

INSPECTION REPORT

SNODLAND C OF E PRIMARY SCHOOL

Snodland

Kent

LEA area: Kent

Unique reference number: 118846

Headteacher: Mrs Pauline Davis

Lead inspector: Mr Paul Evans

Dates of inspection: 28th February – 3rd March 2005

Inspection number: 267681

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

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INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Type of school: Primary
School category: Voluntary aided
Age range of pupils: 4-11
Gender of pupils: Mixed
Number on roll: 382

School address: Roberts Road
Snodland
Kent
Postcode: ME6 5HL

Telephone number: 01634 241251
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Appropriate authority: The governing body
Name of chair of Mr Reg Aslett
governors:

Date of previous February 1999
inspection:

CHARACTERISTICS OF THE SCHOOL

Snodland C of E Primary School is a large primary school providing education for 382 children, 187 girls and 195 boys, aged 4 to eleven. The majority of pupils live in Snodland, although some children do come from surrounding villages. Children's attainment when they join the school is well below the levels expected for their age. The number of pupils known to be eligible for free school meals is broadly in line with the national average. There are a small number of pupils for whom English is an additional language. They receive good support which is well matched to their needs. The percentage of pupils on the school's special educational needs register is broadly in line with the national average although the number of pupils with a Statement of Special Educational Need is above the national average. However, the proportion of pupils with special educational needs is high in some classes. More than 70 per cent of the teaching staff, including the headteacher and the deputy-headteacher, has changed during the past two and a half years. Some classes are affected by the high level movement of pupils. These factors have presented barriers to learning but the staff is now settled and good improvement is now taking place.

INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Members of the inspection team			Subject responsibilities
20737	Paul Evans	Lead inspector	Educational Inclusion English as an additional language Science Information and communication technology Physical education Personal, social and health education and citizenship
9614	Carolyn Webb	Lay inspector	
26945	Sylvia Gatehouse	Team inspector	Special educational needs Modern Foreign Language Mathematics Music
22254	Hazel Callaghan	Team inspector	Foundation Stage curriculum History Geography
21534	Kate Rawson	Team inspector	English Art and design Design and technology

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PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

OVERALL EVALUATION

Snodland Church of England Primary School is an improving school which provides a **satisfactory** education for its pupils. The leadership and management of the headteacher, together with the new deputy-headteacher, are good. The quality of teaching and learning is satisfactory. The school provides satisfactory value for money.

The school's main strengths and weaknesses are:

- The very good educational vision of the headteacher and her skills in teambuilding are central to the improvement being made in the school.
- There is strong teamwork between all school staff.
- Standards in English, mathematics, science and information and communication technology (ICT) are not high enough.
- Provision for pupils with special educational needs, and for those who have English as an additional language, is very good.
- Pupils' attitudes and behaviour are good throughout the school.
- A small amount of teaching and learning are not good enough.
- There are inconsistencies in marking.

Since the last inspection, the school has made good improvement. Almost all areas of concern raised in the last inspection report have been tackled well, although little headway has been made in raising standards. The remaining issues are being vigorously dealt with by the new management team. Almost three-quarters of the teaching staff, including the headteacher and the deputy-headteacher, have changed in the past two and a half years, slowing progress, but the present team of teachers shows many strengths. The movement of teachers, the lack of systems for assessing and tracking pupils' progress and inconsistencies in marking have presented barriers to pupils' learning. There has been very good improvement in the quality of the curriculum. The re-organisation of the daily timetable has resulted in better time provision for all subject areas. Provision for ICT has shown good improvement and there has been good improvement in provision for pupils with special educational needs.

STANDARDS ACHIEVED

Year 6 results

Results in National Curriculum tests at the end of Year 6, compared with:	All schools			Similar schools
	2002	2003	2004	2004
English	D	E	C	B
Mathematics	C	E	E	E
Science	D	E	E	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.

Pupils' achievement, overall, is **satisfactory**. Achievement is satisfactory in the Foundation Stage. Children join the reception class with skills that are well below expectations for their age. They are now making good progress in many lessons and achieving satisfactorily in all areas of learning, but standards are still well below those expected nationally by the time the children enter Year 1. Pupils' achievement is improving and is now satisfactory in Years 1 and 2 and it is good in Years 3 to 6. The school's results in national tests at the end of Year 2 and Year 6 in 2004 were lower than in most schools and lower than in schools whose pupils attained similar standards in the Year 2 tests in 2000, except in English in Year 6 where standards were average. In the work seen during the inspection, standards in Year 6 were in line with expectations in English, maths and science. Standards at the end of Year 2 are below expectations, but there are signs of improvement, both in the content and the quality of presentation of the pupils' work. Pupils' skills in using information and communication technology are below expectations throughout the school.

Provision for pupils' personal development is good. Pupils' attitudes and behaviour are good throughout the school and their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is also **good**. Levels of attendance are above the national average.

QUALITY OF EDUCATION

The quality of education provided by the school is **satisfactory**. The quality of teaching is **satisfactory** overall throughout the school. There are excellent relationships between pupils and staff and good relationships between pupils. The care offered to pupils is very good and the promotion of equality of opportunity is also very good. The school has very good links with parents. The quality of the curriculum offered to pupils is good with a very good range of extra-curricular activities.

LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

Leadership and management are **good** overall. The leadership of the headteacher is good and she has a very good, clear educational vision for the school. The effectiveness of management is good. Financial management is good and the governors have a satisfactory and improving understanding of the strengths and weaknesses of the school. They have a good working partnership with the headteacher and with all staff in the school. There have been several changes to the governing body and training is still taking place. The governing body fulfils all its statutory duties. Governance is satisfactory overall.

PARENTS' AND PUPILS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

Parents are satisfied with the school. In questionnaires, at their meeting with the lead inspector and when spoken to during the inspection, parents were generally complimentary about the school. Pupils are pleased with their school. They have great confidence in all adults working in the school.

IMPROVEMENTS NEEDED

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

- Improve the achievement of pupils and the standards that they reach, in English, mathematics, science and information and communication technology, throughout the school.
- Raise the quality of all teaching to the highest levels seen within the school.
- Complete, implement and rigorously monitor whole school systems for assessing pupils' progress in all subjects in order to raise achievement and standards.

PART B: COMMENTARY ON THE INSPECTION FINDINGS

STANDARDS ACHIEVED BY PUPILS

Standards achieved in areas of learning, subjects and courses

Standards are **in line with expectations** at the end of Year 6. Achievement is **satisfactory** overall and is good in Years 3 to 6.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Achievement is rising throughout the school.
- Standards in English and literacy and in science are below expectations at the end of Year 2. Standards in information and communication technology are below expectations throughout the school.
- Pupils with special educational needs and those with English as an additional language achieve well.
- Changes in teachers are beginning to have an impact on standards and achievement.

