

# INSPECTION REPORT

## **PRIORY FIELDS PRIMARY SCHOOL**

Dover

LEA area: Kent

Unique reference number: 118391

Headteacher: Mrs A Siggins

Lead inspector: Mr J Sorsby

Dates of inspection: 23<sup>rd</sup> – 25<sup>th</sup> May 2005

Inspection number: 269532

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

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## INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Type of school:	Primary
School category:	Community
Age range of pupils:	4 to 11
Gender of pupils:	Mixed
Number on roll:	359
School address:	Astor Avenue Dover Kent
Postcode:	CT17 0FS
Telephone number:	01304 211543
Fax number:	01304 211545
Appropriate authority:	The Governing Body
Name of chair of governors:	Mr B R Cope
Date of previous inspection:	13 <sup>th</sup> – 17 <sup>th</sup> March 2000

## CHARACTERISTICS OF THE SCHOOL

Priory Fields Primary School is a larger than average size primary school with 359 pupils from reception to Year 6. Approximately 31 per cent of pupils have special educational needs, which is above average. Most of these pupils have moderate learning, social, emotional or behavioural or communications difficulties. 0.9 per cent of pupils have a statement of special educational needs; this is below average. Thirty-five pupils are of a background other than white British or mixed British, the largest groups being Slovakian, Czech and Bangladeshi. Six per cent of pupils speak English as an additional language, most being at an early stage of learning English and many having joined the school during the past year having had no formal prior education. Pupils come from a range of economic backgrounds; overall their socio-economic status is well below the national average. Seventeen per cent of pupils joined or left the school at times other than normal in the last year, this being very high. The proportion of pupils eligible for free school meals, 26.6 per cent, is well above average. Pupils' attainment on joining the school is well below average overall, and very poor in communications, language and literacy and in social development. The current head teacher is the third since the last inspection, having become the acting head teacher in September 2004 and the substantive head teacher less than two months before the inspection.

## INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Members of the inspection team			Subject responsibilities
14042	J Sorsby	Lead inspector	
9736	J Brasier	Lay inspector	
32747	K Faulkner	Team inspector	Areas of learning for children in the Foundation Stage Science Design and technology History Music Personal, social and health education
21171	S Handford	Team inspector	English Art and design Geography Modern foreign languages Religious education Provision for pupils with English as an additional language
22778	A Shannon	Team inspector	Mathematics Information and communication technology Physical education Provision for pupils with special educational needs

The inspection contractor was:

Penta International  
Upperton House  
The Avenue  
Eastbourne  
BN21 3YB  
BS8 2BN

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# PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

## OVERALL EVALUATION

Following a period of decline after the last inspection this has become a **good school** that provides **satisfactory value for money**. Pupils achieve well and their standards rise from being well below average when they join the school to being around nationally expected levels by the end of Year 6. The school owes its success to good teaching, very good leadership and management and a strong desire by all to succeed.

The school's main strengths and weaknesses are:

- Because of the overall good quality of teaching and learning and despite some inconsistencies in quality in Years 3 and 4, pupils achieve well.
- The new head teacher leads and manages the school very well; there is a strong and effective governing body.
- Teachers assess what pupils know, understand and can do well and make good use of this information to plan lessons that accurately meet individual pupils' needs.
- Pupils who join the school knowing very little or no English are provided for well.
- Good provision is made for pupils who have special educational needs.
- Despite rapid improvement, standards in mathematics and English are too low.
- Despite recent improvement, the attendance rate is too low.

The school was last inspected in March 2000. Following a period of significant decline and falling standards, good improvement has taken place, particularly in the past year. Provision has improved significantly in reception. Standards have improved in reading and writing, information and communications technology (ICT) and art and design in Year 2 and in ICT and art and design in Year 6. Overall, pupils are making better progress in English, mathematics, science and ICT. The quality of teaching and learning has improved, as has pupils' behaviour. Assessment and the use of assessment data has improved, as has the curriculum, relationships with parents, other schools and the community and the leadership and management of the school. All key issues have been successfully or partially dealt with, largely in the past year.

## STANDARDS ACHIEVED

Results in National Curriculum tests at the end of Year 6, compared with:	all schools			similar schools
	2002	2003	2004	2004
English	E	C	E	D
mathematics	E	E	E	C
science	E	E	E	D

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

**Overall, pupils achieve well.** Children join reception with standards that are well below those expected for their age in their mathematical, physical and creative development and in their knowledge and understanding of the world. Their standards in communication, language and literacy and in their social development are poor. They achieve well and by the end of reception their standards are below expectations in all their areas of learning.

Pupils continue to achieve well and by the end of Year 2 standards are as expected for their age in all subjects. Because of earlier weaknesses in the school that have now been overcome, pupils now in Year 6 joined Year 3 with standards that were well below average in English and mathematics and below average in other subjects. They have achieved well and have reached expected standards in English, science, ICT, religious education, physical education and art and design. Their standards in mathematics have also improved and are below rather than well below expectations. Improved standards in Years 2 and 6 are particularly welcome given the high proportion of pupils who join and leave the school at times other than normal and therefore have limited time to benefit from all the school offers, and given the high proportion who have special educational needs and the high proportion who speak English as an additional language. More able pupils are now achieving appropriately and in line with all other pupils.

In the national tests for pupils in Year 6 in 2004, in comparison with all school nationally standards were well below average in English, mathematics and science. In comparison with similar schools they were average in mathematics and below average in English and science. Current standards in Year 6 indicate a significant improvement in standards in the past year although standards in English and mathematics remain too low. In the national tests for pupils in Year 2 in 2004, in comparison with all schools nationally and similar schools standards were well below average in reading and writing. In comparison with all schools, standards in mathematics were well below average and in comparison with similar schools they were in the bottom five per cent nationally. Current standards in Year 2 also indicate a significant improvement in standards in the past year. **Pupils' personal qualities, including their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development, are good.** Pupils behave well. Attendance rates are unsatisfactory but improving. Pupils have very good attitudes to school and to learning.

## **QUALITY OF EDUCATION**

**The school provides a good quality education; the quality of teaching and learning are also good.** Assessment data is used well to ensure that lessons accurately meet the needs of all pupils including those with special educational needs and those who speak English as an additional language. The support and guidance of pupils is very good, with all pupils being very aware of their personal targets. Teachers skilfully motivate pupils and make lessons fun. In response, pupils behave well and are keen to learn. Teaching for some pupils in Years 3 and 4 is less effective than for pupils in other year groups. The well designed curriculum ensures pupils' interest in lessons and meets their personal and academic needs well. It is well enhanced by very good links with other schools, by the school's close working relationship with parents, and by the good quality of care provided to pupils. Learning resources and the school's accommodation are good.

## **LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT**

**The leadership and management of the school by the new head teacher are very good.** She is very well supported by the very effective deputy headteacher. Her clarity of vision, sense of purpose and high aspirations are well complemented by the good governance of the school and the good leadership and management provided by other staff with management responsibilities. The senior management team has been very quickly moulded into an effective working group. Governors see to it that the school complies with its statutory requirements. All necessary systems, such as monitoring and evaluation are fully in place and working well.

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

Parents and pupils are very pleased with the school, and pupils enjoy all it offers them.

### **IMPROVEMENTS NEEDED**

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

- Further improve standards in English and mathematics by following the school's action plan.
- Improve the quality of teaching in Years 3 and 4 to raise it to the quality seen elsewhere in the school and hence, further raise standards.
- Continue to try to improve the rate of attendance.



# PART B: COMMENTARY ON THE INSPECTION FINDINGS

## STANDARDS ACHIEVED BY PUPILS

### STANDARDS ACHIEVED IN AREAS OF LEARNING, SUBJECTS AND COURSES

All pupils, including those with special educational needs, higher attaining pupils, pupils for whom English is an additional language and pupils who join the school later than normal achieve well. Overall, standards rise from being well below average at the start of reception to being average by the end of Year 6.

