

INSPECTION REPORT

Parton Manor Infant School
Craven Drive, Churchdown, Gloucester, GL3 2AG

LEA area: Gloucestershire

Unique Reference Number: 115511

Headteacher: Mrs. R Hughes

School Inspection No: 190419

Reporting inspector: Jennie Willcock-Bates

Dates of inspection: 20-23 September 1999

Under OFSTED contract number: 707336

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

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INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Type of school:	Infant
Type of control:	LEA
Age range of pupils:	4 to 7
Gender of pupils:	Mixed
School address:	Craven Drive Churchdown Gloucester GL3 2AG
Telephone number:	01452 712214
Appropriate authority:	Gloucestershire
Name of chair of governors:	Mr Robert Nightingale
Date of previous inspection:	16 th April 1996

INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Team members	Subject responsibilities	Aspect responsibilities
Jennie Willcock-Bates, RgI	Mathematics, Music, Physical education, Religious education	Attainment and progress, Teaching, Spiritual, moral, social and cultural development
Catherine Fish, Lay Inspector		Attendance, Partnership with parents and the community
Hefina Petrie	English, History, Geography, Areas of learning for children under fives.	Special educational needs, Equal opportunities, Curriculum and assessment, The efficiency of the school
John Moles	Science, Design & technology, Information technology, Art	Attitudes, behaviour and personal development, Support, guidance and pupils' welfare, Leadership and management, Staffing, accommodation and learning resources

The inspection contractor was:

Quality Assurance Consultants

The Hucclecote Centre

Churchdown Lane

Hucclecote

Gloucester

GL3 3QN

01452 425433

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The Office for Standards in Education

Alexandra House

33 Kingsway

London WC2B 6SE

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MAIN FINDINGS

What the school does well

- The pupils' make good progress as they move through the school from the reception classes to when they leave at the end of Key Stage 1.
- The school implements literacy and numeracy strategies effectively and the pupils make good progress in reading, writing and number.
- The provision for the under-fives in reception is a strength of the school and teaching is very good. The school builds effectively on the good work started by the Family Centre.
- The provision for special educational needs is also a strength and the pupils are very well taught.
- The moral and social education of the pupils is very good and makes a successful contribution to standards of behaviour and the pupils' attainment and progress.
- The calm leadership and the clear educational direction of the headteacher have a positive impact on the quality of education.
- The procedures for analysing and setting targets have a positive impact on improving standards.
- Day to day assessment of pupils' work in lessons is a strength.
- The procedures for promoting discipline and good behaviour and the pupils' well being, health and safety are very good.

Where the school has weaknesses

- I. The teachers do not always intervene enough in the learning of the most able.
- II. There are insufficient opportunities for pupils to reflect and extend their spiritual development in assembly and other subjects of the curriculum.
- III. The school has relatively high rates of authorised and unauthorised absence

The school has many strengths that far outweigh the shortcomings. These shortcomings will form the governors' action plan, which will be sent to all parents and guardians of pupils in the school.

How the school has improved since the last inspection

There have been significant improvements since the last inspection. The school has made good progress in most of the key issues and shortcomings then identified. There are improvements in the teaching of information technology. There are clear indications in pupils' past work that design and technology has improved. There is more challenging work for the most able but the teachers do not always intervene to extend their learning further. Positive improvements have been made to planning and assessment that have ensured that learning outcomes are clear, and lessons are reviewed. The focus has sensibly been literacy, numeracy and science. Day-to-day assessment is now a strength. Standards in writing, presentation of work, science, information technology and design and technology have improved. The pupils' handwriting is neat. There is a better balance of time in the curriculum. The school has rightly emphasised literacy and numeracy and is still grappling with how the rest of the curriculum fits into the timetable. Time allocations for religious education are not yet adequate.

Standards in subjects

The table shows standards achieved by 7 year olds in 1998 based on National Curriculum tests:

Performance in	Compared with all schools	Compared with similar schools
Reading	D	C
Writing	E	D
Mathematics	D	C
Science	C	B

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

The information in the table above shows that the school's performance in the 1998 national tests in reading and is below average, writing is well below average, and science is average when compared to all schools nationally. Mathematics is just below to the national average. The percentage reaching the higher Level 3 is close to the national average in reading but below average in writing and mathematics.