Commentary

1. Pupils' achievement is satisfactory overall. In Years 1 and 2, pupils' achievement is also satisfactory, but showing improvement. Whilst in both these key stages, achievement is now improving, it has been too low for a long period prior to the new team of teachers and managers joining the school and settling in. There is clear improvement and in many lessons achievement is good. However, this improvement needs time to raise standards to the levels that pupils are capable of. Pupils' achievement is now good overall in Years 3 to 6. This is mainly due to good teaching, although there are still some inconsistencies in the quality of teaching and consequently in pupils learning and achievement, between classes.
2. In the 2004 national tests for Year 6 pupils, standards were average in English and well below average in mathematics and science, compared to all schools nationally. Compared to schools whose pupils had similar scores in their tests at the end of Year 2, in 2000, standards were above average in English and well below average in mathematics and science. The trend of results, at the end of Year 6, taking the past five years together, is below the national trend in all three subjects. Looking at the school's scores between 2000 and 2004, standards in English have remained steady and in mathematics and science standards have fallen.
3. In the 2004 national assessment trial for Year 2 pupils, standards were below average in reading and well below average in writing and mathematics, when compared to all schools nationally. Teacher assessment in science showed that standards were well below average. When compared to the results of similar schools, these results were below average in reading, well below average in writing and in the lowest five per cent nationally in mathematics. The trend of

results, taking the past five years together, is below the national trend in all three subjects. Looking at the school's scores in 2000 and 2004 standards in reading have remained steady and in writing and mathematics standards have fallen.

4. The school's results in 2004 were disappointing. The school has thoroughly analysed the reasons for this and the analysis indicates that there was a high proportion of pupils who joined the school after Year 2 who had special educational needs and this depressed results. Following this analysis the school has introduced several strategies such as teaching pupils in ability groups and the use of booster classes. These are beginning to raise standards.
5. Inspection evidence shows that standards in English, mathematics and science are in line with expectations at the end of Year 6. At the end of Year 2 standards are below expectations in English and science but in line with expectations in mathematics. Standards in ICT are below expectations throughout the school. The school is not yet doing as well as it should. However, the school is aware of this, improvement has begun and targets for further, rapid improvement are aimed at raising pupils' achievement and the standards that they reach,
6. Children in the Foundation Stage achieve satisfactorily from a low level of attainment on entry. Because of these low levels when they join the school they attain levels which are below the expectations of the early learning goals by the time that they join Year 1. This is below that found at the previous inspection due to the much higher proportion of children with special educational needs in each year group. Standards in creative and physical development, however, have risen due to the improved curriculum and teaching.
7. Pupils with special educational needs reach good standards in their work because they have very good support from their class teachers and teaching assistants, and because the targets in their individual education plans are tightly focused, achievable, and regularly reviewed. Pupils with English as an additional language are also well supported and make good progress in learning English. Their overall achievement is good.

Key Stage 1

Standards in national tests at the end of Year 2 – average point scores in 2004

Standards in:	School results	National results
Reading	15.5 (15.0)	15.8 (15.7)
Writing	13.0 (13.9)	14.6 (14.6)
Mathematics	13.9 (15.2)	16.2 (16.3)

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

Key Stage 2

Standards in national tests at the end of Year 6 – average point scores in 2004

Standards in:	School results	National results
English	27.4 (25.3)	26.9 (26.8)
Mathematics	25.3 (25.4)	27.0 (26.8)
Science	27.2 (26.5)	28.6 (28.6)

There were 58 pupils in the year group. Figures in brackets are for the previous year

Pupils' attitudes, values and other personal qualities

Pupils' attitudes to learning and their behaviour are **good**. Their attendance is **good**, as is their overall spiritual, moral, social and cultural development.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Pupils are very enthusiastic about school and very keen to learn
- Staff use the very good behaviour management strategies consistently
- The school is a very inclusive society.
- Procedures to promote and monitor attendance are good

Commentary

8. Staff have very high expectations of pupils' behaviour and are rarely disappointed. The school is a harmonious society, in which all whatever their particular difficulty or need, are well integrated with and supported by their peers, although the behaviour of a small number is still a concern to their peers and parents. The school has very good policies and practice in ensuring that all pupils have equal access to everything that is provided by the school.
9. All pupils are proud to celebrate their rewards in assemblies, and they value their Golden Time. This is special time at the end of the week which is earned by pupils' who have worked, achieved or behaved particularly well. Pupils' can choose what they do during 'Golden time' and it contributes strongly to the rewards for good performance. They regard the sanctions, such as 'naming' on the class whiteboard, as fair, although few wish to suffer these. There have been no exclusions during the past twelve months.
10. Children quickly learn what they should or should not do from the moment they arrive in the welcoming atmosphere of the Reception classes. Pupils' moral and social development is good. Pupils are aware of those less fortunate than themselves and want to help. Problems are discussed and resolved during Circle Time and personal, social and health education sessions. Assemblies give 'food for thought', and reflection during these and through aspects of some lessons results in pupils' satisfactory spiritual development.
11. Pupils are interested in their lessons and in some, for instance, science and geography, older pupils are involved in the planning and evaluation of their work. This promotes their understanding of their own learning well and in turn raises their self-esteem and self-confidence which impacts well on their learning. They like learning about different faiths and cultures and the good

provision for them to do so is enhanced through the visits they make and the many visitors to the school. They like hearing music and seeing art from their own and other cultures and their cultural development is good. Currently the school does not formally plan for or monitor pupils' spiritual, moral, social or cultural development

12. Staff know pupils and their capabilities well, and give them many opportunities to take responsibility, which they exercise well. Pupils' personal development is good. Office monitors are conscientious, and pupils in Years 5 and 6 organise the assembly music and arrange the chairs with care. House captains, all in Year 6, are proud to collect the cup after house points are counted on Sports day. School councillors, elected by democratic vote, are proud that, representing the views of their classes, they have an important role to play in the life of the school. Relationships between pupils are good throughout the school.
13. Pupils with special educational needs have very good attitudes and behave very well in lessons. This is especially the case when they are well supported by well-briefed and well-trained teaching assistants who consistently and persistently operate the school's behaviour management strategies. Pupils with English as an additional language demonstrate good attitudes to their learning and good behaviour. They are well supported by all staff and by their peers.

Attendance

14. Pupils' attendance is good. Pupils like school and the majority arrive on or before time in the mornings. There are good procedures for promoting attendance such as calling parents on the first day of absence if no reason is given, and presenting certificates as class and individual rewards for good attendance.

Attendance in the latest complete reporting year (%)

Authorised absence		Unauthorised absence	
School data:	4.7	School data:	0.1
National data:	5.1	National data:	0.4

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

QUALITY OF EDUCATION PROVIDED BY THE SCHOOL

The quality of education provided by the school is **satisfactory**. The quality of teaching and learning is **satisfactory**. The quality of the curriculum is **good**. The school offers **very good** care, guidance and support to all its pupils. The school's partnership with parents is **very good**, and links with the local community and with other schools are **good**.

Teaching and learning

Teaching and learning are **satisfactory**. Assessment is **satisfactory** overall.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Teachers' planning is thorough.
- Teachers and teaching assistants work together very well to meet the needs of pupils.
- Teachers have high expectations for pupils' behaviour.
- Teachers do not always interact sufficiently with children in the Foundation Stage.
- The quality of teaching is inconsistent between classes in some year groups.
- Most teachers effectively evaluate pupils' learning in lessons to plan the next stages of learning.
- Assessment strategies have improved but they are used inconsistently.

