselves what different volumes of water in a range of different containers looked like.
62. A further strength is the opportunities for pupils to use their number skills in problem solving situations. The school has worked hard and well to address this weakness which was identified through the analysis of test data. All classes now have a timetabled time for undertaking different problem solving challenges. This approach is enjoyed by the pupils and is developing their understanding and use of number in a variety of contexts well.
63. The quality of teaching and learning is good in Years 3 to 6 and satisfactory in Years 1 and 2. Across the school, teachers' planning is good. The focus of learning in the lesson is clearly identified, as are activities which are matched to the different levels of pupils' ability in the class. The learning focus is consistently shared with pupils at the beginning of the lesson. Teachers quickly establish effective learning environments in their classes and work hard to get and secure pupils' interest and commitment to their learning. In the lessons where teaching is very effective, teachers successfully enthuse pupils with interesting and imaginative approaches. In a Year 3/4 lesson dealing with volume, the teacher had made a collection of interesting commercial products which contained different volumes of liquid. The pupils were then challenged to explain why the liquids were sold in different volumes and to search at home for other examples. In a Year 4/5 lesson on money, the teacher devised a challenging buying and selling game whereby pupils bought and sold products making a profit where they could but being careful they were not tricked by unscrupulous shop keepers. The result was that all pupils were fully involved and all were very motivated to record their transactions and to count their money accurately.
64. The leadership and management of the subject are good. The co-ordinator is knowledgeable and enthusiastic and has a good view of the working of the subject across the school. Strengths are in the regular monitoring that is undertaken, the annual reports of progress which are written for staff and governors and the useful Action Plan. Data are analysed well and the whole school approach to improving problem solving skills is an example of the effectiveness of data analysis. Data are also used to provide support for underachieving groups and as a basis for forming the ability groups in Years 4 to 6. This initiative has been an important reason why standards have risen significantly in the last year. Pupils take part in a mathematical challenge day at a local college. There is insufficient planned use of ICT in this subject.

## Mathematics across the curriculum

65. The subject is used satisfactorily across other curriculum areas. In PSHCE, pupils in Year 2 draw a block graph to show the four fantasy things that people in the class would like to do. Others, in science, draw graphs to show the favourite ice-cream flavour of people in the class. Pupils in Years 5/6 draw line graphs in science to show the speed at which water cools and how the length of a shadow changes with distance from a light source. Across the school, good use is made of timelines in history.

## SCIENCE

Provision in science is **satisfactory**.

### Main strengths and weaknesses

- In Year 6, pupils attain standards which are below average for their age.
- The relationship between teachers and pupils is very good
- The regular assessments and tracking of pupils' progress are good.
- Too few opportunities are provided for pupils to investigate for themselves.
- The over use of worksheets limits the development of pupils' writing skills in Year 2.
- There is a lack of challenge for the higher attaining pupils.

### Commentary

66. Standards are average in Year 2. This judgement is similar to the findings of the school's last inspection and the assessments made by teachers at the end of Year 2 in 2003. Indications are that it is the same as the provisional assessments for 2004. In Year 6, standards are below average. This is a significant decline in standards since the previous inspection when they were judged to be above average, but higher than the provisional results in the national tests in 2004 when standards were well below average. Differences in attainment are partly due to the fluctuation in the school's intake and the increased number of pupils with SEN entering the school and partly the result of a drop in the standard of teaching in these year groups. For these reasons, improvement since the last inspection is judged to be satisfactory. Additionally, the satisfactory nature of teaching and learning overall is judged to be promoting satisfactory achievement. This includes pupils who have SEN.
67. Across the school, pupils achieve satisfactorily. Pupils in Year 2 know that humans need different types of food and understand that a balanced diet is necessary to stay healthy. They have a satisfactory understanding of electricity and know that pushes and pulls are examples of forces. Pupils are given opportunities to carry out simple experiments but overall, their investigative skills are restricted by the over-use of work sheets, which do not ensure that pupils learn the techniques of recording their experimental work. Pupils in Year 6 know, for example, that moving air provides energy by using toy cars to make land racers and experimenting with sails of different sizes. They are able to explain in scientific terms that air is all around them and has weight. Evidence showed that, although pupils in Year 5/6 can talk about processes such as prediction and fair testing, their ability to plan their own experiments and to draw conclusions from their work are more limited. A shortcoming in pupils' achievement across the school is that there is often a lack of challenge for the higher attaining pupils and, too often, all pupils do the same tasks which restricts opportunities for these pupils to do their best.
68. Teaching and learning across the school are satisfactory. This is similar to the judgment made at the last inspection for pupils in Year 2 but represents a drop in Year 6 where teaching was good. Evidence shows that the pupils are taught all elements of the subject as they move through the school. A significant strength in teaching across the school is the relationships and respect which exist between teachers and pupils. This establishes a good work ethic and, overall, pupils are well behaved and most are eager to do their best. For example, older pupils in the Year R/1 class