However, when compared to schools with pupils from similar backgrounds, the pupils' performance in reading and mathematics is average, writing is below average and science is above average. The school carefully analyses the test results and sets targets to improve pupils' performance. The tests for 1999 indicate a significant improvement on 1998 in all subjects, especially in the numbers of pupils reaching the higher Level 3 in English, mathematics and science. However, at present there are no figures available to compare the results with those from other schools. The inspection findings more closely reflect the test results of 1999 than 1998. When the majority of pupils start school, aged four years old, their attainment is below average. The school clearly adds value to the pupils' attainment and they make good progress to reach the average standards achieved over the three years they are in the school.

Quality of teaching

Teaching in:	Under 5	5 – 7 years
English	Very good	Good
Mathematics	Good	Good
Science	Very good	Good
Information technology	Good	Satisfactory
Religious education	Satisfactory	Satisfactory
Other subjects	Very good	Good

Inspectors make judgements about teaching in the range: excellent; very good; good; satisfactory; unsatisfactory, poor, very poor.

'Satisfactory' means that strengths outweigh any weaknesses.

The quality of teaching is good overall with only a very little that was less than satisfactory. Teaching was at its overall best in the reception classes with all lessons being good and in nearly half of them it was very good. In other classes it was still good overall with just over half of the teaching being good or better. During the inspection one of the two teachers in Year 2 was covering temporarily for the absence of a senior member of staff and did not know the pupils as well as permanent staff. This good teaching has a direct impact on the pupils' good progress.

Other aspects of the school

Aspect	Comment
Behaviour	Good: pupils are polite and respectful.
Attendance	Satisfactory: improved procedures; school still battling with unauthorised absences.
Ethos*	Good: strong and successful; strong commitment to high standards
Leadership and management	Good: calm, clear leadership from headteacher; governors well involved and supportive. Effective procedures are in place to monitor teaching and curriculum.
Curriculum	Good: broad, reasonably balanced; strong emphasis on literacy and numeracy.
Pupils with special educational needs	Good: a strength of the school. Pupils are very well taught, and supported effectively by learning support assistants.
Spiritual, moral, social & cultural development	Good: very good provision for moral and social development.
Staffing, resources and accommodation	Good: staff experienced and well trained. Some problems with sound travelling between the open plan areas in the centre of the school.
Value for money	Good

**Ethos is the climate for learning: attitudes to work, relationships and the commitment to high standards.*

The parents' views of the school

What most parents like about the school	What some parents are not happy about
IV. The school is approachable. V. Their children like going to school. VI. The school promotes high standards of behaviour. VII. The values and attitudes promoted in the school have a positive effect on their children. VIII. Reports on their children's progress are accurate. IX. Children are well cared for. X. The good links with the Family Centre. XI. The personal notes of thanks from the headteacher.	XII. Not all feel they have a clear XIII. Annual report comes the same day as the me to prepare for the meeting. XIV. Some parents feel that the approach to

The inspectors agree with the positive comments made. The school acknowledges that the report comes out on the same day of the meeting and is reviewing this practice. There are clear agreements about homework but some inconsistencies in how they are applied. Homework is set for the week in the parallel classes and posted on the parents' notice board. The pupils take reading books home regularly.

KEY ISSUES FOR ACTION

The school needs to act upon the following key issues in order to maintain the developments noted during the inspection and make further improvements to the standards and quality of education.

Improve the frequency and the effectiveness of teachers' intervention in the learning of the most able by:

- i) including a clear statement related to the most able in the teaching and learning policy;
- ii) identify the pupils and target specific support to them;
- iii) ensure that these pupils are included in the teachers' direct teaching with small groups;
- iv) ensure that questions asked of pupils challenge them to think and solve problems extending what they have learned.

Paragraphs: 15, 16, 27, 33, 86, 90, 92.

Improve the provision for the pupils' spiritual development by:

- v) reviewing the current provision to include planned opportunities for the pupils to reflect upon their own achievements and the achievements of others within subjects in the curriculum;
- vi) building on the good practice identified and use opportunities in lessons for pupils to express their wonder at the natural and creative world about which they learn;
- vii) ensuring that assembly has a special and purposeful time for pupils to reflect on.

Paragraphs: 41, 92, 98, 119, 126.

Continue with the good work undertaken to improve further attendance rates in the school.