#### Main strengths and weaknesses

- Children achieve well in reception.
- Overall, pupils achieve well in Years 1 to 6.
- Pupils achieve very well in science and ICT in Years 3 to 6.
- Pupils with special educational needs achieve well
- The achievement of pupils for whom English is an additional language is good.
- Despite rising standards, those in mathematics remain too low in Year 6.

#### Commentary

1. Children join reception with standards that are well below average in their mathematical, physical and creative development and their knowledge and understanding of the world and poor in their communications, language and literacy skills and their social development. Because teaching is good and the curriculum is well structured to their needs, children achieve very well in their communications, language and literacy skills and in their social development. In all other areas of learning they achieve well and by the end of reception their standards are below those expected for their age in all areas.

2. The following table demonstrates that pupils in Year 2 in 2004 achieved higher standards than pupils in Year 2 in 2003 in reading, but lower standards in writing and mathematics. Their standards were well below the average for all schools nationally in reading and writing and in the bottom five per cent nationally in mathematics. Compared to similar schools they were well below average. Given their well below average standards on joining reception, they achieved satisfactorily in reading and writing but unsatisfactorily in mathematics. These results preceded the change in the leadership in the school and the significant progress that has been achieved in raising standards this year.

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

Standards in:	School results	National results
reading	13.7 (13.0)	15.8 (15.7)
writing	11.8 (12.1)	14.6 (14.6)
mathematics	13.5 (13.9)	16.2 (16.3)

*There were 55 pupils in the year group. Figures in brackets are for the previous year*

3. The following table demonstrates that pupils in Year 6 in 2004 achieved lower standards than pupils in Year 6 in 2003 in English, mathematics and science, and that the

fall in standards was similar in each subject. Their standards in English, mathematics and science were well below the average for all schools. In comparison with similar schools standards were below average in English and science and average in mathematics. These pupils entered Year 3 with standards that were in the bottom five per cent nationally in reading and mathematics and well below average in writing. Given these standards on joining Year 3, they achieved well in English and very well in mathematics.

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

Standards in:	School results	National results
English	24.2 (26.8)	26.9 (26.8)
mathematics	25.0 (25.4)	27.0 (26.8)
science	26.2 (26.7)	28.6 (28.6)

*There were 51 pupils in the year group. Figures in brackets are for the previous year*

4. Pupils now in Year 2 are achieving well. Their standards on entry to Year 1 were below those expected for their age in all subjects and their current standards are in line with expectations for their age in all subjects. This is the result of good teaching which has promoted good learning. The manner in which the curriculum is structured to meet pupils' needs and interests has also contributed well to pupils' achievements, as has good use of assessment to plan lessons that meet individual pupils' needs. All pupils achieve equally well. This is the result of the good support given to pupils who have special educational needs and those for whom English is an additional language. Higher attaining pupils benefit from the accuracy of assessment of their needs and of teachers' planning in meeting them.

5. Pupils now in Year 6 are also achieving well overall. Their standards on entry to Year 3 were well below average in English and mathematics. Their current standards are average in most subjects but they remain below average in mathematics. The quality of teaching in Years 3 to 6 is inconsistent. In Years 3 and 4 it is only satisfactory, and pupils effectively mark time, their standards not rising. However, in Years 5 and 6 teaching is very good and pupils achieve well. In science and ICT pupils now in Year 6 have achieved very well. This is because these two subjects are taught well in Years 3 and 4.

6. Most pupils with English as an additional language gain in fluency as they move through the school, so that they achieve as well as their classmates. However, pupils who have recently arrived and can be found in classes throughout the school are still in the very early stages of acquiring English.

7. All pupils with special educational needs make at least satisfactory progress in relation to the targets set for them in their individual education plans and the majority make good progress in achieving their targets.

**PUPILS' ATTITUDES, VALUES AND OTHER PERSONAL QUALITIES**

Pupils' attitudes, behaviour and personal development are good. Attendance remains unsatisfactory.

**Main strengths and weaknesses**

- Most pupils display good attitudes and behave well in lessons.
- Personal development, including their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good.

- The school works very hard to promote good attendance, but the rate of attendance remains too low.
- There is some unsatisfactory behaviour on the playground and it is not sufficiently well supervised at lunchtimes.

## Commentary

8. Pupils are very keen to answer questions and contribute their own ideas to lessons. They listen with respect to others' viewpoints and show pleasure in their achievements. Pupils say that nearly everyone works hard. They work well in groups. They are very enterprising and very keen to take responsibility. Pupils with special educational needs have good attitudes to the school and work hard during lessons.

9. Pupils exhibit mature behaviour in most situations. They appreciate what is expected of them and are keen to comply. There is a little challenging behaviour, where pupils have not yet learned to control their emotions. Pupils in all classes, both in discussion with inspectors and in their answers to the pupils' questionnaire, say that there is too much rough behaviour on the playground. In examples seen during lunch times, two incidents were not noticed by supervisors. One or two younger pupils also told inspectors that some of the poor behaviour directed at them was persistent and unpleasant.

10. Pupils are encouraged to think more deeply about issues, such as the Tsunami, and are encouraged to talk about themselves. They show concern and compassion about the problems they encounter. They have good knowledge and experience of their own culture, but have less knowledge of our multicultural society. Some older pupils said that the school had opened up new interests for them that they now followed outside school.

11. The school works hard to promote good attendance. For example, the school runs an attendance 'Derby', with a diagram of the course on display. Every Monday the best classes for attendance in the previous week move forward their positions on the course during assembly. Administrative staff also telephone home on the first day of absence if no notification has been received. There is good collaboration with the education welfare officer, and the newly appointed family's liaison officer and children's liaison officer both work hard to improve attendance.

12. Pupils' behaviour has improved since the last inspection. Their attitudes and personal development remain good.

## Attendance

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

Authorised absence		Unauthorised absence	
School data:	5.6	School data :	1.7
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.*

13. While the current year's performance has not improved, this is because it has been adversely affected by the school staying open during several days of heavy snow last winter and by an influx of refugees whose initial attendance rate was poor.

## Exclusions

### *Ethnic background of pupils*

### *Exclusions in the last school year*

Categories used in the Annual School Census	No of pupils on roll	Number of fixed period exclusions	Number of permanent exclusions
White – British	321	36	0
White – any other White background	5	0	0
Mixed – White and Asian	2	0	0
Asian or Asian British – Indian	2	0	0
Asian or Asian British – Bangladeshi	1	0	0
Black or Black British – any other Black background	3	0	0
Any other ethnic group	22	0	0
No ethnic group recorded	3	0	0

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

## QUALITY OF EDUCATION PROVIDED BY THE SCHOOL

The school is providing a good quality education; teaching and learning are good. The good curriculum is very well enriched. It meets all statutory requirements. Assessment is thorough, and the information collected is very well used to respond to individual needs.

### TEACHING AND LEARNING

The quality of teaching and learning has improved since the last inspection and is now good. A detailed and broad range of assessment data is collected by teachers and is put to good use in lesson planning to ensure that each pupil's individual needs are being addressed.

#### Main strengths and weaknesses

- The quality of teaching in Years 5 and 6 is very good.
- Teachers plan well and set appropriate challenge for each pupil.
- Pupils with special educational needs and those for whom English is an additional language are well supported in lessons.
- Although all the teaching seen was at least satisfactory, there are inconsistencies in the quality, particularly in Years 3 and 4.

### Commentary

#### *Summary of teaching observed during the inspection in 38 lessons*

Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
2(5.5%)	14(37%)	15(39%)	7(8%)	0(0%)	0(0%)	0(0%)

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

14. Since the last inspection a concerted effort by the head teacher and the new senior management team has resulted in improvement in the quality of teaching. It is now good and results in pupils learning well. Consequently, standards are rising. However, some inconsistencies in quality remain, and some pupils do not therefore make as much progress as they could.