Commentary

Summary of teaching observed during the inspection in 39 lessons

Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
0	7 (18%)	17 (44%)	14 (36%)	1 (3%)	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. Teaching and learning are satisfactory throughout the school and are improving. A good proportion of good and very good lessons were observed but the quality of past work shows considerable fluctuations in the quality and quantity of work. There are also inconsistencies in teachers' expectations across the curriculum and from class to class. While much marking is of high quality, praising pupils' efforts and guiding them towards further improvement, some marking is not of this quality and does not help pupils to understand either how well they have done or how to improve. In a small number of lessons, teachers do not have high enough expectations for pupils' progress and achievement and in these lessons pupils' do not learn well enough. These inconsistencies cause pupils' learning to be slowed. The school is aware of this and has clear plans to raise the quality of all teaching and learning to the highest quality seen within the school.
16. Teaching and learning in the Foundation Stage are satisfactory overall. When there is direct interaction between adults and children, teaching and learning are good but this does not happen sufficiently frequently to ensure good learning consistently takes place. The teaching assistants are well trained, fully involved in lesson planning and the assessment of children's learning. They work with the teacher as a strong team that responds well to children's individual needs.
17. A strength in the teaching evident in most classes is the thorough planning and good knowledge of the subjects being taught. However, there are

inconsistencies in teachers' knowledge and understanding of guided reading and the teaching of letter sounds, particularly in Years 1 and 2. Teaching in mathematics has significantly improved due to the school's successful analysis of weaknesses in pupils' learning. Most of the very good lessons observed were in mathematics. They were very effective in promoting pupils' learning because activities were well matched to pupils' knowledge and ability.

18. A strong aspect of teaching in most lessons is the very good relationships apparent between pupils and adults, so that pupils are keen to do well. Teachers' management strategies are good and they have high expectations for pupils' good behaviour and attention, to which pupils respond well. In the one unsatisfactory lesson observed the teachers' confidence in the aspect being taught was not sufficiently strong. This resulted in the pace of the lesson being slow and pupils were kept waiting as the teacher dealt with other pupils' difficulties. This restricted pupils' progress in learning.
19. Teachers and teaching assistants work together very well to meet the needs of pupils of all abilities. The teaching of pupils with special educational needs is very good overall. Teachers plan very well for pupils with special educational needs. Pupils who have individual education plans are very well provided for by teachers and their assistants because they take particular note of pupils' needs and thoroughly plan their lessons and activities accordingly. Pupils' targets are regularly reviewed and adjusted to meet their on-going needs. The quality of individual education plans is very good because the co-ordinator, class teachers and support staff plan pupils' targets together in small steps so that targets are achievable and pupils see the purpose of them and try their hardest. Assessment of the progress of pupils with special educational needs is good. Teachers regularly monitor pupils' performance, plot their attainment, and forecast their future achievement.
20. Assessment strategies have been improved since the last inspection. However, there is inconsistency in the quality of assessment of pupils' work and teachers' marking. In the best practice, teachers carefully monitor pupils' work and use the information to set relevant activities in the next lesson. In some classes, pupils' work is insufficiently monitored and pupils are not given feedback on how well they are working or what they need to do in order to improve. Marking in English is inconsistent between classes and this slows pupils' progress and learning. Assessment of pupils' reading skills and progress is very inconsistent both in quality and regularity.
21. The assessment of pupils' progress is unsatisfactory overall. Regular assessments in English, mathematics and science are used satisfactorily to monitor pupils' progress through the school. As data is collected the senior management team are beginning to use the information to track pupils' progress and to identify underachievement, but this is still in an early stage of development. Information about the standards achieved is used satisfactorily to set targets for pupils' future learning. These targets are not always sufficiently monitored, however, so that they keep pace with pupils' progress. This is usually because targets are set for groups of pupils rather than responding to individual pupils' progress. Some pupils feel frustrated when their successes

are not recognised and new targets set. There are no whole school procedures for assessing pupils' standards in subjects other than English, mathematics and science. Pupils' knowledge and skills are monitored but there is insufficient rigour in the monitoring of skills development from one year to the next to ensure that pupils achieve well.

The curriculum

The quality of the curriculum is **good**. There are **very good** opportunities to broaden pupils' experiences through extra-curricular activities. The school's **good** staffing, accommodation and resources support pupils' learning well.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- There has been very good improvement in the curriculum since the time of the last inspection.
- The very good curriculum for pupils with special or additional educational needs contributes very well to their achievement.
- An extensive range of visits, visitors and clubs expands pupils' enjoyment and interest in their learning.
- The school has not yet established an effective bridge between the curriculum for the Foundation Stage and the early stages of the National Curriculum.
- The curriculum is organised very effectively.
- The accommodation provides good learning areas but the playground areas require further development to enhance pupils' learning outdoors.

Commentary

22. The school has worked extremely hard to bring about very good improvement in the quality of the curriculum in the last two years. There is now a good curriculum that securely meets all statutory requirements. The school has fully addressed the issue of time allocation for each subject identified at the time of the last inspection, and has improved the quality of the curriculum for the Foundation Stage very well, with a good focus on developing children's confidence and enthusiasm for learning.
23. The re-organisation of the daily timetable has resulted in better provision for all subject areas. Teachers successfully make good links between subjects so that pupils' learning is enriched and much more meaningful. The school is successfully introducing French conversation lessons, theme days, and Academic Review Days, which are days when parents and pupils meet teachers and support staff, to review and discuss individual targets for future learning, especially in English, mathematics and personal development. These innovations constitute considerable and effective improvements since the head teacher took up her post two years ago.
24. The curriculum for pupils with special educational needs is very well enriched by a wide range of very good activities, events and festivals. These activities represent good improvements since the last inspection when provision for pupils with special educational needs was judged to be satisfactory. Pupils with

special educational needs are fully included in all areas of the curriculum including out-of-school activities and events. This is entirely in line with the school's very strong stance on educational inclusion.

25. The school has also identified pupils who have particular gifts or talents and good ways are being developed to increase the challenge for these pupils, for example in teaching pupils in groups of similar abilities in mathematics and in clubs such as information and communication technology.
26. The school enriches the curriculum very well through a wide range of visits that bring classroom work to life. In addition, visitors to school enliven the curriculum making a very good contribution to pupils' knowledge and understanding in subjects such as history, music and religious education. A very good range of clubs in lunchtimes and after school are well attended, making a very good contribution to pupils' personal and social development.
27. Innovative improvements in the curriculum between the Foundation Stage and infant classes have a positive effect on the development of pupils' independence, self-confidence and sense of responsibility for their own learning. These weekly sessions enable pupils to discuss and plan their chosen tasks, to organise their own resources and time, and to complete the activity with an evaluation of how well their project has gone. Teachers value these occasions because they have time to talk to pupils as they pursue a favourite pastime, such as using the internet to find out about toys of long ago. However, the school has not yet fully established the extension of Foundation Stage practice into Years 1 and 2, which presents a lack of smooth flow in pupils' learning between these key stages, especially in English and mathematics.
28. The quality of staffing, accommodation and resources has all been significantly improved since the last inspection when all were judged to be satisfactory. In the last two years, the quality of staffing has considerably improved and there are more support staff. For instance, the new co-ordinator for special educational needs works closely with a skilled special needs assistant as well as all other staff, and makes a major contribution to the achievement of pupils requiring extra support and guidance. The accommodation has been subjected to considerable improvements. The building is now well maintained and decorated and the outdoor areas provide good spaces for physical education, although there are only limited areas for relaxation and socialising. The very good ICT suite is very new so has yet to have an impact on standards, although newly installed interactive whiteboards are having a strong impact on pupils' learning and enjoyment in lessons. An attractive library has been established and is being computerised by parents, and a *Rainbow Room* has been set up for small group work and special needs support. Resources have improved for all subject areas, these are now good and used well to enhance the school's curriculum.

