

# INSPECTION REPORT

## **NEWINGTON CE PRIMARY SCHOOL**

Newington, Sittingbourne

LEA area: Kent

Unique reference number: 118649

Headteacher: Mrs P Williamson

Reporting inspector: Mr Christopher Gray  
21037

Dates of inspection: 19 - 22 May 2003

Inspection number: 247937

Full inspection carried out under section 10 of the School Inspections Act 1996

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## INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Type of school: Infant and junior school

School category: Voluntary controlled

Age range of pupils: 4 to 11 years

Gender of pupils: Mixed

School address: School Lane  
Newington  
Sittingbourne

Postcode: ME9 7LB

Telephone/fax number: 01795 842300

Appropriate authority: The governing body

Name of chair of governors: Mr K Taylor

Date of previous inspection: 17 November 1997

## INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Team members			Subject responsibilities	Aspect responsibilities
21037	Christopher Gray	Registered inspector	Mathematics Information and communication technology Music	What sort of school is it? How high are standards? a) The school's results and achievements How well are pupils taught? What should the school do to improve further?
9561	Husain Akhtar	Lay inspector		How high are standards? b) Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development How well does the school care for its pupils? How well does the school work in partnership with parents?
23588	Charanjit Ajitsingh	Team inspector	Educational inclusion English as an additional language Foundation stage English Geography History	How good are the curricular and other opportunities offered to pupils?
11901	Pat Lowe	Team inspector	Special educational needs Science Art and design Design and technology Physical education Religious education	How well is the school led and managed?

The inspection contractor was:

Cambridge Education Associates Ltd

Demeter House  
Station Road  
Cambridge  
CB1 2RS

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## REPORT CONTENTS

	Page
<b>PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT</b>	<b>7</b>
Information about the school	
How good the school is	
What the school does well	
What could be improved	
How the school has improved since its last inspection	
Standards	
Pupils' attitudes and values	
Teaching and learning	
Other aspects of the school	
How well the school is led and managed	
Parents' and carers' views of the school	
<b>PART B: COMMENTARY</b>	
<b>HOW HIGH ARE STANDARDS?</b>	<b>11</b>
The school's results and pupils' achievements	
Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development	
<b>HOW WELL ARE PUPILS TAUGHT?</b>	<b>13</b>
<b>HOW GOOD ARE THE CURRICULAR AND OTHER OPPORTUNITIES OFFERED TO PUPILS?</b>	<b>15</b>
<b>HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL CARE FOR ITS PUPILS?</b>	<b>17</b>
<b>HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL WORK IN PARTNERSHIP WITH PARENTS</b>	<b>18</b>
<b>HOW WELL IS THE SCHOOL LED AND MANAGED?</b>	<b>19</b>
<b>WHAT SHOULD THE SCHOOL DO TO IMPROVE FURTHER?</b>	<b>21</b>
<b>PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS</b>	<b>23</b>
<b>PART D: THE STANDARDS AND QUALITY OF TEACHING IN AREAS OF THE CURRICULUM AND SUBJECTS</b>	<b>28</b>

## **PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT**

### **INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL**

Newington CE Primary School is for children aged four to eleven, and has 182 full-time pupils (80 boys and 102 girls). This is similar in size to most primary schools and much the same size as at the last inspection. The catchment area of the school has altered since the last inspection with the building of more accommodation for a Housing Association. Although, overall, children's attainment on entry to the school is average, they are starting school with a lower range of skills than at the time of the last inspection, especially in speaking and listening skills.

Children's backgrounds are varied but most pupils' socio-economic circumstances are similar to the national average. The proportion of pupils entitled to receive a free school meal (11 per cent) is average. Two pupils have a European mother tongue other than English; one of them is at the early stages of learning English. As a proportion, this is similar to most schools. There are 45 pupils on the special needs register; at approximately 25 per cent of the school's roll, this is average. Two pupils have Statements of Special Educational Need, and, in percentage terms (one per cent), this is about average. The number of pupils who join the school at times other than the start of the school year is higher than average.

### **HOW GOOD THE SCHOOL IS**

Newington Primary School is a quickly improving school, giving its pupils a good standard of education. Pupils behave well and have good attitudes to their work. The standards the oldest pupils are likely to achieve when they leave the school in Year 6 are average in English, mathematics and science. The overall quality of teaching is good. The school is very well led by the new headteacher and her senior management team. Governors' involvement is good. The school has a large amount of money in reserve, but provides satisfactory value for money.

#### **What the school does well**

- Teaching is good across the school
- The new headteacher leads the school very well and has enabled it to move forward very quickly
- Pupils in the Foundation Stage receive a very good start to their education
- Pupils' attainment in religious education and art is above expectations by Years 2 and 6
- The school's recent advance is based on very effective systems for assessing where pupils need to improve and for helping teachers to make the most of their skills. Provision for pupils with special educational needs is especially good.
- The school provides very well for pupils' personal development; they respond with good behaviour and good attitudes to school

#### **What could be improved**

- Standards of pupils' attainment in music
- The opportunities which pupils have to use computers
- The school has allowed too much money to build up in reserve
- The levels of pupils' attendance, especially that of younger pupils

*The areas for improvement will form the basis of the governors' action plan.*

### **HOW THE SCHOOL HAS IMPROVED SINCE ITS LAST INSPECTION**

The school was last inspected in 1997, when there were three key issues. The first was to improve the quality of teaching in the infants, where teaching is now good. The second was about the use of the school day. Lessons now begin and end promptly, though the three lesson morning could be used more efficiently to give more time to subjects apart from English and mathematics. The last issue was about the school's provision for pupils' spiritual and cultural development, and these are both now judged to be very good.

In addition, teaching has improved across the school. However, results in National Curriculum tests at the end of Year 6 are at similar levels to those at the last inspection. In the interim, standards fell. Much of the improvement made by the school has been achieved in the last two years, and standards are beginning to rise above average levels below Year 6. The overall improvement since the last inspection has been satisfactory.

## STANDARDS

The table shows the standards achieved by pupils at the end of Year 6, based on average point scores in National Curriculum tests.

Performance in:	compared with			
	all schools			similar schools
	2000	2001	2002	2002
English	C	A	D	D
mathematics	D	E	D	D
science	E	C	E	E

Key	
well above average	A
above average	B
average	C
below average	D
well below average	E

The table shows that the results were below average in English and mathematics and well below average in science, and the school did not meet its targets, set several years before the tests. The group of children who took the tests had a higher proportion of pupils with special educational needs than is usual in the school. A comparison with the results of pupils who performed at a similar level to these children when they were seven shows the school's results to have been better in English and mathematics, indicating that the children made good progress between Year 2 and Year 6 in those subjects. Results in science did not keep pace and were below the average. The school analysed reasons for the lower performance in science and has adjusted its curriculum accordingly this year. Over the years, the school's results has been rising at a rate similar to the national trend.

The inspection finds that standards in the current Year 6 are average in English, mathematics and science, with evidence of rising standards in younger groups, showing that pupils are now achieving well in the school. The school is likely to meet its targets for the National Curriculum tests which the pupils have just taken. By Year 2, standards are also average in English, mathematics and science. Pupils' attainment is higher than expected in religious education and art by Years 2 and 6. Attainment in information technology meets expectations, though pupils have limited opportunities to use computers. Pupils' attainment in all other subjects apart from music is as expected. In music, attainment is below what is expected in most classes and depends on the class teacher's level of expertise. Children in the Foundation Stage achieve very well and most are likely to exceed the early learning goals by the time they are ready to enter Year 1.

## PUPILS' ATTITUDES AND VALUES

Aspect	Comment
Attitudes to the school	Good. Pupils show enthusiasm for learning and respond well to good teaching. They clearly enjoy school and appreciate what staff do for them.
Behaviour, in and out of classrooms	The school is an orderly and happy community. Pupils' behaviour is good both in and out of the classroom and in all aspects of school life.
Personal development and	Very good. Pupils become respectful and form very good relationships

relationships	with teachers and with one another.
Attendance	Below the national average because a small number of parents of younger pupils do not do enough to ensure that their children miss the least amount of school possible.

## TEACHING AND LEARNING

Teaching of pupils in:	Reception	Years 1 – 2	Years 3 – 6
Quality of teaching	Very good	Good	Good

*Inspectors make judgements about teaching in the range: excellent; very good; good; satisfactory; unsatisfactory; poor; very poor. 'Satisfactory' means that the teaching is adequate and strengths outweigh weaknesses.*

Teachers' planning and their use of what they know about all their pupils' attainment are the main reasons why teaching is effective in this school. This enables most lessons to challenge pupils at their own level and hold their interest and enthusiasm. Pupils learn well because they enjoy their lessons and because teachers explain to them how their learning fits in with what they know already. Teachers have good relationships with their pupils. They clearly like the children and this is returned, producing a quiet and relaxed atmosphere in most lessons. English and literacy skills are well taught, though pupils need more experience of extended writing. Setting is working well in English and mathematics, and this enables teachers to give appropriate work to pupils of different abilities. Pupils learn well in the sets because the work they do gives them a sense of achievement. Mathematics and numeracy teaching are satisfactory, overall, though there are occasions when the level of challenge given to a few pupils is not appropriate. Music teaching is satisfactory, overall, though its quality varies from class to class, according to the skills of the teacher. Information technology is taught satisfactorily, overall, but teachers are hampered by not being able to give clear demonstrations to a whole class. Teaching is good in all other subjects and enables pupils to learn well and enjoy the experience. Pupils with special educational needs, and those for whom English is an additional language, receive good support and their learning is similar to that of their classmates. The teaching in the Foundation Stage is a strength of the school.

## OTHER ASPECTS OF THE SCHOOL

Aspect	Comment
The quality and range of the curriculum	Good, overall, and very good in the Foundation Stage. Pupils benefit from interesting lessons that are well planned to meet their needs. A good range of extra-curricular activities increases pupils' opportunities for learning.
Provision for pupils with special educational needs	Very good. Teachers keep very good notes on pupils' progress and the co-ordinator manages the provision very well. Teaching assistants are well trained and make a valuable contribution to pupils' development.
Provision for pupils with English as an additional language	Very few pupils come into this category but the school works effectively to make sure they are able to learn well.
Provision for pupils' personal, including spiritual, moral, social and cultural, development	Very good. The Christian ethos of the school is appreciated by parents and helps the pupils to develop spiritually. They respect the views of others and this is clear in their behaviour and in their relationships. They are learning to understand a range of cultures and beliefs.
How well the school cares	The quality of welfare is good, overall. The staff provide a supportive

for its pupils	environment in which pupils feel secure. The school is careful about matters related to pupils' health and safety. The very good systems of assessment help build up a whole picture of each child.
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The school works hard to involve the parents of children from all backgrounds. Most parents respond well and are happy with the school's work, but the school is not receiving the co-operation of a small number of parents in trying to improve the rates of attendance.

## HOW WELL THE SCHOOL IS LED AND MANAGED

Aspect	Comment
Leadership and management by the headteacher and other key staff	The headteacher quickly saw where the school needed to be better and has been very effective in leading her staff to bring about improvements. She is well supported by her senior management team.
How well the governors fulfil their responsibilities	Governors work well to support the school, are clear about how well it performs and contribute well to helping it move forward.
The school's evaluation of its performance	Very good systems have recently been developed to identify where improvements are needed and to ensure that they are brought about.
The strategic use of resources	The school has a generous number of teachers and assistants. Its resources are good in number and quality and the buildings are ample and attractive, though the school is right to want to replace the infant lavatories. However, too much money has built up in the school's reserves without having sufficient impact on the development of information technology. Governors' application of the principles of best value is satisfactory.