15. Insufficient evidence was collected to make a judgement on the quality of teaching of history, geography, design and technology, music or personal, social and health education. All other subjects are taught well throughout the school, with the exception of physical education in Years 1 and 2 which is taught very well.

16. Overall, the quality of teaching is good, but it varies between year groups. In reception and Years 1 and 2, good teaching results in pupils achieving well. In Years 5 and 6, teaching is very good and one excellent lesson was seen in each year group. Pupils achieve very well in these year groups. However, in Years 3 and 4 teaching is only satisfactory, and so is pupils' achievement. Hence, overall between Years 3 and 6 pupils make good progress. Almost all of the observed teaching that was only satisfactory was seen in Years 3 and 4, and little teaching seen in these year groups was better than satisfactory. The lack of progress in Years 3 and 4 is holding back the standards pupils achieve in the school.

17. Overall, teachers are very skilled at motivating their pupils and ensuring that they work hard. They share their good subject knowledge well, and, together with teaching assistants, provide good support for pupils who find their lessons difficult and those who speak little or no English. Lessons are well planned, with good emphasis on ensuring that the challenge with which pupils are faced is appropriate for each and takes full account of their prior learning and skills. Teachers expect a high standard of behaviour from their pupils and manage their classes well. Assessment, except in religious education, art and design and personal, social and health education is good, resulting in the collection of a good range of data which teachers use well in planning pupils' next steps in learning. In English, mathematics and science, pupils have a good awareness of their targets and how to improve their work. This aids their learning and is making a significant contribution to their good achievement.

18. Where teaching is only satisfactory, there are several underlying weaknesses. Teachers' expectations of pupils are too low and lessons are insufficiently challenging. This is because assessment is not as thorough as in lessons that are good or better and assessment data is not used as effectively to plan lessons that meet individual pupils' needs. Marking does not inform pupils sufficiently as to how they can improve their work. Finally, teachers do not manage their pupils well, the behaviour of some pupils is sometimes unsatisfactory, teachers have to spend more time controlling their classes and, overall, less is achieved.

19. Teachers have a good awareness of the needs of all the pupils in their classes. They plan well to meet the needs of pupils with English as an additional language. Pupils in the early stages of acquiring English are well supported when teaching assistants are available. The specialist teacher is able to translate for those pupils of Czech and Slovak background. This helps them to participate fully in the curriculum. In some situations pupils in the early stages of acquiring English do not fully understand the initial parts of lessons when the teacher is teaching the full class and hence do not benefit from receiving entire lessons in the context of the full class.

20. Pupils with special educational needs are given good support by the special educational needs co-ordinator and the teaching assistants. The teaching assistants play a vital role in managing the pupils and guiding them in activities. All have very good relationships with the pupils and they offer unobtrusive but effective support and as a result pupils with special educational needs make equally good progress to all other pupils.

## **THE CURRICULUM**

The curriculum provides good learning opportunities for all pupils. It is very well enriched by a very good variety of school time and after school activities. The school accommodation is good and the school is well staffed to meet the needs of the curriculum and of individual pupils.

## **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- The curriculum meets pupils' needs, aptitudes and interests well.
- Provision for special educational needs is good.
- Good links with the community enhance the range of learning opportunities.
- There is very good provision for clubs and visits to enrich the curriculum.
- Provision for pupils for whom English is a second language is good.

## **Commentary**

21. The curriculum, which meets all statutory requirements, provides pupils throughout the school with a good range of learning opportunities. Appropriate emphasis is placed on personal, social and health education, which takes good account of drugs awareness and sex education. All subjects now benefit from a comprehensive scheme of work. Careful thought has gone into planning the curriculum and links are becoming strong between subjects, enhancing pupils' interest and enjoyment of learning. Planned use of ICT to support work in all areas of the curriculum is satisfactory, but could be developed further. The National Literacy and Numeracy Strategies are well established and literacy in particular is well supported and extended through links with other subjects. Extra provision is made in literacy for pupils who experience difficulties with their reading and writing skills, and this is helping to raise standards.

22. The school makes good provision for pupils with special educational needs throughout the school. Procedures are well organised. The requirements of the code of practice for special needs are fully met. The special educational needs co-ordinator works effectively with all members of staff, ensuring that pupils with special educational needs have full access to the curriculum. Individual targets are reviewed and revised regularly to monitor each pupil's progress and plan any necessary support.

23. There are strong links with the community which enrich the curriculum. For example, members of the YMCA worked along side teachers, supporting work in physical education, art and design and design and technology. Regular focus weeks such as Creative Arts Week, which involve members of the community, engage pupils' interest and extend their experiences and understanding. There are strong links with the local secondary schools supporting pupils' learning in musical and sporting activities. Pupils' experience is also broadened through participation in local events such as the Mayor's Christmas Concert.

24. Pupils benefit from a very wide selection of extra-curricular clubs, which cater for all age groups. Clubs offered include a wide range of sports, choir, chess, drama and dance, including salsa. Pupils enjoy the clubs greatly and spoke of them with great enthusiasm. The curriculum is further enhanced by the very good range of visits in which pupils participate, such as to the British Museum, Canterbury Cathedral and, for Year 6, an adventure weekend. Visitors to school have included an orchestra, the Ghurka band, a beekeeper, the police and representative of customs and excise, the fire brigade and many others. Visits and visitors very successfully capture and enhance pupils' interests in and enjoyment of learning.

25. Teachers and teaching assistants work hard to ensure that all pupils have access to the full curriculum. Good provision is made for pupils who join the school knowing little or no English. They are well supported in lessons and quickly become fully integrated in all that the school offers. The involvement of a specialist multi-lingual teacher supports pupils' integration very effectively.

The curriculum has improved well since the last inspection.

## **CARE, GUIDANCE AND SUPPORT**

Pupils are cared for well. They receive very good advice and support. Pupils' views are sought, valued and acted upon in the running of the school.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- Pupils are very well supported, advised and guided, both pastorally and academically.
- Pupils have very good relationships with adults and trust them.
- Pupils are well inducted into the school whenever they arrive.
- Families are very well supported by the school.
- Playground supervision at lunchtime is inadequate to prevent some inappropriate behaviour.

### **Commentary**

26. Good ongoing assessment of what each pupil knows, understands and can do, coupled with teachers' good knowledge of their pupils, result in pupils' receiving very good personal and academic advice and guidance. For example, pupils have individual targets that they know well and teachers record their progress towards their achievement. The very good advice and guidance pupils receive contribute well to the progress they make.

27. Pupils told inspectors how happy they were in the school and parents confirmed this. This is a very good foundation for their work in school, and contributes well to their good attitudes to school and to learning. The children's liaison officer is a very good 'trouble-shooter' who does whatever is necessary to ease pupils' school life, from providing anger management advice to helping to solve friendship problems.

28. While informal monitoring of pupils' views is effective and the school council is democratically elected, the council is not yet run by its elected officers. It is starting to be an effective pupil voice.

29. The nature of the school is such that while most pupils join at normal times, many new arrivals join each class at different times in the year. The school has well developed procedures for admitting and integrating new pupils of any age. Pupils told inspectors how pleased they are with the way they had been introduced into the school, both in reception and at later stages. Helping families overcome difficulties that affect their children's learning is an important part of the school's work, and an important contribution by the school to the community. The newly appointed family's liaison officer is a friendly bridge between school and home. She works hard to eliminate some of the stress in pupils' lives and has successes to her credit, including help with housing and help for mothers experiencing difficulties in their relationships. For many pupils the provision by the school of a breakfast and an after-school club is an important additional aspect of what the school offers them.