Paragraphs: 21, 22, 46.

In addition to the key issues, the governors should include the following shortcomings in the action plan:

- i) increase the time spent teaching religious education; Paragraphs: 32, 132.
- i) Ensure consistency in the setting of homework; Paragraphs: 28, 92.
- ii) Ensure that parents have time to read annual reports before the meeting with teachers; Paragraph: 49.
- i) The governors annual report to parents does not include the rate of authorised absence. Paragraphs: 49, 57.
- ii) Continue to explore ways of reducing the effects of noise travelling between the open plan areas in the centre of the school. Paragraphs: 63, 69, 81, 122.

INTRODUCTION

Characteristics of the school

1. Parton Manor Infant School has 164 pupils on roll aged 4 to 7 years old. The number on roll has reduced since the previous inspection. The school is situated in the large village of Churchdown on the edge of the City of Gloucester. It serves two large housing estates, a permanent site for travellers, a Royal Airforce camp and non-estate private housing. There are fluctuations in the numbers on roll when travelling families move on and when there are changes of personnel at the airforce camp. There is a wide range of socio-economic circumstances. Some parts of the community experience drug abuse and domestic turbulence. There is decreasing unemployment in the area but some families, whilst being employed, are earning low incomes. Twenty-six per cent of the pupils are entitled to free school meals, a figure that is above the national average.

2. A Family Centre is attached to the school: it caters for pre-school children and their families, offering a wide range of activities for parents and their children and other members of the community. Children are admitted into the two reception classes in the September of the year in which they are 5 years old. At the time of the inspection, the children under-five had only been in school for two weeks. They were attending the school part time, with older children attending the morning sessions and the youngest four year olds attending in the afternoon. All pupils are expected to be full time by half term. The majority of children in the reception classes have attended the Family Centre.

3. There is a wide range of attainment on entry. A few pupils come into the school with advanced learning skills but the overall attainment on entry is below average particularly in their language and mathematics development. The Family Centre prepares the children well for school. The number of pupils identified as having special educational needs is above the national average and the number with statements of special educational need is below average. Two pupils are integrated into the school on a weekly basis from the local school for pupils with special educational needs. There are no pupils from other ethnic groups, or who speak English as a second language

4. At the time of the inspection the children had been in school for only two weeks, they were all in new classes and were still becoming familiar in the expectations of their class teachers. The deputy head was absent from the school. The headteacher had to teach a class in Year 2 until it could be covered by a temporary substitute teacher.

5. The school aims to provide a structured and caring environment and encourage children to want to learn. It believes in:

- working together with parents for the educational development of their children;
- working in close liaison with support services in the interest of curriculum development and the needs of children;
- providing a framework through which each child can develop his or her potential for the benefit of our future society;
- primary education being stimulating and challenging;
- children being presented with a wide range of learning opportunities based on first-hand experiences and observation;
- catering for individual differences, allowing children to progress at different rates according to their stages of development, abilities and aptitudes.

6. The school is currently working on:

1. reviewing the literacy policy in line with the improvements made following the implementation of the literacy hour;
2. implementation of the numeracy strategy in mathematics;
3. revision of the early years policy when the new nationally recommended goals for under-fives are received.

7. Key Indicators

Attainment at Key Stage 1

Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 1
for latest reporting year:

Year	Boys	Girls	Total
1998	23	27	50

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		Reading	Writing	Mathematics
Number of pupils at	Boys	15	14	20
	Girls	21	23	22
	Total	36	37	42
Percentage at NC Level 2 or above	School	72	74	84
	National	80	81	84

Teacher Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Number of pupils at	Boys	14	19	20
	Girls	20	24	23
	Total	34	43	43
Percentage at NC Level 2 or above	School	68	86	86
	National	81	85	86

3. Attendance

Percentage of half days (sessions) missed through absence for the			%
Authorised	3.	School	8.47
		National comparative data	5.7
	Unauthorised	School	0.36
		National comparative data	0.5

3. **Exclusions**

Number of exclusions of pupils (of statutory school age) during the previous year:

	3.
	Number
3. Fixed period	0
Permanent	0

3. **Quality of teaching**

Percentage of teaching observed which is:

	%
Very good or better	13%
Satisfactory or better	99%
Less than satisfactory	1%

PART A: ASPECTS OF THE SCHOOL

3. EDUCATIONAL STANDARDS ACHIEVED BY PUPILS AT THE SCHOOL

3. Attainment and progress

8. In the 1998 national tests for pupils age seven years old, at the end of Key Stage 1, results in reading were below the national average and in writing results were well below average. The percentage attaining the average Level 2 was well below the national average in reading and writing. However, whilst the percentage reaching the higher Level 3 in reading was close to the national average, it was below average in writing. In relation to schools with pupils from similar backgrounds, the pupils' performance was close to the average in reading and below average in writing. Although results in mathematics were below the national average, the pupils performed slightly better than in English: the percentage reaching Level 2 was close to the national average but the percentage reaching Level 3 was below average. The results in mathematics were in line with the average of similar schools. In the teachers' assessments in science, the percentage of pupils reaching Level 2 was in line with the national average and the percentage attaining Level 3 was above average. The average levels of attainment over the last three years have been generally close to the national average. There are as yet no national figures with which to compare the results of the 1999 tests. However, the school has significantly improved the numbers of pupils attaining the higher Level 3 in reading writing and mathematics. The improvement is reflected in science assessments, particularly in relation to experimental and investigative science.

9. The inspection findings reflect the 1999 results more closely than those of 1998. The improvements in attainment are the result of careful analysis of results to identify what the pupils are getting wrong, setting clear targets, the successful implementation of the National Literacy and Numeracy Strategies and effectively targeted improvement to the quality of teaching. There have been improvements to the English, mathematics and science curriculum.

10. When the children enter the school from the Family Centre and other playgroups their attainment is below average in the tests for children on entry to school. The Family Centre equips them well to start school and, with the very good teaching and successful provision in the reception classes, the children make good progress. They are on course to reach the expectations of the nationally agreed desirable learning outcomes in language – literacy, mathematics, knowledge, understanding of the world, creative, physical and personal and social development by the time they are five years old. They are then well placed to start the Programmes of Study of the National Curriculum. When they leave the school at seven years old their attainment, including that of the part-time children from travelling families, is in line with expectations and a significant proportion of the pupils are attaining higher levels

in English, mathematics and science. The school is clearly adding value to the pupils' attainment and they make good progress as they move through the class.

11. The inspection findings indicate that the pupils' attainment in English overall, that is in speaking and listening, reading, writing and spelling is in line with national expectations for the age group. There is no evidence in the inspection findings to support any differences in attainment between boys and girls. Pupils of all levels of attainment make good progress. However, in reading and spelling a significant proportion of the pupils are attaining higher levels despite it being the beginning of Year 2. Standards in handwriting are satisfactory. The pupils speak confidently and listen to their teachers attentively. This is particularly successful during the shared text work in the literacy hour. The pupils' reading is clearly improving as a result of good teaching of literacy. The majority is generally reading accurately and many use a good range of strategies such as letter sounds and clues from pictures to read unfamiliar words. High-attaining pupils read the meaning of the text to find out unknown words. They correct their own mistakes. Standards of writing are satisfactory and the pupils write for a range of purposes in other subjects such as notes and records in science and reports and accounts in history. Some of the most able draft and revise their work. Spelling of simple words and grammar are generally accurate.

12. In mathematics, the pupils' attainment is in line with national expectations in number and algebra, shapes and measures, and data handling. In numeracy, a significant proportion of the pupils is exceeding expectations. They recognise numbers up to 100 and some can add two digit numbers in their heads. The majority of pupils add numbers up to ten and with help nearly all add some numbers up to twenty. They recognise patterns in addition and subtractions and order their work effectively. Low-attaining pupils and those with special educational needs are below average but are working well, within their abilities. They recognise and calculate doubles in their heads and can add single digit numbers up to ten using counting apparatus. Most pupils recognise what is longer and shorter than a metre and collect data about eye colour and countries visited to create a graph. Information technology supports mathematics effectively and the pupils practise their numeracy skills in science and design and technology.

13. The pupils' attainment in science is in line with expectations for the end of Key Stage 1 and they make good progress. The pupils examine fruit carefully, plant seeds in different environments, noting differences in growth. High-attaining pupils make realistic predictions and records of what they find out. They understand the life cycle of fruit and identify the small variations in eye and hair colour through careful observation. Attainment in information technology is in line with expectations: pupils use word processing to draft their writing, gather statistics and use a database and analyse information

appropriately. They make satisfactory progress throughout the school, which marks an improvement since the previous inspection.