## PARENTS' AND CARERS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

What pleases parents most	What parents would like to see improved
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Children make good progress</li> <li>• The school is helping children to become mature and responsible</li> <li>• Children are expected to work hard and to achieve their best</li> <li>• The school is well led and managed</li> <li>• Teaching is good</li> <li>• The school works closely with parents</li> <li>• Parents feel comfortable about approaching the school with questions or a problem</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Amounts of homework</li> <li>• The activities outside lessons</li> </ul>

Inspectors endorse parents' positive comments. The team found the amounts of homework to be about right and to link well with important aspects of class work. At the pre-inspection meeting, parents were not so unhappy about homework in term-time, but they would like clearer guidance of what teachers expect when they set work for the holidays. Inspectors found a good range of extra-curricular activities, but most of them are for older pupils.

## **PART B: COMMENTARY**

### **HOW HIGH ARE STANDARDS?**

#### **The school's results and pupils' achievements**

##### **National Curriculum test results, trends and targets**

1. Pupils' results at the end of Year 2 in the 2002 National Curriculum tests were the same as the national average at the expected level (Level 2 and above) in reading and mathematics and similar to the average in writing. At the higher level (Level 3), results were average in reading and writing and below average in mathematics. In science, teacher assessments show that pupils' attainment was above average at the expected and higher levels.
2. Looking at the average points score (where pupils' attainment at all levels is taken into account), results were average in reading, mathematics and science and above average in writing. The latter result was caused by the above average proportion of pupils who attained at Level 2B and above. Overall trends in reading, writing and mathematics have been steadily upward from a low point in 1998, the year after the last inspection. The performance of boys in reading and writing has fallen below that of girls, to a greater extent than is so nationally. The school has tackled this with an emphasis on books and writing activities for boys, and no significant difference is observable in pupils' work in this school year.
3. Pupils' results at the expected level (Level 4 and above) in the 2002 National Curriculum tests at the end of Year 6 were below average in English and mathematics and well below average in science. Results at the higher level (Level 5) were below average in English, average in mathematics and well below average in science. The school did not meet its targets for English and mathematics because the targets were unrealistic, having been set five years in advance, as required by the local education authority. Although the group contained a greater proportion of pupils with special educational needs than is usual in the school, there was no opportunity to make the targets more realistic as the tests approached. However, the school is likely to achieve the targets for 2003, which are set, appropriately, at average levels.
4. The average points score shows that results compared with all schools were below average in English and mathematics and well below average in science, and the comparison with schools with similar free school meals figures shows the same. However, comparing the school's results with those of schools with similar prior attainment shows English and mathematics to be above average but science to be below average. The school's analysis shows that pupils' worse performance in science was caused by lack of experience in experimental science and deficiencies in pupils' technical vocabulary. The school has altered its planning to improve these areas. There are no significant differences between the performance of boys' and girls'.
5. The overall trend in all subjects has been in line with the national trend, over the years, though there has been great variation in some years. English and science have gradually improved from below average results in 1998 (the year after the last inspection), with higher-than-usual performance in 2000 from a high-attaining cohort, followed by lower results last year. Results in mathematics had declined from 1999 to 2001, and the new headteacher set improving mathematics as her first priority on appointment. This has borne fruit.

##### **The findings of the inspection**

6. Children begin Reception with average skills, overall. Communication skills are a little lower than at the last inspection because the socio-economic profile of the village has changed somewhat with the extension of Housing Association accommodation. A new Reception teacher began in September; because of her very good teaching and the high quality provision the children receive, most are likely to exceed the early learning goals in all areas by the time they begin Year 1.

7. The inspection finds pupils' attainment in the current Year 6 to be average in English, mathematics and science, a finding which the results of the recently-taken national tests are likely to corroborate. The school's records show that most pupils have made the expected progress since they took the Key Stage 1 national tests in Year 2, and a good percentage have made good progress. The standards attained by pupils in other year groups are generally higher than those of the current Year 6 when at similar stages and the current Year 5 group looks set to attain above average standards in the national tests of 2004. This shows that, overall, pupils are now achieving well in the school. The good use of setting in English and mathematics has played an important part in this improvement.
8. The current Year 2 cohort is unusually small and unusually imbalanced in sex: it contains 21 pupils, of whom only five are boys. Inspectors find that their attainment in English, mathematics and science is at average levels and the recently-taken national tests corroborate this, though results are yet only provisional.
9. In English, pupils' reading skills are average, overall, by Years 2 and 6, though they are higher in some year groups. Pupils' writing is average, but not many pupils reach the higher levels, because they do not have enough experience of extended writing. This also shows in the work in other subjects, where sentences tend to be brief. Handwriting shows improvement at Key Stage 1, but lacks consistency in Key Stage 2, especially among older pupils.
10. Pupils' attainment in mathematics is average by Years 2 and 6. Pupils develop sound numeracy skills, though few have instant recall of their times-tables. Pupils use numeracy skills in other subjects, as when handling data in information technology. In science, inspection evidence shows that the changes made to the curriculum as a result of analysing last year's test have been successful. Pupils have a better grasp of technical vocabulary and a firmer understanding of fair testing. Standards are now average by Years 2 and 6.
11. Attainment in information technology is as expected by Years 2 and 6, though much of pupils' understanding comes from exercises in books rather than first-hand experience at a computer. None the less, pupils' past work shows that they have worked hard in all strands of the subject.
12. Pupils' attainment surpasses what is expected in art and religious education. Attainment in music depends on how much expertise each teacher possesses. Where it is well-established, pupils achieve as expected, as in the co-ordinator's class. But, overall, pupils' attainment does not reach the levels expected for their age because teachers do not have enough guidance in how to teach the subject. In all other subjects, pupils are attaining at levels expected for their age.
13. Only two pupils have mother tongues other than English. Both pupils make progress at a rate similar to their classmates because teachers are aware of their needs and plan effectively for them.
14. Pupils with special educational needs make good progress. Their needs are identified early and they are set clear and achievable targets. Their progress in relation to their prior attainment is good in all areas of the curriculum and they achieve well. The school works closely with the families of travellers' children and helps them to make similar progress to their peers.
15. The school has identified pupils who are gifted or talented and teachers' planning takes account of their academic needs - for example, through targeted questioning. Pupils who are gifted - for instance, in music - have access to extra-curricular activities, such as the music club, which, though voluntary, is especially aimed at them. Higher-attaining pupils are generally well challenged and enabled to make progress at similar rates to other pupils.

### **Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development**

16. As at the time of the previous inspection, pupils' attitudes to learning and their behaviour in the school are good. Most pupils, including the youngest, willingly come to school, some well before the start of the school day. Parents confirm that their children like school. Carefully planned

activities for children in the Reception class ensure that they behave well, develop independence and make friends with other children. They are keen to learn and their social development is very good. Likewise, in the rest of the school, pupils are very interested in their lessons. Their participation in class and extra-curricular activities, particularly in sports activities, is good. Pupils who have special educational needs respond well to the support that they receive. In lessons, attitudes to work are good across the school and contribute significantly to pupils' achievement. For example, in a Year 2 religious education lesson pupils were highly motivated, were enthusiastic and took good interest in learning about taking responsibility for one's own actions. In a Year 6 English lesson, pupils were totally involved and made excellent progress in comparing work of different writers.

17. Inspection evidence does not support the reservation about behaviour in the school expressed by a few parents. Pupils benefit from the very good opportunities for their moral and social development provided by the school. Movement in common areas is orderly. Pupils behave sensibly in the play areas. Lunch-time is a good social occasion. Inspectors saw no incidents of any oppressive behaviour. Pupils' behaviour indeed is good. The school's position on bullying and other oppressive behaviour is well understood and relationships are very good. All groups of pupils work and play together happily. Pupils listen to others attentively, show very good consideration for others' feelings and appreciate others' work - as in a Year 6 art lesson where pupils respected others' ideas and praised the pictures of water lilies that others produced. Pupils also respect the school property, including the displays, which are in good condition. Exclusions are not really a feature of the school; one pupil was twice excluded for a fixed period during the last school year.
18. Pupils' personal development is very good. Pupils use their initiative, work on their own and choose their activities where they have opportunities to exercise these good qualities. Pupils are helpful. They take attendance registers to the office, help in tidying up classrooms and assist in assemblies. Older pupils work as mentors for the younger ones - these 'buddies' have a high profile and are popular. Pupils take these responsibilities seriously. Where opportunities permit, pupils work together well, sharing materials and ideas; this was evident in a Year 6 physical education lesson where pupils worked well collaboratively and appreciated the skills of others in hitting a ball.
19. Pupils' attendance has been declining since the last inspection and is unsatisfactory, being below the national average. Absences are widespread and involve many pupils, particularly the younger ones. The problem of absenteeism also seems to be related to a very small number of families who have unfavourable circumstances and who are known to the authorities. Whilst illness accounts for most of the authorised absences, a significant number of absences are caused by family holidays during term-time. Unauthorised absence, when parents fail to inform the school of the reasons for their children's absence, is not an issue as it is considerably below the national average. Punctuality is satisfactory.

## **HOW WELL ARE PUPILS TAUGHT?**

20. The quality of teaching in the school is good, overall, and very good in the Reception class. During the inspection, teaching was very good or better in 27 per cent of lessons, good in a further 41 per cent, satisfactory in 29 per cent and unsatisfactory in two per cent (one lesson). This is a considerable improvement on the last inspection, when only five per cent of teaching was very good or better and ten per cent was unsatisfactory.
21. The high quality of teachers' planning is the main strength of the teaching in this school and a principal cause of pupils' good learning and achievement. Teachers of classes in the same year groups plan together. Plans show details not only of what groups of pupils are going to learn, but of specific skills to be focused on or special questions to ask of certain targeted pupils. This ties in well with the school's work on the gifted and talented initiative. Every lesson has a clear lesson objective and these are always explained to the pupils, which improves their learning, because they know where a lesson is going and why they are doing the activities. Work matched to

pupils' abilities is used in most English and mathematics lessons. In a good information technology lesson for Years 1 and 2 pupils, a higher-attaining pupil, who was already able to carry out the graphics activity which was being introduced to the class, was working on her own with headphones at the other computer on a mathematics challenge. Teachers' assessments are thorough and are an important part of effective planning, as discussed below in Section Five. Of particular note are the detailed day books in which teachers record notes about the progress of pupils with special educational needs. Teachers' marking varies from class to class; there are examples of high quality marking in two classes. Elsewhere, it is never less than satisfactory.