Care, guidance and support

Provision for pupils' care, health and safety is **very good**. Support for all pupils is **good**. The school has **effective** systems for seeking pupils' views.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Relationships between pupils and adults are excellent.
- Pastoral care is very good.
- The support given by the Family Liaison Officer is very good.

Commentary

29. Health, safety and welfare are high priorities for the school and provision in these areas is very good. Risk assessments and security reviews are carried out regularly, and personnel trained in first aid are always on site. Child protection procedures are very good and the school, now aware of the requirements of recently enacted legislation, is taking steps to comply.
30. Pupils know that all staff listen to them and that their views matter and they have no fears about expressing these. They are consulted informally and through the school council, and councillors are particularly proud of the new compost bins installed as a result of their deliberations. Pupils' pastoral care is very good. As a result of the mutual trust and respect evidenced in the excellent relationships throughout the school all have an adult to whom they can speak, confident that any concern will be taken seriously and dealt with swiftly. The family liaison officer is a friend and counsellor to all who need her and valued as a confidante by many. She makes a very positive contribution to the very good provision pupils with special education and other needs receive. The very few pupils who speak English as an additional language are well supported by staff and their peers.
31. Pupils now know their targets having discussed these with teachers prior to attending with their parents the recent, very successful academic review day. However, as yet these targets are set for groups of pupils and are not specific to individuals. Whilst pupils find teaching staff's comments on their work during lessons very useful they regret that their written work is not always marked, or sometimes when it is that marking does not always include notes on how and whether they could improve their work.
32. The school provides very good pastoral care for all its pupils, especially those in the Foundation Stage. It also provides good support for children with special needs and guidance from outside agencies is quickly obtained if specific support is required. Pupils with special educational needs are very well cared for, guided and supported by all staff at the school, and through the special help provided by external agencies such as educational psychologists, physiotherapists, tutors and family liaison officers, when required.

Partnership with parents, other schools and the community

Links with parents are **very good**, and those with the community and other schools and colleges are **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Communication with parents is very good.
- Parents receive very good information.
- The school receives particularly effective support from the secondary school.

Commentary

33. The school has established very good links with parents, who in their turn are very appreciative of all the school does for their children. The Friends of Snodland organise successful fund-raising events, where stalls are staffed by parents and teachers, which relatives and the community enjoy.
34. Parents' attendance at meetings and in particular at the recent academic review day is excellent. The latter was voted a great success and one the school hopes to repeat every term, although prior to this meeting a significant number of parents were concerned about the information they received about their children's progress. Some parents help regularly in class, and the new Open Hour once a term enables them to see exactly what their children have been doing and learning. The weekly newsletter, with school and headteacher's news on one side of the sheet, and class/curriculum news on the other is particularly effective. Links with parents in the Foundation Stage are good.
35. The school's partnership with parents of pupils with special educational needs is very good. Parents are regularly involved in constructing pupils' individual education plans including manageable targets. Parents of pupils who speak English as an additional language and other parents are readily assisted by friendly office staff.
36. Links with the local church are long-standing and enrich pupils' education –. The curate is amongst many regular visitors to school. Good links with the local community include residents talking to children about their war experiences, and Year 4 pupils, dressed as evacuees, sing 1940's songs to elderly people at a special needs residential home. There are good links with local businesses which have resulted in financial support for the school in projects such as the new perimeter fencing.
37. Links with other schools are rapidly improving and those with the secondary school, with technology status, are particularly good. Regular meetings and joint training are now arranged, and Snodland's policy on assessment is being developed with the help of secondary school staff. Snodland's school council was set up with the help of the secondary school's head boy and girl and is now overseen by senior students. Preparation for pupils' transfer is good. Year 6 pupils enjoy their science and physical education days, and transfer arrangements also include summer schools and very good special needs liaison.

LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

The leadership and management of the school are **good** overall. The leadership of the headteacher is **good**. The leadership of other key staff is **good**. Management is **good**. Governance is **satisfactory**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The headteacher has a very good vision and sense of purpose.
- The school shows a very good commitment to inclusion.
- There is very good work amongst the leadership team in creating and supporting good teamwork and commitment to improvement among staff.
- The use of data to carefully monitor pupils' progress is in the early stages of development.
- There are too many priorities in the development plan.
- Monitoring of teaching and learning is not rigorous enough.

Commentary

38. The headteacher has a very clear vision. She is passionate about the curriculum. Since her appointment she has focussed on developing the staff team and improving the teaching and learning through the school. Despite a high changeover of staff, the head and deputy have established a collegiate approach and the staff and governors are united in their view of what they want to achieve. In the past year the school has been involved in several initiatives within the county including the development of the curriculum in response to 'Excellence and enjoyment', the development of a transition curriculum from Foundation Stage to Year 1, and involvement in a digital excellence project. There is very good commitment to the principle of creating a fully inclusive school. The result is very good leadership of, and very good provision for pupils with special educational needs whose needs are identified accurately and supported very effectively. Those identified as Gifted and Talented receive good provision and work is often planned separately for them.
39. The leadership and management of special educational needs are very good. The new special educational needs co-ordinator has established a very good relationship with the special educational needs support staff and together they make a strong team. Improvement in the provision for pupils with special educational needs is very good since the last inspection. The new Code of Practice is very securely established. Staff knowledge and understanding of special educational needs have been enhanced through in-service training opportunities.
40. Leadership and management of the Foundation Stage are good. The Foundation Stage leader has developed a strong team that works very well together to provide a stimulating learning environment.
41. Management is good overall. The school has made good use of the primary leadership project to help them identify and address weaknesses. Budget decisions support the development priorities, for example, allowing non-contact time. New staff and newly qualified teachers are supported well and objectives for performance management are linked well to school priorities. The school

has provided training for monitoring and devised an annual timetable for each subject, which is good. The school is committed to self-evaluation and issues are shared positively with the whole team.

42. Currently there are too many priorities on the school development plan, which presents the danger that key priorities are not sufficiently monitored and supported. After moving forward on many fronts, the leadership team now recognises the need to prioritise on fewer objectives and focus upon improving the pupils' achievement and raise standards. A main objective is to ensure that agreed strategies for improving teaching and learning and raising standards are fully understood and carried out systematically through the whole school, for example, in teachers' marking.
43. Subject leaders are clear about their roles and responsibilities. The effect of the very good subject leadership in mathematics has been a whole-school approach to the raising of standards this past year – an initiative which is proving very successful and has already had a positive impact on standards and pupils' achievement. However, at present, some leaders are new to the role and not all are fully proactive and confident in identifying issues and taking action. They have drawn up action plans and are responsible for ensuring objectives are achieved but this is not yet consistent.
44. The school has begun to use data from assessing and testing pupils to help track their progress and to set targets. These are evident throughout the school. In every class targets for English, science and mathematics are displayed. In some classes teachers have already begun to ensure that marking links back to these targets. The pupils and their parents are aware of their targets, which is good. As yet, there is no whole-school overview of the tracking, and no tracking in reading, which is a weakness, but one the school has identified.
45. All statutory duties are fully met. Governors demonstrate a good commitment to the school and have a satisfactory understanding of its strengths and weaknesses. Most have been involved in monitoring a subject of the curriculum and there are good systems in place to support this – including a written report to the governing body. As yet no governor has been allocated to monitor special educational needs provision, although the governing body is kept aware of provision and developments in the teaching of pupils with special educational needs. The school takes satisfactory note of best value principles. Spending decisions are based on the benefits to pupils and the school has some understanding of the comparative spending of other schools. However, there is no consistent practice of setting a date in the School Development Planning for the evaluation of the outcomes of spending decisions, and the consequent impact on pupils' learning. Given its circumstances and context, the school provides satisfactory value for money.