14. The school has improved design and technology and generally maintained appropriate standards in other subjects. The pupils' attainment in religious education is broadly in line with the Locally Agreed Syllabus and they make satisfactory progress. Some pupils relate the stories discussed to their own lives. They know that prayer is important and that Jesus is an important figure to Christians. Standards are satisfactory in art, design and technology, history and geography. In physical education overall, standards are satisfactory and there are strengths in gymnastics. Although there is too little evidence to form a secure judgement about standards and progress, in music overall, the pupils sing well and with enthusiasm.

15. All pupils with different levels of attainment, and from different backgrounds are attaining appropriate levels. A significant proportion of the most able pupils is attaining higher than average levels. Work is planned appropriately for them and this marks an improvement since the previous inspection. However, there are times when their learning is not extended by effective, well-timed intervention from teachers. Although low-attaining pupils and the pupils with special educational needs are functioning at lower than average levels in relation to their abilities, they are reaching good standards, particularly in literacy and numeracy. This is because of the very good teaching and support from the learning support assistants. There is a clear trend of improvement over time and there are indications that the school has the capacity to meet its expected targets in the year 2000.

16. Throughout the school, the pupils are making good progress over all their knowledge, skills and understanding because of good teaching and positive recognition of their capabilities. There is clear evidence in the pupils' work of good progress over time from when they enter the school in the reception classes to the end of the key stage in Year 2. There is good progress in the pupils' literacy skills of reading and writing and in numeracy skills. Progress in the pupils' scientific understanding is frequently good. Throughout the school, the pupils with special educational needs are making good progress. The targets in their Individual Education Plans are appropriate and work is well matched to their needs. They are successful in their classes and withdrawal groups with the specialist teacher, enabling them to make steady advances in their learning. The children from travelling families make good progress with sensible support and effective work. Work is well planned for the most able. However, their progress is not always as marked, as it could be when the teachers do not intervene sufficiently in their learning.

17. Good progress is made in the reception classes and in Year 1. Progress in lessons in Year 2

was satisfactory but one of the two classes was covered, at very short notice for the absent staff, by a senior member of staff, and the substitute teacher did not know the pupils well. However, progress was good in the work of the previous Year 2. Good progress is made throughout the school in reading, writing and spelling, mathematics, in particular number, science, art, geography and physical education. Progress is satisfactory in information technology, religious education, design and technology and history.

3. **Attitudes, behaviour and personal development**

18. Since the last inspection the school has maintained its high standards in attitudes, behaviour and personal development and increased pupils' pride in their work. Pupils' attitudes to learning are good. They show great interest in what they do and are always willing to contribute to discussion and to answer questions. They are confident in the knowledge that their contributions will be treated with respect. The parent's questionnaire strongly endorses the view that their children enjoy school. Pupils persevere when work is difficult. They strive to meet the high challenges teachers often set; for example, when teachers deliberately use a demanding but appropriate vocabulary in literacy lessons. They are proud of their work and take care to present it attractively whether it is written by hand or prepared using a computer. They are willing to evaluate their own work and make improvements. Pupils enjoy sharing their work with each other and visitors, and they listen attentively to each other's ideas. They willingly speculate, for example, when explaining the results of their science investigations. Most pupils sustain concentration for long periods of time. Many take initiatives to solve their own problems, for example, independently using a number line on the wall to aid subtraction.

19. Behaviour is good in the majority of lessons, about the school and in the playground. There are very few instances when mild rebukes are required. In most cases pupils respond immediately. The pupils with challenging behaviour respond to the calm yet firm management of the teachers. Bullying is not tolerated. The pupils work very well with each other in all aspects of school life. Children under the age of five are caring towards each other and have good relationships with teachers and adult helpers. Older pupils automatically make way for younger pupils and show concern for them when they need help or reassurance, for example, leading them back to their teaching areas after assembly. The children from travelling families integrate very well into their classes. Large and small groups collaborate well whether it is sharing art equipment or working on the millennium tapestry. They voluntarily help each other when they perceive a need. Relationships are very good. Pupils are sensitive to the needs, ideas and beliefs of others. They listen to each other realising that each should take a turn to speak. Pupils take good advantage of help provided by teachers, classroom assistants

and parents. There have been no exclusions.