30. Since the appointment of the new head teacher much has been done to improve behaviour. The number of fixed term exclusions has reduced from 36 involving 8 pupils in the academic year 2003/4 to only 4 exclusions in 2004/5. This is despite very challenging



behaviour by a very small number of pupils, these pupils being very well supported to enable them to remain in school.

31. The needs of pupils in the early stages of acquiring English are very quickly assessed as new pupils join the school. The resultant targets for language development are shared with teachers and support staff and are very well taken into account in planning lessons. Pupils' achievements are monitored well, providing further feedback into teachers' lesson planning.

32. Pupils with special educational needs are given good support. Because of the very good links with the nursery and play group, special educational needs are identified at a very early stage and appropriate provision is made. Individual education plans contain appropriate targets, which are informed by detailed assessment of pupils' difficulties. This information is used effectively to plan appropriate work and has a positive effect on pupils' progress. Individual education plans are reviewed at least termly and where needed more frequently. The school works closely with the local education authority's support services for, for example, behaviour and attendance support.

33. The quality of care, guidance and support has remained good since the last inspection. Some aspects, such as behaviour in lessons has improved, with teachers taking a firm and consistent grip on the management of behaviour. However, behaviour in the playground has not improved. This is largely as a result of deficiencies in supervision. Several instances of unacceptable behaviour not being challenged by lunch-time supervisors were seen, supervisors being sometimes insufficiently attentive to spot what was going on behind their backs.

## **PARTNERSHIP WITH PARENTS, OTHER SCHOOLS AND THE COMMUNITY**

Links with parents, the community and other educational institutions are very good.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- The school's very strong links with the community enhance pupils' learning.
- Very strong links with other schools contribute to pupils' achievements.
- Parents support the school very well and are full partners in their children's learning.

### **Commentary**

34. Very good links have been developed with the community that enhance pupils' experiences and their achievements very well. These include links with the chemical industry, two churches, army units, the YMCA, a DIY shop and many other organisations. Examples of how these links have benefited pupils include their participation in the White Cliffs project to protect the local environment, participation in a group that promotes holidays for indigent children in the Netherlands, the visit to the school by the Ghurka Band and the provision of an after school club devoted to healthy living. Similarly very good links with other schools enhance pupils' achievements. For example, the local grammar school has helped with the setting up of the school council and the French club, and the local secondary school has helped with science, sport and music, as well as providing a very good induction programme for pupils.

35. Parents have a high regard for the school and many volunteer their help in different ways, for example, in class. The school works particularly closely with the parents of pupils

who have special educational needs. Parents' views and opinions are sought and are considered when drawing up targets for the child to achieve. The school operates an 'open door' policy for all parents and all know that they can meet teachers or the headteacher at any time to resolve any concerns. The school is very welcoming to parents. Parents receive well produced information on their children's progress, the curriculum they are following and how parents can help their children's learning.

36. The school's partnership with parents, the community and other schools has improved since the last inspection.

## **LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT**

Leadership and management by the head teacher and deputy head teacher are very good. The leadership of key staff is good and the governance of the school is carried out well.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- The headteacher and deputy headteacher lead and manage the school very effectively.
- Very good self-evaluation by the school of its strengths and weaknesses leads to prompt and effective action and very effective strategic planning.
- The foundation stage, provision for pupils with special educational need and for those for whom English is an additional language, English, mathematics, science, ICT, religious education, physical education and art and design are all led and managed well.
- Governance of the school is good.
- Insufficient time has elapsed since the appointment of the new head teacher and senior management team for all actions taken to have their full impact on standards.

### **Commentary**

37. The recent history of the school has been difficult. Since the last inspection there have been three headteachers, the current incumbent only becoming substantive head teacher immediately before the inspection. Numerous issues faced the school when she became acting headteacher a year earlier, and through painstaking analysis and planning, clarity of vision, and strong and effective leadership and management, many such issues have already been overcome. The school has improved well in the past year and now offers its pupils a good quality education.

38. Central to the improvements that have been achieved has been evaluation and planning. Underlying evaluation has been very effective monitoring of the quality of teaching and the curriculum. The former has led to the identification of weaknesses and, in particular, strong efforts to support those teachers whose work required improvement. This process, while being effectively managed is not yet complete, but the foci for action and the plans of action have been clearly and accurately identified.

39. The head teacher believes in her staff and invests heavily in their development. She has ensured that the performance management system is fully effective and identifies staff development needs. Supportive staffing structures are then put into place in an effort to overcome problems. As a consequence of her efforts, staff and governors have received high quality effective training and are now more able to effectively carry out their full range of responsibilities. Of critical importance has been the appointment of a deputy head teacher and the restructuring of the senior management team. These have been very well carried out and the senior management as a whole is now an effective, knowledgeable

team working to a common set of objectives. This in turn has empowered subject and aspect leaders and managers to perform their roles with clarity and purpose. With the need, a year ago, to improve the quality of teaching and raise standards, the formation of effective teams was very important. The results of the successful team building has in no small measure contributed to the raising of standards in the past twelve months. Of particular merit has been the strengthening of the school's work with pupils who have special educational needs and those who speak little or no English on arrival. Each of these two distinct and different groups constitutes a large proportion of pupils in the school, and the effectiveness of the support they receive has been central in the school successfully meeting the needs of each individual pupil.

40. On a broader front, school development planning has been comprehensive and very effective. Few areas of activity in the school required no action a year ago. Consequently the school development plan has had to be something of a manual for school management and development, touching on everything from behaviour management to marking in an effort to raise standards. The plan, which is constantly subject to amendment to take account of the school's changing circumstances, remains the central focus for development and is very closely linked to the school's budget writing process and financial management.

41. Governance of the school is good. Governors have a good understanding of the school's strengths and weaknesses and use their knowledge well in their full participation in setting the school's direction. They are fully involved in school development planning and are effective in carrying out their role of critical friend to the senior management. They share the school's sense of purpose, are focused on raising standards and sufficiently knowledgeable to suggest means of doing so. They make full use of monitoring and evaluation in order to be aware of the constantly changing picture and are competent in challenging, discussing and planning the way forward. They are partners in the leadership and management of the school.

42. Since Easter 2005 the level of support for pupils with English as an additional language from the service funded through the Ethnic Minority Achievement Grant has diminished. The school has dealt with this effectively by employing a specialist teacher who is able to speak the language of the main ethnic group. The recently appointed co-ordinator manages support well and is seeking to add to resources and develop a policy and induction pack for new pupils and their parents.

43. The management of special educational needs is good. The special educational needs co-ordinator is experienced and committed to seeing that these pupils fulfil their potential. The school's approach is well organised and designated funds are used appropriately. All staff work closely with the co-ordinator who ensures that they are all aware of the procedures. Parents are kept well informed and are invited to all reviews. The designated governor for special educational needs is a member of the support staff and meets regularly with the special needs co-ordinator and reports back to the governing body.

44. The school's finances are well managed with budgets being drawn up annually and reviewed regularly to ensure that sufficient funds are available and allocated to meet educational priorities. At the moment the school has surplus funds well in excess of the five per cent recommended, as a consequence of decisions that pre-dated the new headteacher and senior management team. The carry forward is now almost 15 per cent of budget. A full programme of expenditure is in place which will improve the quality of provision and reduce the carry forward to five per cent in 2005/6. The programme includes a new ICT suite, renovations to the playground, a new library, additional staff and additional teaching assistant hours.

## Financial information

### *Financial information for the year April 2002 to March 2003*

Income and expenditure (£)		Balances (£)	
Total income	986001	Balance from previous year	135615
Total expenditure	975090	Balance carried forward to the next	146526
Expenditure per pupil	2793		

45. The school applies the principals of challenge, comparison, consultation and competition well to its work and in particular to its management of resources.