thoroughly enjoyed using their sense of smell to identify different objects, such as lavender, tomato sauce and soya sauce in the 'smell pots' provided. They confidently talked about their findings and used language such as 'flowery and vinegary' to describe the different smells. In a very effective lesson to pupils in Years 4/5, the teacher prepared the pupils very well for an investigation into the insulation properties of different materials. The pupils were challenged well to consider the importance of fair testing and were given good opportunities to devise and plan their own work. The lesson enthused the pupils and made them very eager to learn more.

69. The planned curriculum, which is based on a two-year rolling programme of topics, accommodates the mixed-age classes well and ensures that pupils have opportunities to build systematically on their previous learning. The co-ordinator is experienced and knowledgeable and has a clear understanding of the below average standards in Year 6. Monitoring pupils' work, observing teaching and learning and analysing data have been carried out. The analysis of statutory test results has led to identifying weaknesses in pupils' learning. Improving pupils' investigative skills and their ability to draw conclusions have been identified as key areas for development. The tracking of pupils' progress is well established but there is insufficient use of target setting in the subject. To help raise the profile of science in the school, a successful 'Science Week' was organized. Many visitors were invited and the week ended with the Year 6 pupils putting on a 'magic science' show. Apart from individual research work, ICT is insufficiently used.

### INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY (ICT)

70. There was insufficient evidence for an overall judgement to be made about provision or standards in ICT. In the single lesson observed in Year R/1, older pupils who were being taught in a small group in the computer suite made good progress in their learning. Good cross-curricular links were established as pupils were using computers to write labels for the 'smell pots' which they were using in science. Pupils were being well supported by a teaching assistant who developed their mouse and keyboard skills well as they wrote and corrected their work. By the end of the lesson, they were able to print out their work with help and support. There is an appropriate breadth of curricular opportunity for pupils and the school is making sound progress in a drive toward the greater use of ICT in all subjects, although inspectors noted deficiencies in mathematics and science. The quality of leadership and management provides a good basis for its future development. There is too little evidence upon which to base a judgement about improvement since the previous inspection.

### HUMANITIES

71. There was insufficient evidence for overall judgements to be made about standards or provision in religious education or geography.
72. In the single lesson observed in **religious education** in Year 5/6, pupils were exploring what it meant to be a friend particularly in a Sikh tradition. The discussion about the qualities of friendship was managed well by the class teacher and pupils felt confident that their ideas were valued and were keen to share them with others in the class. The curriculum is appropriately based upon the Kent Agreed Syllabus and covers a number of major religions, including Sikhism and Christianity. There are appropriate curricular opportunities for pupils. They have visited the local church and a synagogue to extend their understanding of the significance of places of worship in religious practice. Planning and assessment procedures and leadership and management are good. A scrutiny of pupils' previous work indicates that there is too little extended and personal writing and the overuse of worksheets. There is too little evidence upon which to base a judgement about improvement since the previous inspection.
73. Evidence from the analysis of pupils' work indicates that in **geography** an appropriate range of topics are covered and skills developed. Some younger pupils consider some of the places which Barnaby Bear might have gone on holiday whilst others study where foods from around the world such as oranges, bananas, rice and tea are grown. Older pupils compare the geography of Britain with that in Chembakolli in India and research different types of volcanic eruption. Pupils in Years 3/4 are following on a world map the route that one of their teachers is taking across the world on his touring sabbatical.

## History

Provision in history is **good**.

### Main strengths and weaknesses

- By the time they leave the school, pupils reach standards that are above average for their age.
- Older pupils have a good understanding of the historical periods they are studying.
- Teachers interest and enthuse pupils by a variety of approaches which successfully bring the subject to life. As a result, pupils' attitudes to the subject are very good.
- Homework supports the subject well and develops pupils' own research skills.
- Interesting work is done on the history of the local area.