20. The pupils are very willing to take the initiative and accept responsibilities. They carry out many tasks independently and with efficiency and confidence, for example, ringing the bell, assisting with dinner duties and taking money and registers to the secretary. Pupils are polite to everyone in the school. They are trustworthy and show respect for the school. Their personal development is very good. Pupils work independently and co-operate well with each other. Children under the age of five, even though they have only recently started school, work confidently on their own or in groups, make choices for themselves and willingly share and explore ideas with teachers and classroom assistants. Pupils make a strong contribution to their own education through their willingness to take responsibility for their own work, to make appropriate responses to teachers' questions, and their willingness to listen to and act upon other peoples' ideas. They strive hard to meet the challenges they are set.

Attendance

21. Attendance is satisfactory overall. The school has relatively high levels of both authorised and unauthorised absences. These levels are reflected, to some extent, in the characteristics of the school. For example, there are a number of children from travelling families on the school's roll who, by the nature of their lifestyle, spend time away from their base school; these absences are authorised, but they contribute significantly to the overall total. Unauthorised absences over the past year were vested in a very few pupils; two remained on roll, when they should have been removed, because information was not made available to the school. The school is carefully watching the attendance one other pupil.

22. Punctuality after breaks, which was an issue in the previous report, has improved. Procedures for recording lateness are clear and effective. Any persistent lateness is referred to the educational welfare officer. Lessons generally start on time throughout the day, although establishing the routines of the school early in the term sometimes takes longer than expected. However, this does not effect the pupils' attainment and progress in lessons.

QUALITY OF EDUCATION PROVIDED

Teaching

23. Despite the absence of a senior member of staff in Year 2 during the inspection, the quality of teaching is good overall with only a very little that was less satisfactory. It was at its overall best in the reception classes with all lessons being at least good and in nearly half of them it was very good. In

other classes it was still good overall with half the teaching being good or better. This has a positive impact on the pupils' attainment and the good progress they make.

24. While the strengths in the teaching of under-fives in the reception class continue, there have been considerable improvements to the teaching in the remainder of Key Stage 1 since the previous inspection when teaching was satisfactory. The pupils with special educational needs are taught very well throughout the school and particularly in their withdrawal groups. The quality of teaching is good in English and mathematics, in particular the teaching of literacy and numeracy, and in physical education. Literacy and numeracy are developed well in other subjects and for example, the pupils write accounts of the life of Samuel Pepys in history and use tally charts to collect data in science. In science and information and communication technology, teaching is at least satisfactory and is an improvement since the last inspection when weaknesses were identified. Teaching is satisfactory in art. There were too few lessons in history, music and religious education to make a secure judgement about the quality of teaching in those subjects. No lessons in design and technology and geography were planned to take place during the inspection.

25. The main strengths in teaching are:

- the teachers' subject knowledge and understanding of English, including literacy, mathematics including numeracy, physical education and the required provision for the under-fives;
- the clear routines and high expectations of behaviour throughout the school and in particular giving confidence to the pupils in the reception class in their early days at school;
- the improvements in planning, particularly for the under-fives, literacy and numeracy, and the inclusion of a range of activities clearly matched to the pupils' various needs;
- the effective methods and organisation used by teachers, particularly in literacy and numeracy that include good direct teaching to classes and groups and the generally skilful questioning to elicit what the pupils know and understand;
- the very good relationships enable even the challenging pupils to be successfully managed.

26. Teaching successfully promotes the pupils' learning and meets the agreements in the clear teaching and learning policy. The teachers expectations of what the pupils know and can do are generally high. The pupils with special educational needs are taught very effectively. They are included in lessons through careful planning of work that matches their needs and they are supported well by learning support workers and class teachers. Consequently the pupils attain levels as high as they can. The special educational needs teacher withdraws the pupils appropriately for a part of the literacy hour and plans specific work for them related to the literacy strategy. Teaching in withdrawal

groups is high quality and this enables them to make good progress in reading, writing and spelling. The children from travelling families are very well supported by their class teachers, experienced learning support workers and the local authority's traveller learning support worker. The school provides a secure base for them and they make good progress.