22. A second ingredient in the success of teaching is teachers' ability to choose interesting activities to teach their objectives and to engage their pupils in what they are doing. They begin this by reminding pupils of previous lessons, so that they understand how current work fits in. In an excellent English lesson in Years 5 and 6, pupils were comparing and contrasting the views of various writers, using different passages over a number of days, set during the war. The teacher's expertise in English was clear when she let no opportunity pass of developing pupils' understanding. For example, by asking pupils what is meant by *non-standard English*, she brought out from them the suggestion that its use by a character in *Goodbye, Mr Tom* implied that he was from a different part of England. Another child suggested that an evacuee was 'clinging to a teddy bear for a security blanket'. In a very good history lesson in the other Years 5 and 6 class, pupils made significant gains in their understanding of sources of evidence because the teacher brought in Roman artefacts from her own archaeological work.
23. A weakness in a few lessons was ensuring that tasks matched all the pupils' ability. Tasks were either too difficult or too easy for a group, or the amount of challenge offered to higher-attaining pupils, though the activity was different, was not sufficiently greater than that given to average pupils.
24. All teachers have good relationships with their pupils and this is another principal basis of good learning. Most teachers are experienced at managing pupils' behaviour and this produces a good working ethos in most lessons. A small number of boys in one class have challenging behaviour, but the teacher is learning effective strategies to cope with them, so that the learning of others is not adversely affected.
25. A further reason for teaching that was no better than satisfactory is teachers' expertise in music, which means that pupils receive an inconsistent experience in different classes. Pupils' skills in music are not being developed as they should be because teachers lack effective guidance in what to teach and how to structure their lessons. In information technology, though all teachers have sufficient expertise to teach the whole range of the subject, lack of space or equipment to give clear demonstrations, and the availability of no more than two or three computers at a time, restrict the effectiveness of teachers' work.
26. In the Reception class, the teacher and other adults foster very good relationships with children so that they have the confidence to make the most of the very good learning opportunities provided. They create a good balance between the outdoor and indoor environments.
27. English teaching is good and particular strengths are evident in Years 5 and 6. Most teachers show good subject knowledge and generally meet the needs of all groups. Handwriting practice is now established in the school, but its benefits are not as evident among older children. Teachers do not always highlight literacy errors in writing for other subjects and pupils' presentation is sometimes allowed to lapse.
28. The teaching of mathematics is satisfactory, overall, with about half the teaching observed in the inspection being good. Setting is used effectively, especially in Years 5 and 6, but the match of tasks to ability is not always used to best effect in Years 3 and 4.
29. Science teaching is good and has benefited from the analysis of last year's test results. Pupils are encouraged to think and reason in scientific terms, to observe, predict, carry out scientific

experiments and to draw conclusions from the evidence. Teachers plan effectively to meet the needs of pupils of all abilities.

30. Teaching in information technology and music is satisfactory, as discussed above. In all other subjects, teaching is good; pupils learn well as a result of effective planning and analysis of their work.
31. The quality of teaching and learning for pupils with special educational needs is good. Teachers and teaching assistants ensure that pupils' individual needs are met through the work that is set and the quality of the support provided. Pupils with special educational needs benefit from working alongside their peers in the classroom and from the support that they receive individually or in small groups from the special needs' support teacher. The support provided for small groups of pupils by teaching assistants is particularly valuable in literacy and numeracy lessons, enabling them to make good gains in learning in relation to the targets set in their individual education plans. Very good resources are used well to promote the learning of all pupils.
32. Gifted and talented pupils benefit from working with the most able pupils in the year group in literacy and numeracy. They are provided with suitably challenging activities that develop their knowledge, skills and understanding. Teachers are conscious of pupils for whom English is an additional language in the two classes where they are to be found and support them well. Travellers children have a good experience of school, which is appreciated by their parents.

### **HOW GOOD ARE THE CURRICULAR AND OTHER OPPORTUNITIES OFFERED TO PUPILS?**

33. The school provides a good curriculum that covers all subjects and is relevant to the ages and interests of all pupils from the Reception Year to Year 6, an improvement since the last inspection. It fulfils the statutory requirements of the National Curriculum and the locally agreed syllabus for religious education.
34. The national recommendations for the amount of teaching time each week are met. The morning is divided into three lessons, following national guidance, but is devoted mainly to English and mathematics, so that all the other subjects, including science, are taught in the afternoon, reducing the time particularly for subjects such as geography or history to be taught regularly in sufficient depth to enhance pupils' researching and writing skills.
35. The school aims are supported by clear subject policies, which are reviewed on a two-year cycle. There are detailed schemes of work to help the teachers in their planning for continuity and progression across classes and year groups. The school uses national subject guidance as the basis for its schemes and the Kent Agreed Syllabus for religious education. These plans are checked by subject co-ordinators to provide consistency and to develop cross-curricular links. Provision for basic skills is made effectively through the delivery of literacy and numeracy strategies but there are insufficient links between subjects to help enhance and improve writing and information technology skills. Extra time is usefully given to reading and handwriting practice each day outside the literacy hour.
36. Provision for personal, social and health education continues to be good and includes sex and drugs education, which is also taught through science. It reflects the aims of school well in its impact on pupils' learning with the addition of citizenship. The curriculum is enhanced by the teaching of French in Years 5 and 6 and by the twice-yearly day trips to France.
37. Pupils have good opportunities for extra-curricular activities, which take place at lunch time and after school, such as homework, art and craft, recorders, gardening, phonics, music, rounders, dance and prance, netball and football. Other opportunities to enrich the curriculum are provided by visitors, such as theatre groups and writers, and visits to museums, local religious and historical places.

38. The school provides a good inclusive education for all its pupils. Boys and girls with special educational needs and those who are at the early stages of learning English as an additional language are given good support, including bilingual books to improve their understanding of English. The school identifies gifted and talented pupils and planning indicates opportunities for additional challenge in lessons. The school promotes racial harmony well and pupils are respectful of each other and adults.
39. The provision for pupils with special educational needs is very good. It is organised to meet their specific needs. Clearly identified lesson objectives ensure that pupils have a good understanding of the work set and the results expected. Individual education plans are drawn up by the co-ordinator for special educational needs, the support teacher and class teachers and, in some cases, in consultation with external agencies. They contain targets relating to specific areas of learning or behaviour and suggest teaching and learning strategies. The targets are discussed with pupils and parents and are reviewed each term.
40. The school has maintained its productive links with the local community, reported by the previous inspection, and they continue to make a positive contribution to pupils' learning. For example, the local church is a well used learning resource and the vicar contributes to school assemblies. Visits to places of interest and worship and visitors, such as the school nurse, police liaison officer and fire brigade, support pupils' education and development. The local Education and Business Partnership facilitates links with industry. The school willingly serves the local community; for example, the elderly are invited to Christmas parties. There are also good relationships with a local play group and the receiving secondary schools to ensure smooth transition to and from the school. Interaction between schools in the cluster of schools results in collaborative work in the curriculum and in sharing good practice.

### **Provision for pupils' personal development**

41. The school's provision for spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is very good, an improvement since the last inspection.
42. Spiritual provision is very good and the school has a calm atmosphere. It is promoted mainly through assembly, personal, social and health education, music and religious education. There is emphasis on kindness and politeness, helping one another, friendship and working well. Each assembly has a moment for thought and reflection with a lighted candle providing a focus and helps to create a real sense of the spirituality of the occasion. Assemblies are sometimes used as opportunities for pupils to share their intentions and concerns for others. In one of the assemblies observed, some older pupils who mentor the younger ones described their role and the reasons for choosing three younger pupils and celebrating their caring work. Following a visit to the RSPCA centre, one pupil was so much moved by the work the centre did for rescuing and caring for animals that she grew some plants from seeds, sold them and raised some money for the centre. Other examples seen were in a religious education lesson in Year 6, where the display of a large picture of the Sikh Golden Temple, the Harimandir Sahib, which lies in an artificial lake and can only be reached by a causeway, created a special moment of wonder, thereby contributing to pupils' spiritual development caused pupils to gasp with surprise. In a lesson observed in the Reception, a child looked at his hand full of sand under a magnifying glass; he caused a feeling of awe and wonder and much excitement which he shared this with another child: 'Look! My hand is gynomous.' Teachers use events such as celebrations and birthdays to reflect on who we are, why are we here and our place in the world.
43. There is very good provision for pupils' moral development. Adults set a good example for pupils. Teachers impart high expectations of behaviour, and communicate a strong sense of right and wrong, through the reinforcement of school values and rules. These are based on Christian values, to foster mutual support and respect, to encourage a caring and responsible attitude, promote self-confidence and tolerance of all individual differences regardless of colour, creed, class, race or sex. The rules are displayed in classrooms and around the school and are accepted readily by pupils. Each class also has its own friendship tree, to which pupils

contribute to work better together. The school rewards system promotes the positive: caring, kindness and respect and doing the right things. The ethos of the school is noticeable in its very good order and in the pupils' willing commitment to fairness and the right kind of behaviour.

44. Provision for pupils' social development is good. Pupils are often arranged to work together in pairs or in groups to work collaboratively, and to share their learning by supporting each other. Though at the time of inspection, there was no elected school council, there are mentors and buddies who take on a variety of responsibilities. The older pupils help the younger ones to integrate, help with lunch-time play, monitor how pupils behave and choose pupils for personal achievement awards in front of the school. They train to become 'problem busters'; they are recognised by their caps and they mediate in playground disputes. Pupils participate in organising activities such as talent shows, drama productions, raising money for charity and sports activities. The school is also a pilot for the Junior Citizenship programme and through the Education Business Partnership, Year 5 and 6 pupils designed a game about stocks and shares, working alongside secondary GNVQ students. Such opportunities help pupils to become familiar with the responsibilities of citizenship.
45. Cultural provision, including multi-cultural provision, is very good overall. In literature, art, history, geography, music, physical education and religious education, the school offers very good provision. It is reinforced by celebrations of festivals such as Christmas and Easter and displays of Hindu costumes, artefacts, Sikh and Muslim books and posters and learning about Indian foods. There are multi-lingual signs and some bilingual books to help pupils who have English as an additional language. There are organised visits to the local area and some special assemblies held at the parish church. Visits by poets and authors during the Book Week, theatre groups and visits to the Museum of Kent Life, Rochester Castle, Hever Castle and the Globe Theatre enable pupils to develop a deeper understanding of their cultural heritage. However, visits to non-Christian places of worship or visitors from those places are rare, though the school creates opportunities for pupils to appreciate cultural and ethnic diversity within its community and outside it.

## **HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL CARE FOR ITS PUPILS?**

46. The last inspection reported good pastoral care and this remains the case now. The staff provide a supportive environment, ensure that new children quickly settle into school and warmly respond to their personal needs; this includes supporting pupils who have specific educational needs. The school has effective procedures for monitoring personal development and teachers know the pupils well; the class files, reporting system and regular staff meetings provide very well prepared means to monitor pupils' development.
47. The school takes effective steps to ensure pupils' welfare, health and safety. The caretaker is vigilant about health and safety matters and the governors' building sub-committee is involved in assessing any risks. There are suitable arrangements for first aid, medical support and child protection issues. The headteacher, the named responsible person, is knowledgeable in child protection matters and keeps others informed about child protection issues. The school has appropriate links with the support agencies. Pupils are carefully and effectively guided on matters relating to their well-being through the curriculum, like the 'circle time', and by such visiting specialists as the school nurse and a police officer. Pupils' well-being is further supported through the initiatives like the Swale drug education programme and the visiting Life Education Bus.
48. The procedures for attendance are not effective enough in obtaining satisfactory levels of attendance. Registration requirements are met and absences are appropriately identified. The school works closely with the education welfare officer, but the service has been erratic recently. Whilst there are many procedures to identify attendance problems, measures to follow up absences and promote good attendance are unsatisfactory, overall. Absences are followed by contacting the parents but not on the first day of a pupil's unexplained absence. The school informs parents about attendance procedures but there is not enough emphasis on the

connection between full attendance and achievement. Family holidays during term-time are not discouraged effectively. There is no multi-agency approach - that is, one involving parents, governors and external agencies - to deal with absenteeism. The school is aware of the need to improve the attendance procedures and has identified this as a priority in its improvement plan. The school promotes punctuality satisfactorily.