Financial information for the year April 2003 to March 2004

Income and expenditure (£)		Balances (£)	
Total income	1 074 257	Balance from previous year	36 316

Total expenditure	983 180	Balance carried forward	127 393
Expenditure per pupil	2 547		

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

AREAS OF LEARNING IN THE FOUNDATION STAGE

46. The provision for children in the Foundation Stage is satisfactory overall but has many good features. Children achieve satisfactorily overall but in their personal, social and emotional development achievement is good.
47. Children are all admitted into school in the September of the year in which they are five. Attainment on entry to the school is well below that found nationally due to the high proportion of children with special educational needs. There is a broad spread of attainment each year but many children have significant weaknesses in their personal, social and emotional development and in their speaking and listening skills. The quality of teaching and learning in the Foundation Stage is satisfactory overall. When there is direct interaction between adults and children, teaching and learning are good but this does not happen sufficiently frequently to ensure good learning consistently takes place. The teaching assistants are well trained, fully involved in lesson planning and the assessment of children's learning. They work with the teacher as a strong team that responds well to children's individual needs. The curriculum for children in the Foundation Stage is good and provides a stimulating environment for learning. It follows the recommended six areas of learning and has a good focus on developing children's confidence and enthusiasm for learning. Opportunities for children to initiate and plan their own activities promote their effective organisational skills independence and co-operative skills. This is particularly important for the many children who enter school with well below average personal and social skills as it raises their self-esteem and enjoyment of learning.
48. The very good pastoral care given to all pupils is evident in the Foundation Stage. The teacher lays the foundations of good communication with parents before children start school. Effective communication with the play groups ensures that the school is aware of any issues that might affect how children settle in school and their learning. Good support is provided for children with special needs and guidance from outside agencies is quickly obtained if specific support is required.
49. Links with parents in the Foundation Stage are good. Opportunities are made for parents and staff to share information and concerns, ensuring good levels of communication and support. The newly introduced Academic Review Day provides good quality time for teachers to share information with parents about their child's learning and to set targets for future learning. The leadership and management of the Foundation Stage are good. The Foundation Stage leader has developed a strong team that work very well together to provide a stimulating learning environment. The provision for children in the reception year has significantly improved since the previous inspection.

Personal, social and emotional development

Provision in personal, social and emotional development is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Children develop well in a sensitive and supportive environment.
- Opportunities for children to plan, organise and evaluate their own activities are good.
- Very good relationships between children and adults create an atmosphere of effective learning.

Commentary

50. The school pays particular attention to this area of learning when children start in school and the children achieve well particularly in developing their self-confidence and independence. Many children start school with well below average personal, social and emotional skills but the opportunities for developing these aspects are good and consequently they achieve well. Despite this good achievement many children do not attain the standards expected by the time they transfer to Year 1. The 'Plan, Do and Review' sessions provide good opportunities for children to follow their own interests, to plan what they are to do and with whom. This results in children's good levels of concentration and perseverance. Many aspects of learning are tackled so children are well prepared for the more formal activities provided as part of the teacher directed tasks. During periods when children make decisions about what activity they will undertake, they organise themselves effectively, select their own resources and co-operate with each other sensibly. Children develop good levels of independence due to the well planned and ordered environment. Adults in both classes have very good relationships with children which promotes children's self-esteem and self-confidence well. The quality of teaching is good and consequently, children's learning is good, particularly when teachers and assistants ask questions that further develop the child's thinking and extends their ideas. The very good relationships evident in the reception unit ensure that children try new activities confidently and settle to their tasks in a secure environment. Behaviour is usually good and children work and play alongside each other amicably. Children with special educational needs are given individual attention so that their identified needs are well met.

Communication, language and literacy

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

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Children's speaking and listening skills are well promoted so children achieve well in these aspects.
- There are too few chances for children to read or write in small groups with adults.
- Children have regular opportunities to write as part of their play and this builds their self-confidence.

Commentary

51. When children start in reception standards overall are well below average. Children achieve satisfactorily but the majority do not attain the expected standard by the time the children start in Year 1. Teaching is satisfactory overall. When teachers' direct children's learning teaching is usually good and children learn well, but this does not happen often enough. All children make good progress in their speaking and listening skills. They learn to talk about what they are going to do and to explain what they have done. Children are beginning to ask sensible questions of each other about their work so building confidence and the ability to express their ideas. Children often get chances to enjoy books and to write as part of their play and this develops their confidence to write so that in more formal sessions they are ready to have a go at writing with adult support. The classroom has a great deal of language on display and this helps children to understand the written word. Teachers and teaching assistants are skilled at using effective questions that promote children's vocabulary and understanding. Insufficient time is given for children to read and write either individually or in small groups. However, more frequent opportunities are planned for the summer term. The higher attaining children are supported and challenged so they do attain the expected standards. Children with special educational needs are given individual attention so that their identified needs are well met.

Mathematical development

Provision in mathematical development is **satisfactory**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Teacher-led activities promote children's learning well, but there are insufficient teacher-led activities to ensure that standards rise.

Commentary

52. When children start in reception standards are well below average. Children achieve satisfactorily, but by the time that they start in Year 1 many children have not attained the standards expected. When lessons are led directly by the teacher, teaching is usually good and children learn well, but these sessions are still a small proportion of each week. When tasks are directed by adults, children's learning in mathematical development is good but there are too few planned and regular chances for adults to work with individual children or groups to ensure that good achievement takes place and standards rise. Teaching and learning are satisfactory overall. Good questioning helps children develop an interest and understand numbers and shapes. Tasks set for children are well matched to their age and experiences. Games and songs are used well to promote children's knowledge and skills. Mathematical questions are a natural extension of all children's activities when they are at play but this does not happen often enough.

Knowledge and understanding of the world

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

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Children's curiosity and interest are well stimulated.
- The curriculum is well-planned.

Commentary

53. When most children start in reception standards are well below average. They achieve satisfactorily overall but many do not attain the expected standard by the time they start in Year 1. The curriculum for children in the Foundation Stage is well planned so that all the aspects of children's learning are meaningfully linked and interwoven. These natural connections build effectively on what children already know and further stimulate their interest and curiosity about the world around them. Teaching and learning are satisfactory. Children are effectively introduced to aspects of learning such as science, history and geography through their own experiences and first hand knowledge. Regular use of construction kits successfully develops children's early understanding of how pieces fit together, when their buildings are stable and what causes them to fall down. Their learning is most effective when these activities are led by an adult whose good questions help children explore their ideas and solutions so consolidating knowledge and skills. As part of the class religious education lessons children learn satisfactorily about the festivals and beliefs of other people.