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

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

Provision for children in the reception classes is good. This is good improvement since the last inspection. The school has developed a new policy that meets the national guidance. The school has implemented changes to the assessment requirements very well.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- Teaching is good and lessons are planned well to match the diverse range of the children's needs.
- The curriculum stimulates the children's curiosity and children learn and achieve well.
- All the staff work well together as a team and ensure that the children are safe, cared for and happy in their learning.
- Good use is made of assessment to enable all children to make good progress.
- Learning slows when outside areas are unusable in poor weather

### **Commentary**

46. Children begin school in the year in which they are five, either on a full-time or part time basis. By the middle of the autumn term all the children attend full time. Assessment of the children's capabilities carried out when they begin school, in the autumn term, show that their skills are very poor in communication, language, literacy and personal and social skills. The children have poor skills in the other areas of early years learning - mathematical development, creative development and knowledge and understanding and physical development.

47. The good induction programme helps the children settle easily to school. This is helped further by the support of the children and family liaison officers who work closely with the school, parents and carers to resolve any problem or concerns. Staff are readily available at the beginning or end of the day to talk to parents and carers and this is helping the children to start each day happily and confidently. On alternate Friday afternoons parents and carers are invited into the classrooms where the children share their good achievements.

48. The good teaching and provision helps most of the children to make good and very good progress particularly in personal and social development and literacy skills. Despite this good start to school most of the children will not reach the expected standards by the end of Reception and start in Year 1 with below average attainment. The children achieve well because the lessons are carefully planned to meet the needs of all the different groups of children, including those with special educational needs and those whose first language is not English. The children's curiosity is stimulated through the learning opportunities that are mainly practical and well matched to the children's interests and capabilities. As a result the children respond with good concentration and involvement in self-initiated learning or when the staff are directly teaching.

49. Teaching staff, including teaching assistants and trainee teachers, work as a very effective team. All adults focus on the children's learning but take great care to make sure that they are happy in the planned activities. The outcome is that all learning is purposeful, organised and managed well and the children make good progress in each of the expected areas. All adults have very clear professional guidance from the Foundation Stage manager as to their role and responsibilities; the adults set very good role models for the children and this in turn helps the children to improve their personal and social skills and makes a good contribution to their emotional well being.

50. The Foundation Stage is well led and managed by an experienced and committed professional. Though recently appointed, effective changes have been introduced that are improving the curriculum provision. An example of this is the regular tracking and assessment of the children's progress. This information is used to match teaching plans to the individual needs of the children and as a result all the different groups of children in the Foundation Stage are achieving well. The classrooms, outside area and resources are flexibly organised to give all the children full and equal access to the learning facilities. The outside area, though effectively used during the inspection, would benefit from the provision of a covered area that would enable the children to learn in the outside environment whatever the weather conditions. The school has identified this as an area for development and improvement.

## **PERSONAL, SOCIAL AND EMOTIONAL DEVELOPMENT**

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

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- The good quality care and relationships between adults and children.
- Children are supported well to help them listen and share.

### **Commentary**

51. The reception classes are very happy places to play, learn and make friends. This is because the staff plan and organise the learning very well to ensure that there are/is a variety of interesting and stimulating activities set up at the start of each day. Each morning begins with the children choosing from a variety of activities organised across both classrooms, the shared area and outside. In these sessions, as well as learning to be independent, each child is valued as an individual through talking, playing and being given direct help by an adult. The children are encouraged to take turns such as sharing the bikes or building with the construction sets. Children are developing independence by choosing their own activity. They understand the good routines in the classrooms and demonstrate this by being able to place their name peg on a selected activity. Though children are achieving well and the staff give constant encouragement and praise the majority of children still work and play alongside their friends rather than work collaboratively and will not attain the expected standard by the end of the year.

## **COMMUNICATION, LANGUAGE AND LITERACY**

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

## **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- Good opportunities are planned for the children to develop speaking and listening, reading and writing skills.

## **Commentary**

52. The children are encouraged to speak and listen in all the planned activities throughout the day in whole class teaching, group work and self-initiated learning. The children respond well and children with English as an additional language benefit from the teaching of a specialist teacher. Literacy has a high priority and writing skills are developed well through such regular activities as children practising letter shapes in response to music. Children understand how books work and recognise some simple words. They are able to “read” their own class books about minibeasts. Displays in the classrooms show that the children make good attempts to write from their experiences in other areas. Children write letters to the vet to ask him to make their rabbit better in the role play area and make captions and labels linked to familiar stories such as “There was an old lady who swallowed a fly”. Book corners are colourful and attractive places for the children to read independently helping the children to read for enjoyment. The achievement in this area for most of the children is very good as the children’s attainment on entry is very poor.

## **MATHEMATICAL DEVELOPMENT**

Provision in mathematical development is **good**.

## **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- Teaching is good with a strong focus on developing addition and subtraction skills.
- Mathematical skills are practised in other areas of the curriculum.

## **Commentary**

53. Mathematical learning is well planned and based on children having the opportunity to practise skills learned in other areas. Children learn through direct whole class teaching and group work well matched to meet the needs of the different groups of children so that all pupils achieve well. The children are beginning to add and subtract accurately numbers to 10 through active learning. The children are encouraged to learn a range of strategies to add and subtract and are able to explain their method to the rest of the class. The good resource of the ladybird with removable spots motivates the children and helps them to understand more clearly the concept of addition and subtraction. The children concentrate well and most are able to accurately record on individual whiteboards simple number sentences. The children are able to practise this skill on the computer program that enables them to draw a ladybird and count the number of spots. Children are achieving well in this area though most will not attain the expected standard by the end of the year.

## **KNOWLEDGE AND UNDERSTANDING OF THE WORLD**

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

## **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- There is a good range and quality of appropriate activities.
- Staff are skilful in encouraging and motivating the children.

### **Commentary**

54. During the inspection it was not possible to evaluate the full range of learning activities that cover this area but the lessons seen show that the children are provided with good activities to help them learn about their world. Role-play in the vet's surgery help the children to improve communication skills. The large outside area is set up every day with activities to develop imaginative, creative and physical skills. These are often linked to helping the children to improve speaking and listening skills. For example children are challenged to match an initial sound with as many objects as they can in the outside area. Children develop computer skills and are able to use the mouse and the printer to draw mini-beasts and then successfully print their work. The staff team constantly interact with the children to ensure that they are positively guided in their learning. Staff ask good questions about the shapes made when exploring the play dough encouraging the children to recognise simple shapes such as squares and circles. As result the children achieve well and grow in confidence as their success are valued and praised.

## **PHYSICAL DEVELOPMENT**

Provision in physical development is **good**.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- The range of learning activities planned help the children to improve physical skills.



## **Commentary**

55. Children achieve well though most will not attain the expected level by the end of the year. Fine motor skills are improved through experimenting with paint, cutting, sticking, drawing and writing using a selection of tools. Children are well supervised and are helped to share and take turns. When children are using sharp tools or climbing on the large apparatus, they are taught to use them safely and be aware of other children. Children were observed happily creating a ladybird musical shaker whilst other constructed a model car and tested it to see how fast it would go down the slide. The children also use the large hall on a regular basis to help them learn to exercise in a larger space and were delighted to explain that they had performed a mini-beast dance to the rest of the school. Such activities also contribute to their progress in personal and social development skills.

## **CREATIVE DEVELOPMENT**

Provision in creative development is **good**.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- There is a good balance between directly teaching skills and planning for the children to explore and investigate.

## **Commentary**

56. The children achieve well because of the good balance between independent work and adult directed learning. Each morning the area is well prepared and as a result the children have lots of choice of learning activities. Children were observed excitedly investigating a tray of soil to find plastic insects such as snails, ladybirds and centipedes whilst others were guided to use scissors to cut out insects from wrapping paper. Children enjoy drawing and some are able to colour carefully and write their own name. All the staff work with small groups on a focused activity such as teaching the children to identify the primary colours. The children's achievements are attractively displayed in the classrooms and shared area showing the children, parents, carers and visitors the value placed on their efforts.