### Commentary

74. By the end of Year 6, pupils reach above average standards. Standards in Year 2 are average. At the last inspection, standards were average in Year 2 but there was insufficient evidence for a judgement to be made in Year 6. Since the last inspection, work in the subject, particularly in Year 6, has been a much higher priority. Pupils in Years 3 to 6 achieve well and those in Years 1 and 2 achieve satisfactorily.
75. Evidence from the work of both the present and the previous Year 6 group shows that they have a good understanding, and appreciation of, the topics they have studied. Pupils know in their study of the Second World War, for example, details about rationing, evacuation, men's and ladies fashion and the events of D-Day. Completed work on the Victorians was also done in good detail and to a good depth. Pupils' work on the local area indicated that they had a good understanding of the importance of local features such as the parish church, the windmill and the village Gateway. Evident strengths were the way in which a range of evidence was used which included historical maps and photographs, the Internet and eye-witness accounts of events. Pupils are encouraged to think beyond the first impressions of events. Questions such as, 'Why did the black market flourish?' and 'Why did Germany invade Poland?' open up different avenues of research. Evidence from completed projects shows that a variety of recording and presentational features such as clip-art, word processing, maps and diagrams were being used effectively. Pupils in Year 2 have a sound understanding of changes as they look at members of their own families and consider differences in schooling and nursing between the past and the present.
76. The quality of teaching and learning is good in Years 3 to 6 and satisfactory in Years 1 and 2. At the last inspection, teaching was good in Years 1 and 2 and there was insufficient evidence for a judgement in Years 3 to 6. Strengths in teaching across the school are where teachers successfully bring the subject to life through their own enthusiasm and by the use of interesting and innovative approaches. Good use is made of role-play. In an effective lesson in Year 1/2, the class were exploring why some historical figures were famous and were looking at the life and impact of Neil Armstrong. They devised some interesting questions that they might ask him and one pupil took the role of Neil Armstrong very confidently to answer his classmates' questions. In a Year 4/5 lesson on the Tudors, role-play was used very effectively to encourage pupils to appreciate the life and times of a selection of people who may have been in a Tudor street scene. This encourages pupils and they have very good attitudes to the subject.
77. The co-ordinator was away from the school on maternity leave during the time of the inspection so there was insufficient evidence to make a judgement on the quality of leadership. However, the co-ordinator's file was comprehensive and well presented, with examples of pupils' previous work matched to National Curriculum criteria. Useful offsite visits are made and visiting theatre companies have brought productions featuring work on Ancient Egypt and the life of Henry VIII. Homework is used well in the subject. Good opportunities are provided for older pupils to develop their independent research skills.



## CREATIVE, AESTHETIC, PRACTICAL AND PHYSICAL SUBJECTS

78. There was insufficient evidence for overall judgements to be made of overall provision or standards achieved in **art and design, music or design and technology**.
79. Interest in **art and design** is promoted well through the use of colourful photographs of pupils' work and attractive displays throughout the school. This imaginative approach was clearly evident in the work produced by pupils in the Year 3/4 class. This incorporated some striking mixed media work entitled 'Dreamscapes'. Very good attention to the development of pupils' design skills was evident in the work based on their own environment. This culminated in pupils using clay to make small three-dimensional models in abstract form, which are to be used as the basis for larger scale sculptures in the school's grounds. Pupils are also starting to use ICT very well to support their work, for example, by taking pictures that are later used in the classrooms as starting points, following a visit or by manipulating images digitally. Pupils in Year 5 / 6 were clearly influenced by the work of Picasso when they created very good paintings in his style. They have also used different techniques to produce effective mixed-media landscape pictures. Pupils use sketchbooks appropriately to try out their ideas and practise different techniques. Although the co-ordinator is very recently appointed, he is knowledgeable and has already introduced many innovative ideas into the art and design curriculum. His good leadership in the subject ensures that art enjoys a high profile in the school. Overall, art makes a good contribution to the pupils' personal development.
80. To help teachers implement the **music** curriculum, a scheme of work has been purchased, which builds systematically on pupils' learning as they move through the school. In the single lesson observed, teaching and learning were both good. The lesson was lively and imaginative and involved pupils in deciding on action words to go with a range of footwear. After listening to a 'footwear' track on CD and the sounds produced by a variety of instruments, individual pupils put on the shoes and moved around in time to the beat of the instruments, while others in the class clapped at the same speed. The pupils concentrated well, participated whole-heartedly and achieved a good balance between performing and composing skills. Evidence from a whole school assembly indicated that pupils obviously enjoy singing and, in general, sing tunefully, although at times there is a tendency to shout. Although there are no extracurricular activities for music provided by the school, additional tuition by outside musicians is provided, for a fee, for a variety of instruments, such as the trumpet, clarinet, flute and piano. School productions also contribute to pupils' overall musical experience. The co-ordinator is a part-time teacher and has worked hard to put new strategies in place to ensure that all teachers are well supported.