Physical development

Provision for children's physical development is **satisfactory**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Effective planning and regular physical exercise promote children's physical skills well.
- There is not enough large-scale climbing equipment available outside to promote children's learning.

Commentary

54. When most children start in reception standards are broadly average. They achieve satisfactorily overall and most attain the expected standard by the start in Year 1. Teaching and learning are satisfactory and effective planning ensures that children's skills are regularly practised and developed. Their manipulative skills using simple tools and writing implements are similar to those found nationally. A good range of opportunities are provided for the children to further develop these skills so their letter formation is developing well with the more capable children writing recognisable letters that are fairly even in size. Children's pictures show growing control, and children in the Foundation Stage use a range of equipment effectively in their artwork such as

making observational drawings using paint and chalk. Children have regular chances to participate in physical education lessons in the hall. The range of playground apparatus is not extensive, but what is available in the hall and outside gives satisfactory chances for children to climb in safety. They are developing satisfactory balance, mobility and control in their movements.

Creative development

Provision for children's creative development is **satisfactory**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Children's learning is promoted well through art and design.
- The children are very interested and concentrate well in creative activities.
- On occasion, adults do not effectively extend children's learning.

Commentary

55. When most children start in reception standards are broadly average although many children lack confidence in their own abilities. Good progress is made in developing their self-esteem and confidence. They achieve satisfactorily in developing their creative skills and many attain the expected standard by the time the children start in Year 1. Children's creative development is promoted in both formal teaching sessions and through self-chosen play activities. Teaching is satisfactory overall and children's learning progresses satisfactorily. Children's creative response to stories is well promoted when teachers read to them. The role-play area, which during the inspection was a garden centre and florists shop, stimulates children's imagination and language. When supported by an adult their ideas were further developed and a wider vocabulary was promoted. Weekly music lessons promote children's enjoyment of singing and an awareness of pitch and rhythms. Children's creative development is well promoted through art and design. Activities are often linked to other areas of learning and enable children to explore different materials and media to create their own patterns and pictures. Bright and colourful self-portraits show that children are introduced to the use of secondary shades and tones of colour. When children plan their own activities, especially in the role-play area and in the making area, it stimulates their creative thinking. They respond well to their different activities showing interest and concentration

SUBJECTS IN KEY STAGES 1 AND 2

ENGLISH AND MODERN FOREIGN LANGUAGE

Provision in English is **satisfactory**.

Main strength and weaknesses

- Pupils' achievement is good in Year 4 and Year 6.

- Pupils' speaking and listening skills are well promoted, but strategies to develop reading skills are not consistent.
- Teaching assistants are very knowledgeable and provide good support in lessons.
- Lack of rigour in monitoring means that inconsistencies in approaches between teachers are not quickly identified and tackled.
- Not all teachers ensure that marking is kept up to date and that it helps pupils improve.
- Very good resources for teaching, including the interactive whiteboards, are used well to motivate and engage pupils in their learning.
- The school has made a good start in developing literacy links with other subjects.
- Too little use is made of information and communication technology to support pupils' learning in English.

Commentary

56. Standards in the 2004 national tests at the end of Year 2 were below average in reading and well below average in writing compared with all schools nationally and with similar schools. Inspection evidence and teacher assessment indicate that standards are improving but remain below average in reading and writing by the end of Year 2. Standards in the 2004 national tests at the end of Year 6 were average, which was a great improvement on results in the previous year. Inspection evidence indicates that standards are average at the end of Year 6. Although improvement since the last inspection is satisfactory overall, there has not been enough improvement in standards in handwriting and spelling which were identified as issues at the last inspection.
57. Pupils' achievement is satisfactory overall. Overall, pupils' achievement is good in Years 3 to 6 but there are inconsistencies between year groups and the quality of learning in Years 4 and 6 is better than in other years. Pupils with special educational needs and those for whom English is an additional language are well provided for and the school ensures that it takes account of the differing needs of boys and girls.
58. The quality of teaching and learning is satisfactory. There is very good teamwork between teachers and teaching assistants. The latter are very well deployed, well briefed, knowledgeable about the pupils they work with and they make a significant contribution to lessons. The strategy of using paired talking for pupils to rehearse ideas is a good feature in almost all classes and it makes a significant contribution to pupils' motivation, self esteem and confidence, as well as contributing to the development of their speaking and listening skills. Teachers continuously use technical language that is appropriate to the subject and in the best lessons this is written down and constantly referred back to.
59. Less effective lessons, though satisfactory, do not allow the pupils enough time to work at their own tasks. Teachers do too much talking leaving insufficient time for the group work session. Although teachers do identify key vocabulary in lessons and all classrooms have good displays extending pupils vocabulary, for example, through offering alternative adjectives, they do not always ensure

that they give pupils the clear expectation that these key words should be spelt correctly in their own written work. Pupils' knowledge and understanding of punctuation are developing well through the school and many pupils are aware of these areas as their targets for improvement.

60. Monitoring of lessons and pupils' work has not been sufficiently rigorous to identify inconsistencies in provision between classes and key weaknesses in some teachers' subject knowledge. In Year 1 pupils are taught phonics but some teachers are not secure in their own understanding. The school has allocated extra time for guided reading outside of the daily literacy hour, but not all teachers share a common understanding, of the principles of guided reading, and it is not implemented effectively in all classes.
61. In Years 4 and 6 particularly, pupils achieve well and make good progress. In these classes teaching is very focussed and built upon the knowledge these teachers gain from regular marking and assessment of pupils' work. The teachers have high expectations and very good subject knowledge and present the pupils with challenging targets and challenging work to match. In other classes, there is not always a similar insistence on good presentation and in particular, there is a great disparity in marking. The best examples tell pupils what they have done well and give them guidance on how to improve their work, but in some classes work is not marked and pupils feel that putting effort into their work is pointless and do not try to improve what they are doing. In some classes, especially in Year 1, there is too little work recorded in pupils' books because much of the work is done on whiteboards and then rubbed off. This makes it difficult for pupils and teachers to see what individuals have achieved.
62. The leadership and management of English are unsatisfactory. The school has identified the development of literacy co-ordination as a key priority. Due to staff changes, subject leaders have only been in post since September and have not developed fully their monitoring role. The key stage 1 subject leader, who is new to the school, has carried out work scrutiny, identified issues for the school to address, and has shared these with the leadership team, which is good and shows that there is the capacity to improve.
63. Resources are very good. The school has invested heavily in developing its book resources. Teachers make very good use of interactive whiteboards in their teaching. The materials are well prepared and pupils are very keen to demonstrate their understanding by coming out to the front of the class to use them. There were some good examples of pupils using information and communication technology to support their learning in English, but overall, insufficient use is made of information and communication technology to support pupils' learning in literacy.

Language and literacy across the curriculum

64. Language and literacy are used well across the curriculum and this is an area that the school is developing further. The school has made good efforts to identify and exploit any chances to incorporate their use in other subjects such as history, geography and science. Teachers ensure that pupils are quite clear that the features of a particular text type are the focus for their writing, as well as the subject content, which is good. The one weakness is in the expectations and support for spelling and handwriting.