## SUBJECTS IN KEY STAGES 1 AND 2

### ENGLISH

Provision in English is **good**.

#### Main strengths and weaknesses

- Pupils achieve well because the quality of teaching is good.
- The quality of teaching in Years 5 and 6 is very good, but in Years 3 and 4 it is inconsistent.
- Pupils enjoy their lessons and work hard.
- The subject is well led and managed, with good identification of aspects for improvement.

#### Commentary

57. Standards are similar to those found at the time of the last inspection and are rising. In national tests for English in 2004, pupils' standards in Year 6 were well below the national average and below those of similar schools. This is because not enough pupils achieved at the higher level. Standards in Year 6 are now average, a significant improvement in the past year and the majority of pupils are achieving at the level expected for their age. From the very low base in English language and literacy at which pupils enter the school, achievement is very good. A significant contribution to their achievement is the quality of teaching in Years 5 and 6. In Years 1 and 2, where pupils have had relatively more benefit from recent improvements in provision, there has been an even greater improvement in standards. Standards in Year 2 in the 2004 national tests were also well below the national average. However, current standards in reading and writing are broadly at the level expected for their age, although too few pupils are achieving at the higher levels.

58. The subject co-ordinator has done much to identify where improvements are needed to raise standards in English, but developments are still in their early stages and have not had sufficient time to benefit all pupils. The adjustment in planning to allow for more time to look at written material in order that pupils gain a model for their writing, is beginning to have a positive impact. In the best teaching, the very structured approach to building up pupils' knowledge and skills results in good quality outcomes. However, the standard of work of many pupils of average and below average ability in Years 3 to 6 is not high enough because they have not developed the skills to make their work more accurate. Teachers, with a few exceptions, are careful to mark work in a way so that pupils know their errors and what to do to improve. The subject co-ordinator has identified the need to monitor teaching and learning more closely to ensure that there is greater consistency in teachers' approach.

59. Overall, the quality of teaching is good and pupils learn well. Teaching in Years 5 and 6 is very good. Teachers work very hard to improve the standards of work of the pupils in their classes. They plan effectively and use questioning skilfully to establish what pupils know and to challenge them to think through their ideas. Learning objectives are used very well to ensure that pupils understand what is expected of them, and to enable them to assess their learning at the end of each lesson. These features are more consistent in Years 1, 2, 5 and 6 than in Years 3 and 4. The quality of teaching has improved since the

previous inspection with mainly good teaching being seen. Classrooms are organised to provide a language rich environment. Teachers are careful to provide work that is appropriately matched to pupils' needs, and resources used well to motivate pupils to learn well, helping pupils to achieve well. There is a good emphasis on teaching key vocabulary. Throughout the school, teaching assistants are well briefed and provide good support for pupils with special educational needs. Pupils in the early stages of learning English receive good support from the specialist teacher and from teaching assistants.

60. Pupils enjoy their lessons and work hard, especially where their interest is engaged by a relevant topic or reading material. They enjoy discussing their ideas with their partners or in groups. They mainly listen well to each other and respect each other's point of view. Speaking and listening skills are satisfactory. In some lessons, not enough attention is given to encouraging all pupils to participate in discussion sessions so that they can develop their speaking skills. This is an area identified by the school for development. Pupils are enthusiastic and confident readers. By the end of Year 6, pupils are reading at the level expected for their age, with some higher level readers. They read with good expression and fluency. They are keen to talk about the books they like reading. Many pupils have good ideas for their writing, but lack the skills to present these well. Their spelling is weak and handwriting not well formed. By Years 5 and 6, there is much work to be done to improve these aspects of pupils' work as well as to ensure that they cover the prescribed curriculum. There is good evidence that pupils' skills are being well taught in Years 1 and 2 and that standards will improve as these pupils move through the school. The significant number of pupils newly arrived in the school since September, with English as an additional language are given good support by the specialist teacher. There is a good assessment of their needs so that teachers are aware of what aspects of their English development to focus on. This is very well reflected in planning.

61. The subject is well led and managed. The subject co-ordinator is well aware of what needs to be done to raise standards. She is an experienced literacy teacher and a good role model. Assessment procedures are good and provide good evidence for tracking progress.

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

62. Literacy is used well in other curriculum subjects to provide accounts of different topics. Younger pupils use captions to describe their pictures. Older pupils show that they can write in different ways and for different audiences when they record what they have learnt in history, geography and religious education. The use of ICT as a tool to help pupils learn English is satisfactory and requires further development.

## **MATHEMATICS**

Provision in mathematics is **good**.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- Teaching is good in Years 1 and 2 and very good in Years 5 and 6.
- Support for pupils with special needs is good
- Pupils for whom English is an additional language are well supported in lessons.
- Assessment procedures are good and teachers give pupils guidance on how they can improve their work.

- Achievement is good by the age of seven and by pupils in Years 5 and 6.
- Standards are too low.

## **Commentary**

63. In the 2004 national tests, pupils' standards in Year 2 were in the bottom five per cent nationally. Standards in Year 6 were well below average.

64. There has been significant improvement in standards in the past year. Pupils now in Year 2 entered Year 1 with below expected standards. Their standards are now in line with national expectations; they have achieved well because of good teaching. Although standards fell after the last inspection, they have now returned to their previous levels.

65. Although current standards in Year 6 are below the national average, and lower than at the time of the last inspection, pupils in the current Year 6 have achieved well because they started in Year 3 with very low standards. Progress was steady during Years 3 and 4 but not sufficient to raise attainment. This good achievement is the consequence of very good teaching in Years 5 and 6. The caring environment provided by the school, which offers the pupils a wide and interesting range of learning opportunities, is an important factor in the good achievement pupils make. Pupils with special educational needs and pupils for whom English is not their first language achieve as well as others. There is good support given to these pupils by the teaching assistants and teachers plan work very effectively for the different abilities within their classes.

66. Teaching is good overall. Teaching in Years 5 and 6 is particularly strong and has raised standards. The introduction of interactive whiteboards has made a positive impact on pupil learning: it provides a clearer, more visual approach to lessons and was seen being used to very good effect in both Year 5 and Year 6 mathematics lessons. In a Year 5 lesson, using an interactive calculator on the computer driven whiteboard enabled the teacher to demonstrate to the whole class very easily. Pupils were also able to quickly show their method of working out for the whole class to consider. Classes are well managed and there are good relationships between the staff and pupils. Teachers' expectations are high and pupils respond positively because work has been carefully matched to provide an appropriate degree of challenge for all pupils whatever their ability. In the very good lessons teachers tailored their questions to individual pupils, which gave pupils of all abilities the chance to answer correctly and thus built confidence. They are given good support from the teaching assistants, who are pro-active and well prepared for the lesson by the class teachers.

67. Assessment is used well to guide future planning and, when marking pupils' work, teachers show how well the learning intention has been achieved and what the individual needs to do to improve. The data obtained from National Curriculum tests in each year group is carefully studied and individual progress monitored.

68. Leadership and management of the subject are good. The newly appointed co-ordinator, with the support of the headteacher, has reviewed the current position and drawn up an appropriate plan to improve the provision for the subject in order to raise standards. This includes In-service training for the staff and closer monitoring of the subject throughout the school.

## **Mathematics across the curriculum**

69. Mathematics is used satisfactorily in other areas of the curriculum. Work on display shows, for example, the use of bar charts to record rainfall and temperature in geography lessons. In science graphs are used showing the average time of sunset and sunrise in the United Kingdom and records are kept of plant growth.