49. The school has an effective behaviour and discipline policy, which includes a system of rewards and sanctions. It is implemented very well in lessons to ensure that most pupils behave well in classrooms. Good behaviour and effort are rewarded through praise and acknowledgement at assemblies. Parents rightly think that the school is helping their children to become mature and responsible. Procedures for recording inappropriate behaviour are satisfactory. This, along with informal monitoring of pupils' behaviour, provides a deterrent for any oppressive behaviour such as bullying. Procedures for dealing with behavioural problems and to promote good behaviour are effective and good.
50. Procedures for assessing pupils' attainment and progress are very good. This represents an improvement since the last inspection when systems were good. The procedures are detailed in all policy documents and are based on national guidance. Children in the Reception class are assessed against the early learning goals and during the year their progress is tracked and recorded. As pupils progress through the school, the results of national tests and formal school tests are added to these records and an academic profile is built up for each child. This forms the basis for reporting to parents, the governing body and the child's next teacher. Pupils' progress is assessed by means of a half-termly assessment task in English, mathematics and science. This leads to target-setting for individual pupils and groups of pupils. In other subjects, the assessment of pupils' achievement is planned for at the end of each unit of work, in accordance with national guidance. In science, religious education, art, physical education and design technology, pupils are given opportunities to assess their own work and the work of others, thereby developing a good knowledge of their own learning.
51. The use of assessment information to guide curricular planning is very good. The school analyses children's base-line scores in the Reception class and national test scores in English, mathematics and science in Years 2 and 6. It also analyses the results of formal school tests in Years 3, 4 and 5, in order to highlight strengths and weaknesses in pupils' attainment. The analysis is used to inform the action plan for the following year, predict future performance and provide appropriate support where necessary. The evaluation of lessons and pupils' learning within lessons enables teachers to highlight areas for consideration in future planning and to identify pupils who are not achieving the projected level, thus enabling remedial action to be taken. Teachers' marking is generally helpful in identifying ways in which pupils can improve their performance.
52. The procedures for identifying, assessing and monitoring pupils with special educational needs are very good. The school draws on a wide range of information to set and review appropriate targets for each pupil, track their progress and direct support to those who need it. Teachers and teaching assistants receive training with regard to special educational needs. Trained teaching assistants play a valuable role in developing pupils' basic skills and extending their knowledge and understanding. Together with teachers, they monitor pupils' progress and the information gained is used to plan for individual pupils' learning. The school works closely with external specialist agencies, as the need arises.
53. The school focuses equally well on the needs of the most able pupils, including those with particular gifts and talents. It works on the data available to decide what level of support is appropriate for each pupil and monitors their progress.
54. The procedures for monitoring and supporting pupils' academic performance are very good. Teachers participate in termly monitoring sessions as a whole staff and review the targets that have previously been set in English, mathematics and science. The headteacher has a rolling programme of monitoring samples of above average, average and below average work from each class. Members of the senior management team analyse the extent to which different groups of pupils are making expected progress, particularly in English, mathematics and science and

consider what action needs to be taken in order to raise standards. Pupils' achievements are acknowledged through praise and rewards in class and at a celebration assembly each week. Overall, the school's use of assessment is a major factor in the rise in standards that is just beginning to be evident in the school's work.

## **HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL WORK IN PARTNERSHIP WITH PARENTS?**

55. The school has maintained the good partnership with parents and carers reported by the previous inspection. Parents' views of the school, as expressed in the parents' questionnaire and at the parents' meeting, were favourable. They value the accessibility of staff and the high expectations that staff have for the pupils. Parents are happy with the progress their children are making in academic areas as well as in developing their maturity. A few parents were less happy with the amount of work that their children bring home and the range of outside lesson activities that the school provides. Some had reservations about pupils' behaviour in the school. With reference to parents' less favourable views, the inspection findings are that the learning of pupils is well supported by the homework. The provision for outside-of-lesson activities is good. Perhaps the school can explain helpfully to parents what exactly constitutes homework (parents at the meeting felt the greatest need for information regarding holiday projects) and extra-curricular activities. A small number of parents are unduly concerned about pupils' behaviour, as it is good.
56. The school reaches out to parents well and this greatly helps to establish a very good parent-school relationship and assists children in settling quickly to school life and doing well at the school. The school prospectus and particularly the governors' annual reports are useful publications as they are clear and easy to read and meet statutory requirements. The annual reports to parents contain details of what pupils have been doing in curriculum subjects but do not adequately inform parents of what pupils should be doing or what they can do to help raise their children's attainment. However, good opportunities are available for parents to discuss their children's progress and how this can be improved. Parents are encouraged to hear their children read at home and the school makes effective use of the homework diaries to assist in regular communication between teachers and parents. A small number of parents regularly assist in school; their contribution is greatly valued by the class teachers. Parents of pupils for whom English is an additional language are helped to feel welcome in the school by signs in a variety of languages and dual-language reading books to share with their children. The school also works hard at links with travellers' parents.
57. The school works closely with the parents of pupils with special educational needs. Parents receive full information regarding the school's provision for special educational needs and are regularly informed about their child's progress. They meet formally with the co-ordinator for special educational needs each term and are welcome to share their concerns with the school and to seek guidance at any time. Pupils' progress is enhanced as a result of the good partnership between home and school.
58. Regular information provided to parents is good and includes good quality school newsletters and letters explaining what pupils are likely to do during a term. The school benefits from an active Parents' and Teachers' Association that organises fund-raising and social activities, involving both parents and children; these raise valuable funds for the school and promote community awareness. Parents actively support the children in all the activities they undertake and the school can rely on parents' support in dealing with problems related to their children's learning and development; however, parental support in keeping absences to a minimum is not consistent.

## **HOW WELL IS THE SCHOOL LED AND MANAGED?**

59. The leadership of the headteacher and the senior management team is very good. This represents good improvement since the last inspection, when leadership was good. Since taking up her appointment in January 2002, the headteacher has established a positive climate for

learning in which both pupils and staff achieve success. She has gained the support of staff and governors in effecting a number of improvements. At the heart of these improvements are the very effective systems for enabling teachers to develop their skills and assessing where pupils need to improve in order to raise standards. The school's aims and values are fully reflected in the work of the school and all staff work harmoniously together to improve standards and motivate pupils to succeed. The headteacher and senior management team have a very clear vision for the future development of the school. They have the full support and commitment of the governors and teaching and non-teaching staff. The delegation to staff with management responsibilities is very good and they contribute effectively to school improvement. The key issues of the last report have been fully addressed.

60. The management of the headteacher and senior management team is very good. They monitor and evaluate the school's performance and take effective action. Subject leaders monitor and review their own subject areas. The monitoring of teaching and learning in the classroom by the headteacher, the senior management team, governors and local authority personnel has proved effective in improving teaching and learning during the past year, the full benefits of which have yet to take effect in terms of standards. Improved planning builds on pupils' prior knowledge and takes into account the next stage of their learning.
61. There are very good procedures for reviewing the performance of the headteacher and other staff. The governing body, with the support of an external advisor, appraises the work of the headteacher and sets performance targets for her. The headteacher appraises the work of members of the senior management team, who appraise the work of individual teachers. Teaching assistants also have an annual appraisal, which is conducted by the deputy headteacher. This has raised the profile of their work and has opened up new opportunities for further training. They have developed their expertise in managing initiatives in literacy and numeracy and provide very good support for pupils with special educational needs and those for whom English is an additional language.
62. The leadership and management of special educational needs is very good and is a significant factor in the good progress made by pupils with special educational needs. The co-ordinator is ably supported by the special educational needs' support teacher, class teachers, trained teaching assistants and external specialist agencies. The school fulfils its legal responsibilities and the specific grant is used effectively in their support. The governor with oversight for special educational needs is well informed. She liaises with the co-ordinator on a regular basis and reports back to the governing body. The school works closely with the secondary schools to which pupils transfer in order to ensure the smooth transition of all pupils, including those with special educational needs.
63. The governing body fulfils its responsibilities well. The governors have worked very hard over the past few years to improve opportunities for learning. They have developed effective systems to check the quality of teaching and learning in the classroom, standards, the impact of their decisions and the quality of education provided. They have a good understanding of the strengths and weaknesses of the school and the areas for development. They take an active role in shaping the direction of the school and in the formulation of the school improvement plan. The headteacher works closely with the governing body and provides regular detailed reports for governing body meetings on standards, curriculum development, monitoring of pupil performance, trends over time and financial matters. Governors on the curriculum committee have individual responsibility for monitoring a National Curriculum subject and other governors for liaising with a particular class. A number of governors give very generously of their time in support of the school and regularly undertake training on new initiatives.
64. The school's priorities for development are appropriate and the action taken to meet the school's targets is very good. The three-year school improvement plan identifies areas for development, with regard to the role of the governors, staff, curriculum, buildings and resources. It includes time-scales and cost implications and is reviewed on a regular basis. There is a shared commitment to improvement and the capacity to improve is very good.

65. The school's budget is driven by the priorities in the school improvement plan. Governors keep a close watch on day-to-day expenditure and the bursar provides them with clear information to guide them. Recommendations made by the last audit were acted on in full, and specific grants for pupils with special educational needs are used well. Co-ordinators bid for a delegated budget and the staff together decides how these bids accord with current priorities and allocate the money accordingly.
66. However, a surplus amount has accrued in the budget over a number of years, which has now reached the equivalent of 24 per cent of income. Governors have plans for part of this: about 40 per cent of the money is needed to build new lavatories for reception and infant children, as current provision is inadequate. Other money is in reserve to continue current staffing levels next year, when the budget allocated by the local education authority is expected to fall at the same time as a slight fall in roll. However, the amount remaining will still be higher than recommended amounts. For some time, governors have debated how to improve the facilities for information technology without reaching a decision. They realise that they now need to plan to make good use of this money.
67. The school office is run efficiently and enables staff to carry out their duties effectively. Office staff provide a good welcome to parents and visitors. Good use is made of information technology in management - in budgeting, curricular planning and assessment data. Governors follow recommended procedures to obtain good value for expenditure and to assess cost-effectiveness of purchases, such as the new mathematics scheme. However, the size of the carry-forward in the budget means that their application of the principles of best value and the value for money offered by the school are no better than satisfactory.
68. The school has a good number of teachers and other classroom staff who have the expertise and experience to teach the curriculum, covering the age range and ability of pupils. Teaching assistants and support staff have good skills, are well briefed and they develop positive relationships with pupils. They make a significant contribution to pupils' achievement. Induction procedures for staff and arrangements to support newly qualified teachers are good. Administration, supervisory and building maintenance staff contribute well towards the smooth running of the school and its caring and learning ethos.
69. At the time of the previous inspection most classes were housed in prefabricated or temporary classrooms and accommodation was unsatisfactory. The school is now accommodated in new buildings which provide a good environment for pupils and allow full access to the National Curriculum and its effective teaching for all pupils. The outside environment is well organised - for example, the pond and garden cultivated by pupils that enrich their learning. There are spacious play areas that the pupils enjoy. The internal decoration of the school is in good condition and it provides a welcoming environment. Displays, including pupils' work, are purposeful and support pupils' learning. The caretaker and cleaner keep the school clean and well maintained.
70. The quality, range and accessibility of learning resources are good, overall, with an appropriate balance between classroom and centrally-based resources. In English, the range of resources and texts are satisfactory, but there are not enough resources to support teachers who lack expertise in music. The school library supports learning adequately. Improving the use of the library as a whole-school resource is quite rightly part of the school improvement plan. Provision for information technology in the school is satisfactory, with an adequate number of computers to enable the school to meet the National Curriculum requirements, though their current siting means that full use of them is not being made.

### **WHAT SHOULD THE SCHOOL DO TO IMPROVE FURTHER?**

71. To further improve the standards of work and the quality of education provided, the governing body, headteacher and staff should:

- (1) Raise the standards of pupils' attainment in music by:
  - giving teachers greater guidance in planning lessons;
  - providing training for those staff who lack sufficient expertise in music.

*(Paragraphs 135-41)*
  
- (2) Provide pupils with more opportunities to use computers by:
  - renewing the stock of old computers as necessary;
  - reviewing where computers are sited in order to maximise their use.