Modern foreign language (French)

65. The school has a programme for teaching pupils in Years 3 to 6 oral French, for a short time each week. Only part of one lesson in French was observed during the inspection. Pupils enjoyed playing a game in which they repeated numbers 1 to 10 in French, and began to develop the language to ask each other how old they are. In some classes pupils were heard answering the register in French. This is a good development.

MATHEMATICS

Provision in mathematics is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The school is successfully implementing an effective array of measures to raise standards.
- The subject leader has very good subject knowledge and puts it to good use.
- The organisation of pupils into groups of the same ability in Years 3 to 6 promotes good achievement.
- Pupils enjoy their lessons and the majority are eager to learn.
- The presentation of pupils' work and teachers' marking is too variable.
- Pupils have a good number of chances to apply their mathematical knowledge and understanding in practical real-life situations.

Commentary

66. Standards in the 2004 national tests were well below average in Year 2 and Year 6 in comparison with all schools nationally. Compared with similar schools, standards reached by pupils in Year 6 were below average, while standards reached by pupils in Year 2 were in the lowest five per cent nationally. The proportions of pupils reaching the higher Level 3 in Year 2, and Level 5 in Year 6, were below the national average. The response to this situation was immediate action that is already having a beneficial effect on standards throughout the school. Pupils' progress over time is steadily improving and their overall achievement is good. In both Year 2 and Year 6, the majority of pupils are currently on track to reach the expected levels by the end of the year.

67. In lessons, pupils make good or very good progress and achieve well or very well due to the quality of teaching. This good improvement is because of the wide range of good strategies that the school has put into place. There have been good improvements in staffing, accommodation and resources. Pupils in Years 3 to 6 are taught in groups of similar ability for daily lessons, and the school has established a good system for the assessment of pupils' progress in lessons and as they move through the school. The monitoring of the subject leader, especially in Years 3 to 6, has a positive effect on the quality of teaching and learning.
68. Pupils with special educational needs make good progress and achieve well because of very good support by teachers and support staff in lessons, or in small groups withdrawn to adjacent areas. Pupils with English as an additional language are well supported and make good progress towards understanding specific mathematical language. Their achievement is in line with their peers.
69. The quality of teaching and learning is good overall. It is consistently very good in the sets in Years 5 and 6 and is a significant factor in enabling pupils to achieve very well in these year groups. Teachers plan their lessons with meticulous precision, use a good range of challenging tasks that demand pupils' best efforts, and employ questioning to make pupils think hard. There is very good teamwork between teachers and support staff to ensure that all pupils are fully included in accordance with the school's strong stance on educational inclusion. Pupils respond enthusiastically to meet their teachers' challenges. They behave well and they have very positive attitudes towards mathematics.
70. Occasionally, teachers do not make best use of time and pace especially in their introductions so pupils have limited time to record their work, and do not get enough done. Mental starters are sometimes not quick-fire enough, and when pupils are not all involved in calculating answers the attention of a few begins to wander and their concentration wobbles.
71. The presentation of pupils' work is too variable between classes. The best work is well organised, with clearly formed figures, careful use of paper and good use of rulers. Some work, however, is rushed and careless, with pages left half used. Teachers' marking does not always tell pupils what steps to take to improve their work. However, pupils have a good number of opportunities to apply their knowledge and understanding of number in practical ways when solving problems. For example, Year 1 pupils enjoy using coins in their bakery shop and Year 2 pupils are eager to share real sweets equally in calculating division problems.
72. The subject leadership and management are both very good. The subject leader energetically leads the whole school's work towards improvement. A clear action plan maps out what needs to be done to raise standards. A presentation to governors keeps them informed and they are involved in monitoring the subject through visits to school. The subject leader puts her own expertise to very good use and has rigorously monitored the quality of planning and teaching in order to provide support to her colleagues and support staff, especially in Years 3 to 6. All teachers have spreadsheets that track pupils'

progress and plot future attainment. Pupils' performance is recorded and their likely attainment is forecast with frequent assessments carried out in between. This is a new and useful system with a few teething problems that the subject leader intends to address. There has been good improvement since the last inspection.

Mathematics across the curriculum

73. Pupils make satisfactory use of their mathematical skills in other subjects. For example, younger pupils sort materials into sets when investigating the properties of materials in science, and use a range of shapes such as squares and triangles when constructing hand puppets and bags in design and technology. Year 2 pupils deploy their knowledge and understanding of number when reading temperatures on thermometers, and older pupils demonstrate their understanding of time using analogue and digital clocks when choosing which television programmes to record, and in what order. The school has good strategies for promoting the use of pupils' mathematical skills in other subjects and most teachers plan to include mathematics in pupils' learning in other lessons. This is one of the areas that the school has used as a part of changes to the curriculum and this is beginning to raise standards.

SCIENCE

Provision for science is **satisfactory**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Standards are below expectations at the end of Year 2.
- Good leadership and management are helping to raise standards.

Commentary

74. In the 2004 national tests in science, at the end of Year 6, the school's results were well below the average for all schools nationally and compared with schools whose pupils scored similarly in their end of Year 2 assessments.
75. In the 2004 assessment of pupils at the end of Year 2, the school's results were well below average when compared to all schools nationally and in the lowest five per cent when compared to the results of similar schools. In the last inspection report standards were judged to be average at the end of Years 2 and 6. However, good improvement is judged to have taken place because the focus in the school is to improve pupils' skills in investigative science. This has had more impact in Years 3 to 6 than in earlier years partly because the effects of inconsistent teaching are more obvious in Years 1 and 2 than in the four years later where standards are raised through consistently good teaching in Years 4 and 6.
76. Inspection evidence shows that pupils are on track to reach standards which are below average at the end of Year 2 and in line with expectations at the end

of Year 6. The school's assessment records show that pupils have low level abilities in science when they join Year 1 and in Years 1 and 2 most achieve well to reach the standards that they do. Pupils in Years 3 to 6 make good progress and are achieving well to reach standards which are in line with expectations by the end of year 6. Standards in science, having been too low for a long time, are improving but the school recognises that these standards are not high enough and is focusing on raising them further.

77. The school has very good strategies to ensure that all pupils have equality of access to its provision in science. Pupils with special educational needs, those for whom English is an additional language and girls and boys are all fully included in all lessons.
78. The overall quality of teaching and learning is satisfactory. The required curriculum is taught throughout the school and pupils are beginning to benefit from the focus on investigation in science and because teachers planning is to include science together with other subjects. When teaching is at its best pupils learn well because subjects are combined together well. For example, in a Year 4 lesson, mathematics and English skills are used well to discover if weight affects the distance that a vehicle will travel. This was also well linked to a major construction site close to the school and pupils' learning and achievement in forces were very good. Not all teaching is as good as this. Most teachers use interactive whiteboards well in the teaching of science, particularly in the introductions to lessons. They have good strategies for managing pupils' behaviour and these generally result in pupils having good attitudes to their learning and behaving well.
79. The leadership and management of science are good. The relatively new co-ordinator has monitored the balance of the curriculum and is promoting the integration of other subjects into science lessons and leading the development of investigative skills. Good support is given to other teachers. Resources for teaching and learning are good and mostly well used.

INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY

Provision for information and communication technology (ICT) is **satisfactory**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Teachers use the interactive whiteboards well in most lessons.
- There is a new, very good ICT suite which is beginning to have the effect of raising standards.
- Standards are too low throughout the school.