## **SCIENCE**

Provision in science is **good**.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- Pupils enjoy the strong emphasis on learning science through investigations.
- Achievement in science is good.
- Lessons are well planned to meet the needs of all pupils.
- The subject leadership and management is very good.
- Pupils are sometimes not guided well enough in independent learning.

### **Commentary**

70. In 2004, teachers assessed standards at the end of Year 2 to be well below the national average. They are now in line with expectations. In the national tests at the end of Year 6 in 2004, standards were also well below the national average. These are also now in line with expectations, demonstrating significant improvement in science standards throughout the school in the past year. Having initially fallen, standards are now as they were at the time of the last inspection and pupils are achieving well in Years 1 and 2 and very well in Years 3 to 6.

71. Analysis of pupils' work, discussions with teachers and lesson observations show that the curriculum is well planned in the long and short term to meet the needs of all the pupils including those with special educational needs and English as an additional language. Lessons are very well planned and take full account of the needs of each pupil. Pupils achieve well in their scientific learning because of this careful planning. More able pupils are given more complex tasks to develop deeper scientific thinking. For instance, in a lesson about the solar system, pupils were able to propose scientific ways to prove that the earth is not flat. Pupils' work is neatly presented and good scientific vocabulary is correctly used, particularly in written work in Years 5 and 6. Pupils are developing good prediction skills and are encouraged to check conclusions. This is a marked improvement since the last inspection when pupils' lack of prediction skills was identified as a weakness. Teachers take great care to mark pupils' written work against the learning objective and this helps pupil to know what they have achieved and how to improve further.

72. Investigations are a feature of most science lessons and pupils show how much they enjoy this by their responses, high level of involvement and concentration. A Year 6 pupil explained that science was interesting because "it helps you to find out how things work ". The quality of teaching is good overall with some very good teaching in Years 5 and 6. Practical activities undertaken by younger pupils have included learning by exploring soil to find insects, observing and drawing them. Older pupils have used a range of materials to find out the best insulator of sound. They understand the need to predict, the criteria for a fair test and to agree conclusions based on their findings. Pupils take responsibility for organising the apparatus and materials for experiments and demonstrate mature attitudes in carrying out investigations with good quality discussions between each other, through the

sharing of apparatus and in taking turns. In less successful lessons pupils are not given sufficient guidance at the start of the activity. Consequently some pupils are not clear as to what is expected and do not learn as much as they could, particularly those who need help to concentrate. Support staff are not always effectively deployed to help those pupils' having difficulties.

73. The subject co-ordinator has made a significant difference to the quality of the science provision. Since her appointment staff training has improved, lessons are monitored and teaching plans ensure that pupils build and develop good scientific skills as they move through the school. Test results are carefully analysed to identify pupils' strengths and weaknesses and the outcomes are used to improve the curriculum provision. Pupils have individual science targets and the subject co-ordinator monitors their progress towards them. This helps pupils to achieve well. Resources are good, sufficient for teaching the curriculum and well organised for easy access and as a result there is equality of opportunity for all classes. The subject co-ordinator has a clear vision for further improvement. The headteacher and governors positively support this by giving science a high priority in the school development plan in the bid to continue to further improve standards

## **INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY**

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

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- Every classroom has an interactive whiteboard that is often used well.
- Standards meet expectations in Year 2 and Year 6.
- Achievement is good by the age of seven and very good by the age of eleven.

### **Commentary**

74. There has been good improvement in ICT since the last inspection. The school has a large computer suite which is used by all classes for direct teaching of the subject. Recently there have been some technical problems with the network but this has not restricted pupils' learning. New computers are due to be installed for the beginning of the next school year. At the time of the last inspection standards were judged to be below national expectations and now they meet those expectations at the end of Year 2 and Year 6. Achievement by Year 2 pupils is good and for Year 6 pupils it is very good because of their low starting point when they entered Year 3.

75. The quality of teaching has improved since the last inspection and is now good. Teachers' expertise has improved and teachers are generally more confident in teaching ICT. Four lessons were observed and in all the teaching was at least good with one excellent lesson seen in a Year 6 class. This good teaching has had a very positive affect on the standards being achieved. The addition of interactive whiteboards in every classroom has a positive affect on learning not only in ICT but in all subjects.

76. In a Year 2 lesson pupils were seen to be able to add text to pictures they had previously inserted into a document. All pupils are able to save their work, use editing keys, and write instructions for a computerised toy to move and to turn. Behaviour and attitudes to work were good and this contributed to the good learning.

77. Similarly in both the Year 5/6 lessons behaviour and attitudes to work were good and pupils learned well. By Year 6 pupils confidently create PowerPoint presentations including animations and sound. This work was linked to their work in personal, social and health education as they designed a Year 6 Guide for the current Year 5 pupils.

78. The subject is led and managed well by a co-ordinator who has identified the subject as an area for development. She is aware of the relative weaknesses in provision such as the need for a technician and the inconsistent use of ICT in other subjects.

### **Information and communication technology across the curriculum**

79. ICT is beginning to be used to support other subjects; for example work in science, art and design and mathematics. Year 4 pupils used the National Gallery website to access Van Gogh's paintings. They were able to zoom in on details before producing their own versions in pastels. During the inspection computers in the classrooms were not seen to be used to support work in other subjects, although interactive white boards were extensively used.

## **HUMANITIES**

80. **Geography** and **history** were not a focus of the inspection. During the inspection, too little evidence was available to make judgements about the overall provision, standards or the quality of teaching. No lessons were seen in either subject. A study of samples of pupils' work indicates that the curriculum is broad and balanced. Displays illustrate some of the topics pupils have studied and act as good reference points. Topics studied follow the scheme of work that is based on national guidance.

## **RELIGIOUS EDUCATION**

Provision in religious education is **good**.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- The quality of teaching is good and pupils learn and achieve well.
- Good opportunities are developed to support pupils' spiritual and moral development.
- Pupils' have a good knowledge and understanding of several major religions.

### **Commentary**

81. As at the time of the last inspection, by the end of Years 2 and 6 pupils achieve standards that are in line with the expectations of the locally agreed syllabus.

82. Teaching is good and pupils enjoy their lessons and learn well. In Years 5 and 6 pupils were learning about different aspects of Islam. They showed a good level of understanding and interest in the subject. In both lessons, there was a good emphasis on the spiritual and moral aspects of religion. In the Year 6 lesson, this was well demonstrated when the pupils used the booklets they had made to explain the importance of the ritual washing before prayer. Pupils were respectful when one pupil volunteered to demonstrate the prayer moves. This was made particularly meaningful by use of a prayer mat and the

Koran. Year 6 pupils have looked at the rules that the Prophet Mohammed left in the Hadiths and have formulated their own versions.

83. Younger pupils enjoy learning by experience, such as by visiting places of worship. During the inspection, Year 1 pupils visited a local church, and Year 2 pupils have visited Canterbury Cathedral.

84. There is a good emphasis in teaching about different religions and exploring the moral and spiritual principles common to each. Most teachers have good subject knowledge and ensure that there are resources available to bring the subject alive. Work in books shows that teachers develop pupils' literacy skills well in the different ways they record the information they have learnt.

85. The subject is well led and managed. ICT is used well, for example, by pupils investigating different religious practices through original research on the internet.

## **CREATIVE, AESTHETIC, PRACTICAL AND PHYSICAL SUBJECTS**

86. Insufficient evidence was collected to judge the overall quality of provision in **design and technology**. No lessons were observed, inspectors scrutinised some samples of pupils' work in books and the displays around the school. Pupils develop their planning, design and evaluation skills in Years 1 to 6. For example pupils in Years 2 investigated the components of a shopping trolley and then designed and constructed their own using "junk" materials. During the design and construction process pupils developed evaluative skills by noting successes or problems encountered. Pupils learned to label the parts of the mechanism and made constructive suggestions of how the trolley could be further improved. In Years 3 to 6 these skills are extended as pupils learn to design, build and evaluate more complex machines such as model toys with moving parts. Displays around the school show that pupils understand the importance of process and problem solving in the successful design and making of working models. The pupils' achievements in design and technology are valued through the high quality of displays that include a carefully constructed battery powered big wheel and roundabout proudly exhibited in the entrance area of the school. Other examples of the pupils' achievements in this subject include designing and making hand puppets, percussion instruments, papier-mâché containers, and physical apparatus for an adventure playground.