### Physical education

Provision in physical education is **satisfactory**.

### Strengths and weaknesses

- Teaching and learning are satisfactory overall but where they are very good, teachers manage pupils very well and challenge them to do their best.
- The subject co-ordinator has a clear view of what needs to be improved.
- Storage in the hall inhibits physical activities.
- Pupils are not consistently encouraged to evaluate their own and others' performance.

### Commentary

81. Overall pupils in Years 2 and 6 reach average standards in gymnastics and games. This is similar to the judgement made at the last inspection. All pupils, including those with SEN, achieve satisfactorily.
82. In the gymnastics lesson seen in Year 6, pupils selected a range of movements and built them into sequences with appropriate levels of control and precision. However, they had insufficient opportunities to improve their performance through self-evaluation or by observation and comment

on the work of their peers. In Year 2, pupils explore and develop their ball skills and co-ordination to a satisfactory level. Standards are broadly comparable to those found nationally. However, opportunities to evaluate and comment on their performance, or that of others, were too limited.

83. The overall quality of teaching and learning is satisfactory. However, a very good games lesson was seen in the mixed Year 3/4 class. It was characterised by very detailed planning, very good class management, good pace, and close support for those who had underdeveloped co-ordination. Pupils' response was one of enjoyment, sustained interest and above average attainment. In other lessons seen, the most effective teaching had a good level of challenge for pupils to learn and apply skills, very clear explanations of what was expected of them and good lesson organisation. Shortcomings included too long a gap between 'warming up' and taking part in an activity in some lessons and lack of opportunities for pupils to evaluate and comment upon their performance or that of their peers.
84. The curriculum is sufficiently broad and leadership and management are satisfactory. The subject manager has identified what needs improvement. Currently, the available space in the hall is limited by the storage of equipment. There are plans to improve the accommodation so that more space is available in the hall and to deal with the problems that prevent the school field being well used. The school provides a range of extracurricular activities that make a satisfactory contribution to pupils' development. They learn to swim and can attend clubs for activities such as football and cricket. There has recently been tennis coaching and pupils also take part in competitive sports against other schools. There has been a Sports Week. Pupils in Years 5 and 6 take part in an annual residential visit where they engage in outdoor and adventurous activities. Overall, improvement since the previous inspection is satisfactory.

#### **PERSONAL, SOCIAL AND HEALTH EDUCATION AND CITIZENSHIP (PHSCE)**

85. There was insufficient evidence for an overall judgement to be made of provision in PSHCE. The school follows an agreed syllabus for this subject area and there is planned overlap with other subjects such as RE and science. This includes appropriate reference to sex and drugs education. All adults in the school work consistently to develop pupils' personal and social development. This helps the development of the impressive sense of community within the school. All classes give pupils the opportunity to discuss sensitive issues in an ordered and controlled way as they sit in a circle and listen to each other.

## PART D: SUMMARY OF THE MAIN INSPECTION JUDGEMENTS

<i>Inspection judgement</i>	<i>Grade</i>
<b>The overall effectiveness of the school</b>	<b>3</b>
How inclusive the school is	3
How the school's effectiveness has changed since its last inspection	3
Value for money provided by the school	3
<b>Overall standards achieved</b>	<b>3</b>
Pupils' achievement	3
<b>Pupils' attitudes, values and other personal qualities (ethos)</b>	<b>2</b>
Attendance	4
Attitudes	2
Behaviour, including the extent of exclusions	3
Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	3
<b>The quality of education provided by the school</b>	<b>3</b>
The quality of teaching	3
How well pupils learn	3
The quality of assessment	3
How well the curriculum meets pupils needs	3
Enrichment of the curriculum, including out-of-school activities	3
Accommodation and resources	4
Pupils' care, welfare, health and safety	2
Support, advice and guidance for pupils	3
How well the school seeks and acts on pupils' views	3
The effectiveness of the school's links with parents	3
The quality of the school's links with the community	3
The school's links with other schools and colleges	3
<b>The leadership and management of the school</b>	<b>3</b>
The governance of the school	4
The leadership of the headteacher	3
The leadership of other key staff	3
The effectiveness of management	3

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