27. There are very few shortcomings in teaching. The school has improved its provision for the most able pupils that was identified as a weakness in the last inspection. However, whilst work is planned appropriately, opportunities to extend and challenge such pupils are sometimes missed and teachers do not always intervene enough in their learning. In some lessons introductions are too slow, tasks are repeated too many times and pupils are kept sitting and listening for too long. As a result, a few pupils lack motivation, become restless and lose their concentration.

28. The use of homework is satisfactory overall. For example, pupils read at home, learn spellings and undertake some activities related to number. There are clear agreements about homework but there are inconsistencies in the way the agreements are applied in each year group. Parents have agreed to support their children's work at home when they can. Homework was used effectively in one lesson to support the pupils' understanding of numbers up to twenty. They were enthusiastic about what they had learned at home and this made a positive contribution to their attainment and progress.

29. The teachers use of day to day assessment is good and is a strength of the school. This marks a significant improvement since the previous inspection. The teachers know the pupils well and assess carefully through observation, questioning and discussion. They skilfully note what the pupils can and cannot do during evaluation sessions at the end of literacy and numeracy lessons. Marking is undertaken mainly with the pupils. Opportunities to encourage the pupils to read by reading comments in their books are sometimes missed. There are good examples in science where marking is particularly effective when the pupils' scientific understanding as well as grammatical errors was assessed. Overall assessment successfully confirms the next stages of teaching.

The curriculum and assessment

30. The school provides a broadly based and relevant curriculum for all its pupils that has been appropriately adapted to meet the recent changes to the requirements of the National Curriculum.

31. The planned provision promotes the pupils' intellectual and physical development well and their personal development very well. The pupils are effectively prepared for the next stage of their education in the adjoining junior school. The provision for the areas of learning for children under five

is very good and prepares them successfully for the Programmes of Study of the National Curriculum at Key Stage 1. The reception classrooms are stimulating and well structured. A wide variety of purposeful indoor and outdoor play activities is organised. These successfully include provision for speaking and listening, direct enquiry and activities initiated by the children. The provision for under-fives is strength of the school.

32. The curriculum at Key Stage 1 meets the statutory requirements of the National Curriculum and the Locally Agreed Syllabus for religious education. Since the previous inspection, improvements have been made in design and technology and information and communication technology. The recently introduced National Literacy and Numeracy Strategies are implemented well following careful planning. They support learning satisfactorily in other subjects, such as science, design and technology, history and geography. The increased time spent daily on literacy and numeracy is used effectively to meet the school's priority of raising pupils' levels of attainment and progress in English and mathematics. For example, the pupils have other work in reading and writing at other times in the day in addition to the literacy hour. Inevitably, this has reduced the time available for other subjects. At present insufficient time is provided for religious education. At times, the sessions related to integrated activities take too long. Curriculum planning and review has significantly improved since the previous inspection and procedures are in place to monitor and evaluate this use of time and its effectiveness in promoting learning.

33. Teachers are careful to ensure that boys and girls and pupils of different abilities and needs are provided with equal access to the curriculum, although sometimes, higher attaining pupils are not sufficiently challenged by teachers' intervention in their learning. Children from the travelling community and pupils with special education needs are supported well and with sensitivity enabling them to participate fully in all aspects of school life.

34. The school makes good provision for the pupils with special educational needs. The special needs co-ordinator fulfils her role well, teaching small groups, advising class teachers, keeping parents informed and liaising with support services. Learning support workers are used most effectively to support pupils in class. The requirements of the Code of Practice for special educational needs are met successfully. Regular meetings to review the progress of individual pupils are organised efficiently. Individual Education Plans have clear targets and are reviewed regularly. The parents are involved whenever possible. Records are monitored carefully and plans implemented conscientiously. The provision for equal opportunities and special educational needs continues to be a strength of the school.

35. The school has suitable curricular aims. Sound policies are in place for all subjects with

satisfactory schemes of work adapted to meet present curriculum requirements. Health education is prominent, for example in establishing healthy eating habits and safety routines in physical education lessons. Formal sex education is not part of the curriculum but sensitivity is given to answering children's questions appropriately.