*(Paragraphs 128-132)*
  
- (3) Make plans to reduce the amount of the budget surplus to within recommended amounts.

*(Paragraph 66)*
  
- (4) Improve the rates of pupils' attendance by:
  - working more closely with parents and external agencies.

*(Paragraphs 19, 48, 58)*

In addition to the key issues above, the following less important weaknesses should be considered for inclusion in the action plan:

- (5) Provide pupils with more opportunities for extended writing.  
(Paragraph 86)

*† denotes an issue already highlighted as a priority in the school's development plan*

*(Numbers in brackets indicate a reference to the main paragraphs where the weaknesses are discussed.)*

## PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS

### Summary of the sources of evidence for the inspection

Number of lessons observed	51
Number of discussions with staff, governors, other adults and pupils	26

### Summary of teaching observed during the inspection

	Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
Number	1	13	21	15	1	0	0
Percentage	2	26	41	29	2	0	0

The table gives the number and percentage of lessons observed in each of the seven categories used to make judgements about teaching. Care should be taken when interpreting these percentages as each lesson represents almost two percentage points.

### Information about the school's pupils

Pupils on the school's roll	YR – Y6
Number of pupils on the school's roll (FTE for part-time pupils)	182
Number of full-time pupils known to be eligible for free school meals	20

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Special educational needs	YR – Y6
Number of pupils with statements of special educational needs	2
Number of pupils on the school's special educational needs register	45

English as an additional language	No of pupils
Number of pupils with English as an additional language	2

Pupil mobility in the last school year	No of pupils
Pupils who joined the school other than at the usual time of first admission	16
Pupils who left the school other than at the usual time of leaving	13

### Attendance

#### Authorised absence

	%
School data	8.4

#### Unauthorised absence

	%
School data	0.2

National comparative data	5.4
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National comparative data	0.5
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*Both tables give the percentage of half days (sessions) missed through absence for the latest complete reporting year.*

### Attainment at the end of Key Stage 1 (Year 2)

Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 1 for the latest reporting year	Year	Boys	Girls	Total
	2002	15	16	31

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		Reading	Writing	Mathematics
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	13	14	15
	Girls	13	14	13
	Total	26	28	28
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	84 (81)	90 (81)	90 (96)
	National	84 (84)	86 (86)	90 (91)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	13	15	15
	Girls	14	16	15
	Total	27	31	30
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	87 (85)	100 (92)	97 (92)
	National	85 (85)	89 (89)	89 (89)

Percentages in brackets refer to the year before the latest reporting year.

### Attainment at the end of Key Stage 2 (Year 6)

Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 2 for the latest reporting year	Year	Boys	Girls	Total
	2002	11	20	31

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys	8	7	8
	Girls	13	13	14
	Total	21	20	22
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	68 (86)	65 (68)	71 (91)
	National	75 (75)	73 (71)	86 (87)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys	7	7	10
	Girls	12	14	14
	Total	19	21	24
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	61 (77)	68 (82)	77 (82)
	National	73 (72)	74 (74)	82 (82)

Percentages in brackets refer to the year before the latest reporting year.

### ***Ethnic background of pupils***

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

<b>Categories used in the Annual School Census</b>	<b>No of pupils on roll</b>	<b>Number of fixed period exclusions</b>	<b>Number of permanent exclusions</b>
White – British	148	2	0
White – Irish	0	0	0
White – any other White background	3	0	0
Mixed – White and Black Caribbean	0	0	0
Mixed – White and Black African	0	0	0
Mixed – White and Asian	1	0	0
Mixed – any other mixed background	3	0	0
Asian or Asian British - Indian	0	0	0
Asian or Asian British - Pakistani	0	0	0
Asian or Asian British – Bangladeshi	0	0	0
Asian or Asian British – any other Asian background	0	0	0
Black or Black British – Caribbean	0	0	0
Black or Black British – African	0	0	0
Black or Black British – any other Black background	0	0	0
Chinese	0	0	0
Any other ethnic group	1	0	0
No ethnic group recorded	4	0	0

*The table refers to pupils of compulsory school age only. It gives the number of exclusions, which may be different from the number of pupils excluded.*

### ***Teachers and classes***

#### **Qualified teachers and classes: YR – Y6**

Total number of qualified teachers (FTE)	9.2
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	19.8
Average class size	26

#### **Education support staff: YR – Y6**

Total number of education support staff	5
Total aggregate hours worked per week	101

*FTE means full-time equivalent.*

### ***Financial information***

Financial year	2002/3
	£
Total income	460,985
Total expenditure	454,284
Expenditure per pupil	2,329
Balance brought forward from previous year	101,876
Balance carried forward to next year	108,577

### **Recruitment of teachers**

Number of teachers who left the school during the last two years	7
Number of teachers appointed to the school during the last two years	6
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Total number of vacant teaching posts (FTE)	0
Number of vacancies filled by teachers on temporary contract of a term or more (FTE)	1
Number of unfilled vacancies or vacancies filled by teachers on temporary contract of less than one term (FTE)	0

*FTE means full-time equivalent.*

## Results of the survey of parents and carers

### Questionnaire return rate

Number of questionnaires sent out	182
Number of questionnaires returned	32

### Percentage of responses in each category

	Strongly agree	Tend to agree	Tend to disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know
My child likes school.	53	34	9	3	0
My child is making good progress in school.	56	44	0	0	0
Behaviour in the school is good.	41	44	12	0	3
My child gets the right amount of work to do at home.	19	59	16	3	3
The teaching is good.	53	38	9	0	0
I am kept well informed about how my child is getting on.	41	50	9	0	0
I would feel comfortable about approaching the school with questions or a problem.	66	28	6	0	0
The school expects my child to work hard and achieve his or her best.	66	31	3	0	0
The school works closely with parents.	41	50	9	0	0
The school is well led and managed.	44	47	0	0	9
The school is helping my child become mature and responsible.	41	56	3	0	0
The school provides an interesting range of activities outside lessons.	25	41	16	6	12

## **PART D: THE STANDARDS AND QUALITY OF TEACHING IN AREAS OF THE CURRICULUM AND SUBJECTS**

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

72. Provision for pupils in the Foundation Stage (Reception class) is very good, an improvement since the last inspection. At the last inspection, it was reported that children entered the school with good skills in speaking and listening, mathematics, drawing and knowledge and understanding of the world but lower than average in aspects of physical and social development.
73. Children now enter with skills which are lower, especially in speaking and listening, though, overall, their attainment on entry is average. By the time they begin Year 1, most pupils are likely to exceed the expected standards of the early learning goals in all areas - a better picture than at the last inspection. A few children in Reception are also starting the National Curriculum and achieving early Key Stage 1 levels in reading, writing and mathematics. Pupils with special needs and those who are learning English as an additional language also make good progress and frequently do better than might be expected. Thus, a very good start is made in the Reception Year with levels of attainment, which exceed expectations for their age.
74. The overall quality of teaching is very good in all six areas of learning and curriculum planning is extremely thorough. It meets the needs of all children well and ensures that good progress is made in the acquisition of knowledge, skills and understanding. Teaching and other support staff foster very good relationships with children so that they have the confidence to make the most of the very good learning opportunities provided, thorough planned experiences and activities that are challenging and yet achievable. They create a good balance between the outdoor and indoor environments to provide an effective context for independent and self-chosen learning. Staff make skilful and well-planned observations of children and assess each child's development in relation to the stepping-stones. They use the assessment to evaluate and improve the quality of provision. Adults provide rich and varied resources and artefacts to stimulate learning and the whole teaching area is bright and welcoming; the indoor and outdoor spaces are well organised with attractive displays. The management of the Foundation Stage is very good.

### **Personal, social and emotional development**

75. Most children enter the Reception class with immature skills in personal and social development, below what is expected of this age, yet they settle happily and quickly into daily routines. They show curiosity and have a positive approach to experiences. Children display increasing independence in choosing activities individually and in groups and show a high level of involvement. They talk freely about each other and about their families and they like working with adults and with each other because each area of the curriculum is planned to balance their choice of activities, with those of learning as a whole group. This helps create opportunities for children to develop independence, confidence and self-control and to share resources and take turns. They take great pride in tidying up their tables after an activity, including helping to put things away. They show good care and concern for each other and for other living things and the environment around them. For example, when digging in their gardening area, after finding a worm, they carefully put it in a transparent dish, covered it and then observed it; then it was put back gently and covered with earth. They also learn that each child is different and everybody is special and show respect to others. In the lessons observed, they demonstrated that they are quick to settle on entry, are keen to get on and know the routines well; a good number work independently. They know the reasons why rules are important and observe them well. Overall, the children are making good progress and the majority exceed the early learning goals for personal, social and emotional development by the time they enter Year 1.

### **Communication, language and literacy**

76. When they start school, most children have average skills in language and literacy but many children have below average speaking and listening skills. A few children have a limited

vocabulary, unused to extended conversation or to making comments on their own. With the good support provided, they begin to use language more confidently for communication, speak clearly and respond sensibly to instructions. A small number use quite complex sentences. Adults place a lot of stress on speech and work hard at encouraging children to talk about their needs rather than use nods and gestures. Through the use of questions and support, adults help children to think, to answer and ask questions. Children are developing an interest in books. They handle books well and take them home to share. They read regularly to adults and enjoy playing bingo with words. They are learning how to use phonics and practise the sound of the letter 'o' and making words with it, such as *orange* and *octopus*. Some read by looking at illustrations; others read by recognising words. Reading is above average for most pupils: at least 50 per cent of the pupils are at Level 1 in reading in English and those with special needs are also meeting the early learning goals. In writing, most children write their names correctly and a good proportion copy letters to teachers' writing and link letters to words. Most can sequence picture stories accurately and write captions and labels. The most able write sentences.

### **Mathematical development**

77. Most of the children are on course to exceed the early learning goal for mathematical development by the end of Reception. They make good progress in this area. Children enjoy counting rhymes and games. They count in a variety of situations, such as counting while skipping on a rope - one child counted to 23. They play with a variety of shapes and correctly name circles, squares, triangles and rectangles. They recognise shapes in the environment and similarities and differences. They draw and cut shapes and choose suitable components to make shapes. They like playing at weighing and how to balance.
78. Good questioning extends their learning and in a lesson observed, they identified numbers which were greater and smaller. They learnt how to tally by counting and marking up to 9 and proudly shared their success with others. They understand words like *sums*, *plus*, *adding on* and *equals* and recognise the symbols used. Children match sets of objects to the correct numeral. They like playing mental mathematical games such as counting two and three on fingers and showing them to the teacher. Most can do sums by adding different units of numbers and the more able can add larger numbers correctly.

### **Knowledge and understanding of the world**

79. The school helps children in the Reception to gain a rich range of experiences and to develop an understanding of the world around them. For example, groups of children very carefully observed the worms, which they had helped to collect in their outdoor area. They are very intrigued with the movement of the worms. They see them under magnifying glass and how they look different under it. One child found an interesting-looking piece of dry wood and showed it to the teacher. Then she saw it under magnifying glass and told another child, 'I can see a green speck now.' Adults exploit opportunities for intervention, questioning children about their activities and commenting on their observations. In a lesson observed, children investigated objects and materials using all the five senses through a circuit of activities such as guessing the object by touching a 'feely bag', identifying flavours of crisps by tasting them, listening to a sound track, smelling the smelly pots and looking at books. Then they enjoyed singing the song of five senses. Children have access to computers and greatly enjoy using these. They are becoming increasingly competent in using the mouse to select objects and direction keys to move objects on the screen.