87. **Music** was not a subject in focus during the inspection, no lessons were observed and consequently no judgement can be made on provision. Evidence from curriculum documents show that the national requirements in this subject are met. Pupils sing hymns tunefully together in assemblies to the piano and guitar and respond calmly to the classical music as they enter and leave the Hall. The school has a specialist room for music lessons that is well equipped with a range of tuned and percussion instruments including keyboards, glockenspiels, xylophones, chime bars and drums. Displays show that the pupils listen to famous composers such as Chopin and express their responses and feelings through creating chalk pictures of sounds to represent the sea. Year 6 pupils use percussion instruments to compose a tune to accompany poems that they are learning. Year 1 pupils learn to play the drums and some pupils learn to play the guitar. Pupils benefit from orchestral performances such as the Duke of York's military band and the Canterbury Symphony Orchestra. Such experiences enrich the pupils' musical appreciation skills.



## ART AND DESIGN

Provision in art and design is **good**.

### Main strengths and weaknesses

- Teaching and learning are good.
- Pupils enjoy the opportunities they have to experience a good range of media and techniques.
- Enthusiastic subject co-ordinator who is a good role model.

### Commentary

88. Standards in art and design have improved well since the last inspection. They are now as expected for pupils at the end of Year 2 and Year 6. Displays of art work enhance and brighten the school environment. The lofty reception area is softened by a bright wall hanging created by pupils in last year's Creative Art Week.

89. Teaching is good. Teachers are careful to use resources that stimulate pupils' imagination. Classrooms are well organised so that pupils have the tools and media that they need to create effective results and, because management is good, pupils work well with good concentration. Teaching assistants give good support to those pupils who need extra help. In a very good Year 1 lesson, a pupil in the early stages of learning English was helped to achieve well because the specialist teacher was able to translate for him.

90. A very good Year 6 lesson illustrates the range of experiences pupils have. Pupils have used a variety of media to present the story of Theseus and the Minotaur in a series of six paintings. The work proceeds from the initial design and planning, to the final products. Paper collage, different materials such as wool, wood, fur and feathers are used very creatively to produce three and two dimensional effects. In this way, pupils show great imagination in interpreting their ideas of, for example, the Minotaur, or the labyrinth. Pupils are very proud of their achievements and the opportunity they are given to present their work to the class.

91. Teachers provide good resources to stimulate pupils' imagination and creativity. In a very good Year 1 lesson, the interactive whiteboard was used very well to illustrate the work of natural sculptors such as Andy Goldsworthy and Tony Cragg. This stimulus provided the pupils with good ideas on how to arrange their material into sculptural shapes.

92. Displays of work around the school show that art and design is well linked to other subjects. Photographs show Year 2 pupils at Canterbury Cathedral, making rubbings and closely observed drawings of artefacts. Accounts of different aspects of life in Victorian times are illustrated by collage paintings. Information and communication technology provides the opportunity to produce creative artwork based on patterns.

93. The subject is well led and managed. The subject co-ordinator is enthusiastic. She is keen to ensure that art and design has a high profile in the school. To this end she arranged for all teachers to visit the National Gallery to take part in an art initiative "Take One Picture". The annual Creative Art Week involves parents and the community.

## **PHYSICAL EDUCATION**

Provision in physical education is **good**.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- Teaching is good and pupils make good progress in lessons.
- Pupils enjoy exercise and have positive attitudes to the subject.
- Physical education contributes well to pupils' personal development.

### **Commentary**

94. Standards at the end of Year 6 are average in games and gymnastics and good in dance. All pupils in Years 3 to 6 are taught to swim and most meet the standard expected. At the end of Year 2 pupils meet the expected standard in games, gymnastics and dance. All pupils, including those with special educational needs and those for whom English is an additional language, have equal access to the lessons. Extra adults in lessons and after school clubs are effectively deployed to help all pupils achieve well and pupils' achievement is good overall.

95. The quality of teaching and learning is good overall. In Years 1 and 2 it is very good. Teachers pay very good attention to ensure that all pupils are safe and check at the start of each lesson that all pupils have suitable kit and footwear. Lessons are planned effectively and in a dance lesson in Year 4, pupils were enthused because the learning was linked to their studies of the Egyptians in history. This gave extra meaning to the development of dance skills as pupils linked together a series of movements to depict a day in the life of an Egyptian farmer. Pupils worked very well, cooperatively with a partner to develop and share ideas. Before the end of the lesson pupils assessed each other's performance and suggested areas for development as well as praising achievement. This is good practice and contributes well to pupils' personal development.

96. Younger pupils show a good understanding of why they need to warm up, stretch muscles and increase heart rate before starting vigorous games such as hockey. Teachers' enthusiasm in lessons results in pupils developing positive attitudes and behaving very well. Even unexpectedly heavy rainfall during the lesson did not dampen the teacher's or pupils' enthusiasm. Good planning with different objectives for pupils of differing ability resulted in all pupils improving their ball control skills.

97. The accommodation is well used after school as pupils have the opportunity to participate in a good range of clubs and competitions. Staff lead clubs such as netball and salsa dancing and pupils benefit from specialist coaching in cricket and football. These opportunities help pupils to further improve personal and social skills and contribute to raising self-esteem and a sense of achievement and pride in themselves and their school.

98. Physical education, which has been identified as a priority for the next school development plan, is well led and managed.

## **PERSONAL, SOCIAL AND HEALTH EDUCATION**

99. Insufficient evidence was collected to judge the overall quality of provision, standards or the quality of teaching and learning in **personal, social and health education**. One lesson was observed and discussion took place with the acting subject co-ordinator, the head teacher.

100. The lesson seen, in Year 6, was taught well. Pupils discussed current issues concerning them with maturity and consideration for each other. The teacher led the discussion well, allowing each pupil the opportunity to participate or not, as each felt able. No pressure was exerted and even those who felt unwilling to contribute felt comfortable with their choice.

101. The head teacher acknowledges that while schemes of work are in place for every year group these require updating. The maintenance of pupils' level of personal development and the improvement in behaviour, particularly in lessons, indicate that current schemes are at least satisfactory and are effective in contributing to the school calm and productive ethos.

102. The school meets its statutory responsibilities. Sex and relationships education are adequately dealt with through science lessons, and pupils in Year 6 receive additional guidance as appropriate for their age. The school also takes very seriously its responsibility to teach pupils of the danger of drug use and abuse. Pupils learn the fundamentals of good citizenship, and demonstrate their understanding through their initiation of and involvement in fundraising for charities, such as their recent efforts on behalf of survivors of the Asian Tsunami. The school's close links with the community also contribute well to pupils' personal and social development, such as when they attended the inauguration of the new Lord Chancellor of the Cinque Ports.

## 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	4
<b>Overall standards achieved</b>	<b>5</b>
Pupils' achievement	3
<b>Pupils' attitudes, values and other personal qualities (ethos)</b>	<b>3</b>
Attendance	5
Attitudes	3
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	2
Accommodation and resources	3
Pupils' care, welfare, health and safety	3
Support, advice and guidance for pupils	2
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	2
The school's links with other schools and colleges	2
<b>The leadership and management of the school</b>	<b>2</b>
The governance of the school	3
The leadership of the headteacher	2
The leadership of other key staff	3
The effectiveness of management	2

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