Commentary

80. Standards in ICT are below expectations throughout the school. ICT is not yet used broadly to promote pupils' learning in a wide range of subjects. This is because the school is part way through the implementation of its new ICT suite

and its plans to raise the provision for ICT throughout the school. There have been too few computers in the past and this has been a considerable barrier to pupils' progress and achievement. However, three weeks before the inspection, the school opened its new, very good ICT suite. This has sixteen stations, is linked to the internet and the room is equipped with an inter-active whiteboard and a projector. The aim of this is to raise the standard of provision throughout the school.

81. Provision for ICT has been improved since the last inspection and while it is still early days, some good teaching and learning was observed in lessons in which pupils achieved well. Overall the quality of teaching and learning is satisfactory. There is inconsistency in the quality of teaching as a few teachers do not yet have sufficient confidence in their use of the new equipment, and one unsatisfactory was seen because of this. However, inspection evidence shows clearly that overall the quality of teaching and learning is satisfactory, that pupils are using the new suite regularly and that teachers plan to teach some other subjects through the use of ICT. Again this is in the early stages of development and there is still some way to go.
82. Pupils in Year 2 followed their teacher's instructions and searched the internet for 'Toys and games from the past', promoting good learning in their history topic and their computer skills. Other lessons of this quality were seen with older pupils when their development of computer skills was linked to learning in literacy. However, in one lesson seen, the teachers' confidence in the use of the new equipment was unsure, the expectations for pupils' learning was low and pupils' achievement was unsatisfactory. The school is aware of this inconsistency and is planning to provide in house training to overcome the problem and raise standards.
83. The subject co-ordinator was absent for part of the inspection, but the subject is satisfactorily led and managed. Resources have been improved well and the expertise of staff is being developed so that the use of the whiteboard in every classroom becomes a useful aid to teaching. There are plans for the co-ordinator to monitor the quality of teaching and learning in lessons, although at this early stage this has not happened yet. The school has entered a good agreement for the sharing of an ICT technician who was busy throughout the inspection loading and monitoring the early operation of the new system.

Information and communication technology across the curriculum

84. There is a growing use of ICT across the curriculum and at present this is satisfactory. Pupils use computers to word-process some of their poems and other written work. The computers are used satisfactorily as tools for research in history, geography and in the development of literacy skills. Planning shows, that all the required curriculum in ICT will be covered with all pupils. However, while the school is only part way through implementing its plan to improve provision in ICT, the range of subjects in which ICT is used to promote pupils learning is still relatively narrow.

HUMANITIES

85. Religious education was inspected by an inspector appointed by the diocese. **History and geography** are both taught regularly, but it was only possible to observe one lesson in geography and a history lesson in which pupils were finding information on toys through time using the Internet. Both subjects were sampled and no judgement can be made on standards, teaching and provision. Teachers' planning and samples of work in both history and geography were studied and are evidence of a satisfactory curriculum for both subjects. The curriculum in history and geography is enhanced by a good range of additional activities, visitors to school and visits that effectively extend pupils' learning. ICT is used satisfactorily to support pupils' learning in history and in geography. Pupils' writing skills, however, are inconsistently used and further developed in history and geography. In some classes the range, quality and quantity of recording are limited. There are no whole school procedures for assessing pupils' standards in history and geography but pupils' knowledge and skills are monitored and appropriately reported to parents each year. Leadership and management of history and geography are satisfactory overall. Subject leaders have clear roles and responsibilities and are given time to monitor teachers' planning, samples of work and to observe teaching. This is beginning to provide subject leaders with an overview of their subjects but there is insufficient rigour in the monitoring of skills development from one year to the next to ensure pupils make good achievement.

CREATIVE, AESTHETIC, PRACTICAL AND PHYSICAL SUBJECTS

86. Because of other priorities for the inspection physical education, music, art and design and design and technology were sampled. Consequently no judgements are made on the standards that pupils reach, provision for the subjects or the quality of teaching.
87. During the inspection no **music** lessons were observed. The school provides extra-curricular activities to enrich pupils' learning for example, recorder tuition and choir, but neither of these clubs was observed. All pupils have access to these in accordance with the school's strong stance on educational inclusion. The juniors' take great pleasure in their singing in assembly, which is accompanied by a compact disc recording. Links between art and literacy are evident in displays. Visitors enhance pupils' knowledge and understanding of musical instruments. For instance, peripatetic teachers from Kent County Music Service visit school to play in string, brass and woodwind ensembles.
88. **Art and design:** The work from a selection of pupils from each class produced with a visiting artist as part of a recent mosaic project makes an attractive welcome display in the school entrance. Pupils in Year 6 have produced collages linked to their geography work, a good example of the cross-curricular links now being developed. Pupils' other work on display and in their sketch books indicates that their drawing skills are not consistently developed. There are some examples of good observational drawing work but on the whole, their drawings show that their understanding of tone, shape and form is below that

normally seen in primary schools. Sketch books are used to record pupils' initial ideas but not frequently enough or with a sufficient focus on the development of artistic skills to ensure consistent progress through the school.

89. In **design and technology**, only two lessons were observed and pupils' work from other classes shows that design and technology has a secure place in the curriculum. Subject leadership is good and there is a clear view of how the subject needs to be developed. The co-ordinator has been proactive in encouraging staff to identify links with other subjects without losing the focus on developing pupils' skills and understanding consistently through the school. For example, a lesson in Year 4 linked work in history, art, literacy and ICT with the design technology task of pupils evaluating the mummies they had made to decide what could be improved. In Year 6 a session spent kite flying was the stimulating start to evaluating how kites work. Both lessons demonstrated very good planning resulting in activities which motivated and excited the pupils. From work in other classes it is evident that pupils are encouraged to evaluate products and to plan their activity using annotated diagrams before they start work and then to review their product when the project is completed. This represents good improvement since the last inspection.
90. **Physical education** was not seen being taught but planning shows that all aspects of the curriculum, including swimming are taught. A number of clubs were in evidence during the inspection and the list of sports clubs is greater than is seen in many schools.

PERSONAL, SOCIAL AND HEALTH EDUCATION AND CITIZENSHIP

91. There were no lessons seen in these subjects. However, the school has satisfactory procedures for developing pupils' awareness of healthy living, including sex education and the awareness of the misuse of drugs and alcohol. It works closely with the local community by supporting a parish initiative so that pupils have an input into the development of their village. The school council provides a good way for the pupils to begin to learn about living in a community and the responsibilities they have. From looking at school planning it is clear that all aspects of the required curriculum are taught to all pupils.

PART D: SUMMARY OF THE MAIN INSPECTION JUDGEMENTS

Inspection judgement	Grade
The overall effectiveness of the school	4
How inclusive the school is	2
How the school's effectiveness has changed since its last inspection	3
Value for money provided by the school	4
Overall standards achieved	4
Pupils' achievement	4
Pupils' attitudes, values and other personal qualities	3
Attendance	3
Attitudes	3
Behaviour, including the extent of exclusions	3
Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	3
The quality of education provided by the school	4
The quality of teaching	4
How well pupils learn	4
The quality of assessment	4
How well the curriculum meets pupils needs	3
Enrichment of the curriculum, including out-of-school activities	2
Accommodation and resources	3
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	2
The quality of the school's links with the community	3
The school's links with other schools and colleges	3
The leadership and management of the school	3
The governance of the school	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).