### **Physical development**

80. By the end of Reception, most children are on course to exceed the expected early learning goals in physical development. They develop small skills, such as handling tools, well. Scissors, pencils, pens, glue, Play-doh, construction toys and large and small equipment are well used, with good control and increasing confidence. Most children peddle around the outdoor circuit, changing direction and avoiding obstacles and can skip and jump in safety. One was seen

skipping backwards and forwards very well. Pupils make a good start in developing a sense of space and continue to improve. Except a small number who needed a little help, most changed competently for a physical education lesson. They recognise changes that occur when their bodies are active. They move with confidence, travelling around under, over and through, balancing themselves well on the climbing equipment. They understand words like *kneel, sit down, lie on your side* and movements associated with them. The Reception has its own well-maintained outdoor curriculum areas with fixed climbing apparatus. Such provision helps children to make good progress in the development of their physical skills.

### **Creative development**

81. The provision for creative development and particularly in art is very good. Children make good progress in the work seen in this area of learning and the majority are expected to exceed early learning goals by the end of Reception; some are exceeding them in art and design and technology. In a stimulating lesson observed, the teacher's very good subject knowledge and understanding of the learning needs of young children and the involvement of other adults helped the children to make very good progress in developing their cutting, pasting, and shaping of fabrics and materials. They chose materials with texture and colour to make a collage and an octopus, reinforcing the link with the letter 'o' and the colour orange. They are also improving singing together and aural skills by learning to sing many songs. They learn the names of musical instruments. They explore independently sounds made by a variety of musical instruments in their own formed groups. They like to do their own role-play, such as being doctors and nurses, wearing the nurses' uniform, carrying a stethoscope and tending to patients gently.

### **ENGLISH**

82. Standards reached by pupils in Year 2 and Year 6 are as expected and they show a rising trend for the last three years, an improvement since 1998 when they dipped below expectations after the last inspection. They are getting better in reading, particularly in Years 5 and 3. Most pupils make good progress and achieve well in lessons and this includes boys and girls who have English as an additional language and those who also have special educational needs.
83. Standards in speaking and listening continue to be average since the last inspection. Pupils express their ideas confidently and speak clearly with a suitable range of descriptive vocabulary. They listen well to their teachers and to each other and respond to questions appropriately. For instance, in a lesson observed in a Year 5 and 6 class, pupils discussed how Walter de La Mare, in his poem, *Silver*, described that colour. They further discussed how men and women might see colour differently, particularly pinks and mauves and why. By Year 2, most pupils generally know what is expected of them and listen carefully to instructions. Most pupils take an active part in discussions and like to join in activities, answering questions with a sound vocabulary and sentence structure. In Key Stage 2, pupils use formal language appropriately in class discussions, with correct use of technical terms. This practice helps them with other subjects, where ideas are explored and developed. Pupils in all years respond well to being taught correct pronunciation and spelling and being encouraged to improve what they want to say. This helps pupils' to improve their confidence when speaking to the class.
84. Standards in reading are also about the national average, overall, though they are higher in some year groups, as in Year 5. In Key Stage 1, pupils' progress in reading is guided by a commercial scheme which ensures that skills grow systematically. The skill of sounding out new words is well taught and most pupils are especially adept at this, though their skill can be deceptive since they do not always grasp the meanings of key words, even though they can read these words aloud well. The more able seven-year-old pupils have a good grasp of what they read and understand. Additional help, given to those with English as an additional language, and those with special educational needs, ensures that they build on success.

85. Pupils are generally interested in books, though many keep to the limited range of books offered by the commercial scheme. More able pupils are better acquainted with popular authors than generally found, reflecting the aspirations of pupils. Very occasionally there is a mismatch between a pupil's choice and appropriate challenge. Regular reading time, in addition to the literacy hour, makes sure that by the age of eleven pupils read longer texts silently and with good concentration. Their understanding is generally sound and some read aloud with dramatic expression. They talk about books, compare them and explain preferences, but their library skills are unevenly developed, particularly for doing personal research, though they use indexes well.
86. Pupils' writing skills are only average because too few pupils are reaching higher levels in both key stages. Pupils do not have enough experience of extended writing. Throughout the school, pupils write for a widening range of purposes and audiences. Their writing includes stories and factual reports. By seven, most make their meaning plain in personal accounts, but writing in all subjects is generally brief, with limited vocabulary and short sentences. The more able pupils spell and punctuate correctly. Otherwise, standards of correctness are low. Handwriting is taught as a separate skill, but standards are inconsistent. About 50 per cent of pupils manage a joined style, particularly in the upper junior years; despite the teaching of handwriting many in Year 6 still do not join consistently. As a result, pupils throughout the school write slowly and work is not always tidily presented. However, in Key Stage 1, improvements are more noticeable in handwriting books.
87. Older pupils have a sound grasp of conventions for the beginnings and endings of stories, and those of higher ability use correctly punctuated speech well for dramatic effect. Poetry writing is especially successful because pupils select words thoughtfully and finish a piece even when they write slowly or have limited language. Pupils in Year 5 create their own verses based on their chosen colour. In a Year 4 class, pupils showed that by changing the wording and presentation of an advertisement, they could make language more persuasive for people to buy a product. Sentence structures tend to be simple, though adequately expressing meaning in factual accounts, in other subjects. A small proportion of pupils' work is word-processed. Pupils with special educational needs and those who learn English as an additional language make good progress in expressing their meanings through the good support they receive.
88. Teaching is good, overall. Particular strengths are evident in Years 5 and 6. In the best lessons, teachers read aloud dramatically, capturing pupils' attention and raising their interest in books. Brisk interactions with pupils seek to involve and challenge all to learn and express ideas. In a very good lesson in Year 6, pupils were totally engaged in comparing and contrasting the work of different writers and finding and understanding the connections in an anthology of Second World War writing. A quick pace was kept and all pupils were fully included because the difficulty of questions was adjusted to the differing levels of ability. Writing tasks are well matched to pupils' abilities and challenge them. Most teachers show good subject knowledge and plan lessons thoroughly, with suitable resources and activities to build on previous learning and extend it further.
89. Literacy hour routines are generally well established, with additional reading and handwriting practice times, ensuring a generous allocation of time for teaching English, but inconsistencies remain. Most notably, tasks and expectations occasionally do not match closely enough the needs of pupils of differing abilities or the writing task is too hard or too long for the specified time and, therefore, a few pupils do not complete it or present it well. In most classes, teaching assistants help individuals and groups take a full part in activities and make good progress. When such help is not available and tasks are not planned carefully enough for pupils' different learning needs, their capabilities for independent learning develop at a slow rate.
90. Marking is mostly consistent. Most teachers give encouragement and identify weaknesses that need attention. However, the impact is reduced because pupils are not routinely required to do corrections or follow-up work. Teachers' marking in other subjects does not regularly highlight literacy errors, and expectations for accuracy are not high, overall. Homework is set usually on Fridays and reading books are taken home regularly. Pupils' best work is also well displayed to

encourage pride in achievement, both in classes, in the corridors and halls, which is good practice, though occasionally spelling and punctuation are left uncorrected.

91. Leadership and management of the subject are good. Results of annual tests and samples of work by different groups of pupils are analysed for trends, and action is taken to raise standards. The school has a library, stocking mainly some recently bought big books and other subject-specific books, but opportunities for a whole class to learn library skills and for independent research are limited. Class libraries have sufficient modern fiction and non-fiction books for meeting the needs of a majority of pupils.

## **MATHEMATICS**

92. Pupils' attainment is average by Years 2 and 6. Inspection evidence indicates that younger pupils in the juniors are now reaching standards which are higher than expected for their age and this shows that pupils are now achieving well, overall. Standards are similar to those of the last inspection, but they fell considerably immediately afterwards and have been rising gradually since.
93. By Year 2, pupils have a sound grasp of number facts and are becoming increasingly skilled in manipulating numbers mentally; for example, when they round numbers to the nearest ten. They halve and double numbers and count in twos, threes, fours, fives and tens. Average and higher-attaining pupils know how to find a quarter of a number and use effective written methods for adding and subtracting two- and three-digit numbers. All pupils use standard measures for length and weight and know the names of common two- and three-dimensional shapes. They use appropriate mathematical vocabulary and choose appropriate calculations when solving problems.
94. By the age of eleven, pupils have acquired the appropriate skills of mental arithmetic. They show a good understanding of place value when they round whole numbers to the nearest ten, hundred or thousand and they are learning to perform the same operation with decimals. Average and higher-attaining pupils calculate complex fractions and percentages of quantities and they recognise equivalent fractions, percentages and decimals. Higher-attaining pupils use cancelling of fractions as a means of solving problems. Most pupils are familiar with the times-tables, though not many have achieved instant recall. Pupils use standard measures and all abilities have an understanding of perimeter and area and how to calculate them. Average and higher-attaining pupils explore the relationship between the most important Imperial measures and their metric equivalents and use short-hand methods of calculation for conversion. Pupils draw and interpret various types of graph and most pupils understand *mode*, *mean* and *range*. Higher-attaining pupils express probability on a scale from nought to one.
95. Other subjects give pupils appropriate opportunities to use their numeracy skills. For example, work in information technology on data collection and presentation enables pupils to practise interpreting graphs and tallying frequency. In science and design and technology, pupils use their skills of estimation and measuring.
96. Pupils with special educational needs receive good support from teachers and assistants. The good systems for regular assessment which class teachers use help them plan for their individual needs. The few pupils whose mother tongue is not English are also well supported; teachers ensure that their language needs are met and do not present a barrier to their learning. In a minority of classes, higher-attaining pupils could reach higher standards if work were matched more closely to their needs.
97. The quality of teaching is satisfactory, overall. Good teaching was observed in both key stages during the inspection and one lesson was unsatisfactory. The use of setting is the principal strength in the teaching, especially in Years 5 and 6. This means that pupils of all abilities are usually given work which challenges them at their own level, because teachers divide their sets into small groups of pupils, based on their ability. The work sample shows that this is not done as frequently as it could be in the Years 3 and 4 sets. All teachers mark work regularly; two teachers' marking is of a high quality, though others do not make such consistently good use of comments for improvement. In one lesson, the activities were not well-matched to pupils' ability -

some were too easy while others were too difficult - and the introduction to the lesson was too long and aimed mainly at higher-attaining pupils.

98. The subjects is well managed. The use of analysis of test papers in all year groups is a strength, enabling the co-ordinator to highlight areas of the curriculum for further emphasis. Monitoring of teaching is used effectively to improve classroom practice. This could be seen clearly in the scrutiny of work, where an improved use of differentiation was attributable directly to the monitoring of particular lessons, shown also by the record of lesson observations. Resources are good and the recent adoption of a new commercial scheme has given teachers a good basis for effective planning.

## SCIENCE

99. Standards in science at the end of Year 2 and Year 6 match the national average, overall. This maintains the position at the last inspection and represents satisfactory improvement. All pupils, including pupils with special educational needs, those for whom English is an additional language and travellers, make good progress and achieve well. This represents an improvement since the last inspection when progress was satisfactory. There are no significant differences between the attainment of boys and girls. Improvement, overall, since the last inspection is satisfactory.
100. A number of initiatives have been put in place, following the disappointing national test results in Year 6 in 2002. Their impact has been to improve standards from well below average to equal the national average. They include more emphasis on scientific enquiry and open-ended investigations, staff training in physical processes and materials and their properties and more rigorous monitoring and analysis of test results. Other measures taken to raise standards include the establishment of links with the Education Business Partnership and people in local industries, who work on science investigations with the pupils.
101. Considerable progress has been made as a result of these initiatives, particularly in Year 6. Pupils in Years 1 and 2 demonstrated their knowledge of the importance of eating healthy food and made a collage of a healthy meal. Pupils in Years 3 and 4 planned group investigations to compare the amount of light that can pass through different materials. They understand the terms, *opaque*, *transparent* and *translucent* and use them with confidence. Pupils in Years 5 and 6 increased their understanding of the factors that affect dissolving, by carrying out group investigations into factors affecting the rate at which salt crystals and table salt dissolve. In discussion, Year 6 pupils explained how much they enjoy carrying out independent investigations. They like the format for writing up experiments - 'aim, equipment, prediction, methods, results and conclusion'; sometimes, they choose to represent their findings in graphs and tables. They feel that they are very well prepared for the national tests.
102. Teaching is good, overall, as it was at the last inspection. It varies from satisfactory to very good. This leads to good learning for all pupils. Teachers' knowledge and understanding are good and they teach the basic skills well. Their planning is very good with clearly defined learning objectives, enabling all pupils to make good progress through carefully planned work that develops their understanding, scientific knowledge and skills. They use a range of effective teaching methods that meet the needs of all pupils, building on pupils' prior knowledge and linking what is new to what they already know. Pupils are encouraged to think and reason in scientific terms, to observe, predict, carry out scientific experiments and to draw conclusions from the evidence. Class management is very good and pupils' interest and concentration are fostered in a supportive learning environment, where high standards are expected and achieved. Independence is encouraged in Years 5 and 6. Good use of time and resources and the valuable support given by teaching assistants enable all pupils to achieve well. The quality and use of targets and ongoing assessment are good; pupils in all classes are encouraged to assess their own progress in the lesson and they have a good knowledge of their own learning.
103. The quality and range of learning opportunities are good. Literacy skills are developed through discussion, research, recording and the use of scientific vocabulary. Mathematical and information technology skills are developed through the use of measurements, diagrams,

pictograms, tables and graphs. Science contributes very well to pupils' spiritual development through their developing understanding of the universe, their observation of tadpoles developing into frogs, their study of the wormery and ant world and the growing of plants, such as pumpkins and mimosa. It contributes to their moral development, as they carry out fair tests, make reasoned judgements, take responsibility and respect the views of others. Their social development is enhanced through groupings, discussions, sharing views and exercising responsibility. Their cultural understanding develops through groupings and their appreciation of the contributions, values and beliefs of others.

104. The curriculum is enriched by visits to the Science Museum in London and visitors to the school. Procedures for the formal and informal assessment of pupils' attainment and progress are very good and assessment information is used very well to guide curricular planning. There are very good procedures for monitoring pupils' subject performance. The subject leader monitors teaching and learning in the classroom, teachers' planning and pupils' work.
105. Leadership and management are very good. This represents very good improvement since the last inspection when they were satisfactory. The subject leader has a very clear vision for the development of science and a commitment to raising standards. Resources are very good and are organised well in support of pupils' learning. The increased emphasis on the use of key questioning skills by teachers and the development of pupils' reasoning skills and their use of scientific vocabulary are having a positive impact on standards. The subject leader has produced a new scheme of work, based on a two-year cycle, with science as the central aspect of all topics. This will come into force in September.

## **ART AND DESIGN**

106. Attainment is above expectations at the end of Year 2 and Year 6. All pupils, including pupils with special educational needs, those for whom English is an additional language and travellers, make good progress and achieve well. This represents good improvement since the last inspection when attainment and progress were satisfactory. There are no significant differences in the attainment of boys and girls.
107. During the inspection, half the pupils in Years 1 and 2 made close observational drawings of a vase of flowers; the other half created an eye-catching flower collage with repeating shapes. Pupils in Years 3 and 4 made good use of papier-mâché techniques to create a bowl. Years 5 and 6 pupils studied the work of Monet and produced effective pictures of water lilies in tissue paper, having previously produced haystacks in pastels. Other pupils expressed awe and wonder in assembly when pupils displayed their reproductions of Monet's work. The quality of pupils' work, over time, is good. Sketch-books are used well as a visual resource. Each year, pupils further develop their skills in drawing, painting, collage, sculpture, textiles, print making and digital media. The value placed on pupils' achievement is reflected in the good quality displays.
108. Teaching is good, overall, as it was at the last inspection; in Years 5 and 6, it is very good. Teachers' good subject knowledge, emphasis on the teaching of basic skills and very good planning are major factors in pupils' good acquisition of knowledge, skills and understanding. Their high expectations inspire pupils to apply creative effort to their work. Pupils are managed very well, enabling good use to be made of time and resources. Effective teaching methods engage pupils' interest and concentration. Through opportunities to appraise their own work and the work of others, pupils have a good knowledge of their own learning. The use of visual images, which help to overcome learning difficulties, leads to good learning for all pupils.
109. Pupils' spiritual development is enhanced through opportunities to appreciate great works of art and to express of their own feelings through art. Their literacy and social development is promoted through group and paired work and discussion. Pupils use their mathematical knowledge to print repeated patterns and create geometric designs. Every opportunity is taken for pupils to sketch during school visits and there is a flourishing art club.
110. Leadership and management of the subject are very good. The subject leader is very enthusiastic. She has a very clear sense of educational direction and the school's aims and values are reflected in the work of the subject. The procedures for assessing pupils' attainment and progress are very good and assessment information is used very well to guide curricular planning. The subject leader has an overview of teachers' planning and pupils' work. Resources are very good and are used well.

## **DESIGN AND TECHNOLOGY**

111. Attainment matches expectations at the end of Year 2 and Year 6. All pupils, including pupils with special educational needs, those for whom English is an additional language and travellers, make good progress and achieve well. This represents satisfactory improvement since the last inspection, when attainment and progress were satisfactory. There are no significant differences in the attainment of boys and girls and most pupils make good progress.
112. One of the strengths of design technology is food technology and, during the inspection, pupils in Years 1 and 2 designed and created an appetising plate of fruit salad, concentrating on taste, colour and texture. Pupils in Years 3 and 4 disassembled torches to see how they worked and successfully identified the key features, in preparation for designing their own torches. The consistent approach to planning, designing, making and evaluating products results in finished products that are of a satisfactory standard and sometimes better. Pupils in Year 6 spoke with enthusiasm about design and technology. They described the wheeled vehicles and pneumatic rockets that they made when they were younger, how they made and controlled cars using *Legodacta* in Year 5 and the making of a fairground and slippers in Year 6.
113. The quality of teaching and learning is good. This represents improvement since the last inspection, when teaching was satisfactory at the end of Year 6. It maintains the position at the end of Year 2. The strengths of teaching are very good planning and a strong emphasis on skills and techniques, which leads to the good development of pupils' knowledge, skills and understanding. Very good management of pupils engages their interest and concentration and inspires them to put creative effort into their work. Teachers' knowledge and understanding are good, teaching methods are effective, and time, support staff and resources are used well to support pupils' learning. The quality and use of ongoing assessment are good and pupils are trained to evaluate their products and carry out improvements; as a result, they have a good knowledge of their own learning.
114. The quality and range of learning opportunities is good. The curriculum is enriched through links with other areas of the curriculum. The procedures for assessing pupils' attainment and progress, the use of assessment to guide curriculum planning and procedures for monitoring pupils' subject performance are very good. Pupils develop their literacy skills as they complete their design sheets and written evaluations and discuss their finished products. They develop their mathematical skills as they measure and make templates. Information technology is used for research.
115. Leadership and management are very good. The temporary subject leader is experienced and enthusiastic and demonstrates a clear sense of educational direction, which reflects the school's aims and values. She has raised the profile of the subject and standards are rising under her experienced guidance. Learning resources are very good and are used well, although the co-ordinator has identified the need to develop control technology.

## **GEOGRAPHY**

116. Teaching of the subject was seen only in Years 5 and 6 during the inspection. Evidence was also gathered for other classes by an analysis of the documents and pupils' written work and through discussions with staff and pupils. Standards are in line with expectations for seven and eleven-year-olds, and at the same level as those found in the last inspection. Boys and girls achieve equally well and pupils with special needs and those who have English as an additional language make good progress with additional support provided.
117. Pupils in Year 2 can identify and draw key features of a holiday at the seaside after reading about 'Barnaby Bear goes to the seaside.' They know man-made and physical features, on a map such as buildings, roads, beaches, hills, the sea and mainland. They also know about different kinds

of transport on land, sea and air. They compare well the buildings and features of their own locality with that of an Indian street.

118. Years 3 and 4 pupils know what they can do to improve the environment. They surveyed around the school, looking at the causes of pollution, such as waste, traffic and vandalism. Pupils in Years 5 and 6 undertook a detailed study of Llandudno, its physical features, its population and why it is a good place for a holiday. They compare this seaside town with their own village of Newington, looking at similarities and differences. In a lesson observed in Year 6, pupils look carefully at different scale maps of Kent, identifying their chosen settlements and analysing what is different about them. They understand that settlements vary in sizes, a hamlet being the smallest and then village, town and city. They also know that the city has a cathedral. However, there is little evidence about their making of maps to scale or use of aerial maps.
119. Learning in geography supports the learning of English, mathematics, history and art. It also makes a good contribution to pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development by the exploration of the life styles, customs and traditions of people in other parts of the world. Discussions with pupils indicate that many of them have a keen interest in geography.
120. The overall quality of teaching is good. Organised field trips in the locality and visits to France enhance the breadth of the study of geography. Teachers have good subject knowledge and use resources well. Most teaching is done through the use of a variety of teaching methods and the appropriate deployment of resources to assist learning - books, posters, pictures, artefacts, visits and visitors. Lessons are varied and occasionally challenging for most groups of pupils, enabling them to achieve well.
121. The co-ordination of the subject is satisfactory. The school has adopted a national scheme and the assessment is effective. However, the lack of regular weekly lessons throughout the year inhibits the continuous progress of pupils and to sustain their achievement.

## **HISTORY**

122. Standards are in line with national expectations by the end of Years 2 and 6 and have been maintained in Key Stage 1 since the last inspection report, though standards in Key Stage 2 then were higher than they are now. There is no marked difference between the attainment of boys and girls. Pupils with special educational needs and those who learn English as an additional language achieve well with additional support.
123. By the age of seven, pupils are beginning to develop a sound understanding of the past by learning about how Florence Nightingale went to help the wounded soldiers in the Crimean War and improve the unhygienic conditions in hospitals. One girl mentioned that her great-great-great grandmother was born in 1820, the year when Florence Nightingale was born. One boy worked out that she died 93 years ago by working out in his head 2003-1910, the date of her death. They know why she is called the 'Lady of the Lamp.' They understand the passage of time relating, it to their own lives, and are developing an understanding of key historical facts. Strengths at Key Stage 1 include the pupils' increasing sense of chronology, understanding of the passage of time and of the difference between the past and the present.
124. In Key Stage 2, the teacher's effective questioning and appropriate provision of a variety of primary and secondary sources enabled Years 5 and 6 pupils to show an increasing understanding of the role of the archaeologist and how that knowledge has been acquired about the ancient Romans. Pupils are intrigued by the careful handling of the Roman pottery by the teacher, dug recently in Canterbury and observe it carefully as the teacher describes how the finds were made and put together. Attainment in this lesson exceeded expectations. Year 6 pupils generally display sound factual understanding of events such as the key events in the life of Boudicca and by researching from a number of secondary sources and the CD-ROM, made available by the teacher, learn that there are different interpretations of the same event. They are beginning to acquire the skills to use relevant historical terms in describing and sequencing events. Their

information-gathering and analysing skills are improving but pupils with lower abilities find independent writing difficult to manage. This also affects their interpretation of events and explanation of causes and effects in a structured way.

125. History makes a good contribution to pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development and to their literacy skills by extending the range of writing that pupils tackle when they cover areas such as fact, opinion and empathy, but occasionally less developed writing skills in English reduce pupils' effectiveness in expressing them better. The subject also makes an adequate contribution to numeracy, art and design and technology and there was some evidence of the use of information technology making a contribution to the learning of history.
126. The quality of teaching and learning is good overall. Planning is good and resources are readily available. There are good displays around the school of posters, pictures and pupils' writing, Victorian artefacts, ancient Greeks posters, toys and books. The breadth of the study of history is enhanced through visits to places of historical interest such as the Museum of Kent Life, Hever Castle, Rochester Castle and Cathedral, the Globe Theatre and Dover Museum.
127. History teaching in school is well supported by the enthusiastic co-ordinator. Assessments are adequate. Though there is sufficient time devoted to history teaching, the way the timetable is organised in blocks inhibits continuous step by step progress and achievement, particularly in developing research skills.

## **INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY**

128. Standards of attainment meet expectations by Years 2 and 6, despite the few opportunities which pupils have to use computers. This is because of the wide range of paper tasks which pupils undertake, preparing them for the activities at the keyboard. Pupils keep a large amount of written work in their information technology books - much more than is generally seen for this subject - but little of it was produced directly on computers. Standards were also average at the last inspection, though, nationally and in the school, the subject now has a broader curriculum than at that time.
129. Pupils in Year 2 know where they might expect to find examples of information technology besides computers. They use word processing to write sentences and to format text. They draw pictures with graphics software and know how to use the icons to alter tools, such as brush-stroke or pattern. They experience control technology with the use of a floor-robot and by giving directions to move a pointer on screen. They make tally charts in preparation for input to the computer to produce graphs.
130. Year 6 pupils format text to a given brief. They understand editing tools such as cut and paste and how to import decorative features such as borders. They have experienced spreadsheets and know how to write formulæ to calculate the total of a row or column. They store information in a database and know how to retrieve it in order to answer questions which join two criteria with *and*. On paper, they use a branching database to distinguish between jelly, ketchup, carbon dioxide and oxygen. In control technology, pupils produce an image with a microscope, which average- and higher-attaining pupils enhance in a graphics application. Pupils use *Superlogo* to write a program to draw two-dimensional shapes. On paper, they design their own invention, incorporating sensors - such as one that adjusts the blinds in response to the intensity of sunlight, or another which adjusts the volume of music when it senses the proximity of a parent.
131. The quality of teaching is satisfactory, overall. Most classes have two computers, which means that teachers have to introduce lessons to the whole class using a single monitor. Sometimes, pupils find it difficult to see what is happening. Pupils then carry out the task in pairs, but pressure of time sometimes means that not all have finished one week's work before the introduction of the next. Teachers work hard to plan paper activities to prepare pupils for their time at the machine. This is a strength of the teaching and makes the most of the limited availability of equipment. Some teachers mark work to a high standard, but this is not so in all

cases. A weakness in teaching is that the coverage in parallel classes is not always the same, though this is so in only one instance. Teachers use information technology in other lessons, though there were quite a number of occasions during the inspection when computers were unused.

132. The subject is managed by two co-ordinators; one is in her first year of management responsibility and so is supported by the deputy head. Management is satisfactory, overall. Its strength is the co-ordinators' enthusiasm for the subject and the hard work they have done to help teachers make the best of the limited availability of equipment. The scheme of work is based on national guidance and gives good guidance to teachers in planning work. The co-ordinators have a good overview of planning and of the work pupils produce. Time to monitor teaching and the evenness of coverage has been limited, however. This has been partly because the release time given to the new co-ordinator has hitherto had to be spent in remedying equipment failure; the recent signing of a contract with a technician has alleviated this. The co-ordinators have purchased new software for cross-curricular use and plan to revise the scheme of work in order to show where it can best be used in lessons other than information technology. The revision will also include new procedures for assessment. Currently, cross-curriculum use of information technology is limited and there are quite a few lessons where machines are not used. Given that pupils have so few computers available for information technology lessons, this means that the best use of available equipment is not being made. The number of computers in the school is satisfactory, but the school has been considering for some time how best to locate them.

### **MODERN FOREIGN LANGUAGES - French**

133. French is taught for 30 minutes each week in Years 5 and 6, with activities in French in other classes, such as greeting, calling the register and singing French songs.
134. Because of timetabling arrangements, no lessons were seen, so it is not possible to make judgements on pupils' attainment or the quality of teaching and learning. However, it is clear that French teaching has a good impact on pupils' development and plays a good part in the school's provision. Displays in French have a high profile in many classrooms, and two pupils greeted an inspector in French in the playground. The co-ordinator has a budget and full responsibilities as do all other co-ordinators. The policy and scheme of work give effective guidance to teachers' planning and teaching.

### **MUSIC**

135. Pupils' standards of attainment are below expectations, overall, though they are higher in classes where teachers have good expertise in music, as in the case of one of the Years 1 and 2 classes, where the subject's new co-ordinator is the class teacher. Standards are now lower than they were at the time of the last inspection, though singing in assembly is better.
136. In this class, Year 2 pupils show an appropriate understanding of pitch and sing back a short melody sung by their teacher. They have learnt how to produce a good singing voice and how this differs from other types of voice. In this class, virtually all pupils pitch accurately and sing in tune. Pupils know how to handle instruments and play them sensibly.
137. In other classes, pupils' skills are less well-developed. Pupils in a Years 3 and 4 class play percussion instruments in a class composition, but few have the ability to explore the type of sound they produce or to adapt it to the picture or word they are attempting to illustrate. Pupils in Years 5 and 6 learn to sing 'partner songs' (two entirely different songs which can be sung simultaneously without being discordant, such as *Peas Pudding Hot* and *London Bridge*). But their listening skills are not sufficiently well-developed for them to learn a simple tune quickly or to realise when the melody is inaccurate. Several boys sing an octave below pitch, though their voices are unbroken.

138. Singing in assembly is better because the co-ordinator has worked to improve this as a priority. However, younger pupils show more enthusiasm and the singing of the oldest pupils suffers from self-consciousness.

139. The teaching observed during the inspection was satisfactory, overall, and good in the co-ordinator's class. Teachers worked hard to keep their lessons going and to ensure that satisfactory learning took place, even when they lacked expertise in the area being taught. However, the overall provision for the teaching of music is unsatisfactory because the scheme of work does not provide enough guidance for teachers on how to structure their lessons or on how to develop particular skills and understanding.
140. The co-ordinator, who took up responsibility at the start of this school year, is aware of this and has begun to plan for a new scheme of work to start in September. A commercial scheme and associated resources to support teachers is on order. The co-ordinator has plans to undertake an audit of staff expertise and to fit a new scheme of work to the commercial scheme, including procedures for assessment. The school intends to give her time to teach alongside colleagues as necessary. Management of the subject is satisfactory. The stock of instruments is good and resources for listening and appraising music are satisfactory. However, resources for supporting teachers are unsatisfactory.
141. Music outside the classroom is part of the life of the school. Those pupils who receive individual tuition, both in school and privately, give a concert in an assembly each term. Infants and juniors are involved in musical productions at Easter and in the summer. There is a music club after school where pupils who learn instruments or who are interested to take part form an orchestra and several teachers take recorder groups.

## **PHYSICAL EDUCATION**

142. Attainment matches expectations at the end of Year 2 and Year 6. This maintains the position at the last inspection and represents satisfactory improvement, overall. All pupils, including pupils with special educational needs, those for whom English is an additional language and travellers, make good progress in developing skills in gymnastics, dance, games, athletics and swimming, as compared with satisfactory progress at the last inspection. Pupils achieve well in all areas. All activities are open to both boys and girls and there are no issues of equality.
143. During the inspection, pupils in Years 1 and 2 improved their ability to bat and bowl more effectively, in preparation for learning to play Kwick Cricket. In another session, they developed their athletic skills, teamwork and sportsmanship. Pupils in Years 5 and 6 improved their batting, catching and fielding skills.
144. Teaching is good, overall, representing improvement since the last inspection when it was almost always satisfactory and was good in half the lessons. Teachers demonstrate good subject knowledge and understanding and their teaching of skills is good. They plan very effectively; this leads to good learning and the good acquisition of knowledge, skills and understanding by all pupils. Teachers' expectations are high and pupils apply a good level of physical and creative effort to their work. The management of pupils is very good and, combined with their interest and enthusiasm, leads to a good pace of working. Time, support staff and resources are used effectively. Ongoing assessment is used to effect improvement in pupils' work and pupils are encouraged to evaluate their work and the work of others.
145. The quality and range of learning opportunities are good. The curriculum is enriched by a range of extra-curricular activities, including football, netball, rounders and dance clubs, inter-school sports between the six cluster schools and an annual school sports day. Pupils in Year 5 go swimming during the year. They make good progress and achieve well. All staff regularly update their expertise. The monitoring of pupils' subject performance, procedures for assessing their attainment and progress and the use of assessment to guide curriculum planning are very good.
146. Leadership and management of the subject are very good. The two new and enthusiastic subject leaders give generously of their time in taking football, netball and rounders' training after school and enabling pupils to participate in inter-school sports. Their work is helping to raise standards. A flourishing dance club is led by a teaching assistant. They have a very clear sense of

educational direction and the school's aims and values are reflected in the work of the subject. Resources are very good and are used well.

## **RELIGIOUS EDUCATION**

147. Attainment is above the expectations of the Kent Agreed Syllabus at the end of Years 2 and 6. This represents good improvement since the last inspection, when attainment was satisfactory. There are no significant differences in the attainment of boys and girls. All pupils, including those with special educational needs, those for whom English is an additional language and travellers, make good progress and achieve well. This shows good improvement at the end of Year 2 since the last inspection, when progress was satisfactory, and maintains the position at the end of Year 6.
148. During the inspection, pupils in Years 1 and 2 demonstrated their understanding of the fact that individuals are responsible for choosing good and bad behaviour. They have a developing understanding of what Jesus taught. In Years 3 and 4, pupils have an understanding of the origin and role of the Christian Church and a developing knowledge of Judaism and Hinduism. Pupils in Years 5 and 6 learnt about the importance of the Golden Temple, in Sikhism. They have a developing knowledge of Islam and a good knowledge of Christian festivals, beliefs and rites.
149. Teaching is good, overall, and leads to good learning for all pupils. This maintains the position at the end of Year 6 and represents very good improvement at the end of Year 2, when teaching was unsatisfactory at the last inspection. Teachers' knowledge and understanding is good and their expectations are high. They plan very well and use effective teaching methods that engage pupils' interest and concentration. The quality of ongoing assessment is good and pupils have a good knowledge of their own learning. They are encouraged to express their own experiences and thoughts and they show respect for the beliefs and practices of others.
150. The curriculum builds upon pupils' own experiences and cultural identity, and foundations are laid for their understanding of the concepts specific to a faith tradition. Stories from different religions and cultures are read and discussed in literacy. Links are made with mathematics, through patterns and symbols associated with religions. Information technology is used for research. Pupils' spiritual development is enhanced through daily worship, church services and visits to the church. Their moral development is enhanced through stories relating to love, care for others, forgiveness, honesty, truthfulness and respect for all life.
151. The curriculum meets the demands of the Kent Agreed Syllabus and is enhanced by the strong links with the local church, as a place of worship and a resource for learning. Music in assemblies is drawn from many cultures; for example, Indian classical flute music. There are very good procedures for monitoring the subject's coverage, assessing pupils' attainment and progress and using assessment to guide future planning.
152. Leadership and management are very good. The subject leader is enthusiastic and knowledgeable and has a very clear sense of educational direction. She provides valuable guidance for teachers. Very good resources support pupils' learning. An area for development is to attract more visitors to the school from different faiths.