36. The teachers plan together with the support of the subject co-ordinators. This is an important factor in the effective curriculum planning that builds systematically on existing knowledge, understanding and skills. Careful and detailed planning between teachers in each year group very effectively ensures continuity of progression in learning. The improved long- medium- and short-term planning enhances the standards of attainment and progress. Opportunities for monitoring the effectiveness of the curriculum by subject co-ordinators have improved since the previous inspection. Plans are in place for this process to be more closely structured. Governors play a supportive role. They are fully informed of curricular developments that are discussed regularly at their meetings.

37. The curriculum is enhanced by visitors to the school, school visits and extra-curricular activities. For example, a visit by the fire service was supporting a project in the reception class. The regular programme of visits, all linked to the curriculum, enrich pupils' learning. The locality is used effectively together with visits further afield such as that to Clevedon for the study of a seaside town where good geographical and historical skills were used. Effective extra-curricular musical activities for choir and recorder are held each week during lunchtime. The pupils learn to play a satisfactory range of games in physical education. Although they do not participate in sports as such, sports day is a special event in the summer term.

38. There are good and effective assessment procedures and record keeping systems in place, which is an improvement since the previous inspection. Soon after children enter school, in the reception classes, teachers diligently administer the local authority baseline assessment procedures, supplemented by the school's own assessment. Information is used very well in planning to meet the needs of individual children. It also successfully identifies, at an early stage, children's possible special educational needs. Tests are also used in Year 1 to help identify higher-attaining pupils in order that they receive suitable provision for their needs. The results of national tests are carefully analysed and realistic targets are set for improved levels of attainment. There is a clear indication from the current year's test results that this practice is having an impact on standards. Spelling and mathematics results show improvement.

39. Teachers keep detailed records and are monitoring pupil's progress well, particularly in English and mathematics. In the numeracy and literacy sessions, teachers are constantly monitoring the

outcomes of each lesson and analysing pupil's performance in order to plan for the following lessons. New reading records are being implemented to replace previous records, which often lacked diagnostic comment. Useful collections of pupils' work graded in line with the National Curriculum are successfully used to improve the accuracy of teachers' assessment. Consequently, there is a very close match between the teachers' judgement of the pupils' performance and national test results.

Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development

40. Overall, the school's provision for the pupil's spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good. The school has maintained the standards identified in the previous inspection report but there are variations between aspects. The aims of the school give a high priority to these aspects and they are generally well met. The majority of the parents feel that the attitudes and values the school promotes have a positive effect on their children. The consistent implementation of the school's behaviour and discipline policy by teaching and non-teaching staff makes a valuable contribution to the pupils' moral and social development.

41. Provision for the pupils' spiritual development is satisfactory. In literacy and numeracy lessons the pupils are encouraged to celebrate what they have learned. In religious education, they are encouraged to discuss their feelings. In the collection of pupils' work from the last academic year, examples of sensitive writing about the love for their grandmothers and about people they admired contributed effectively to their spiritual development. In physical education one pupil's success in gaining confidence to jump was appropriately celebrated by the class. However, there are few moments when the pupils reflect upon their feelings about music or the work of an artist in a planned and special way. Collective worship makes a satisfactory contribution to the pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. However, whilst music is played it is not always used to create an atmosphere of tranquillity and reflection. Assemblies meet requirements and there is always an act of worship. The pupils eagerly learn the school prayer that has a significant meaning to them. However, there is very little difference between the act of worship and assembly to make it a special contribution to the pupils' spiritual development.

42. The school's provision for moral development is very good and clearly makes a significant contribution to the pupils' good behaviour and the progress they make. All staff set very good examples and are effective role models for the pupils. Positive moral values are expressed through the school and classroom rules, and the pupils know what is expected of them. These strong principles are valued by the parents. Routines and expectations are clearly set from the reception class to Year 2 and pupils are confident and are developing clear ideas of what is right and wrong. They are given good

opportunities to support each other particularly those who are grappling with challenging or silly behaviour. Group work, called circle time, is planned to promote the pupils' ability to practise being assertive and respectful of others.

43. Provision for the pupils' social development is very good. They are successfully encouraged to collaborate and share equipment and toys. The under-fives in the reception class are given very effective opportunities to work and play together while they learn the routines of starting school. All pupils have an opportunity to become a 'special helper'. They take registers to the office and older pupils in Year 2 help the younger pupils to find toilets and the cloakrooms. They are responsible for organising play boxes at break times and ringing the bell for assembly. There are special helpers at lunchtime who undertake tasks such as providing water and clearing away plates. These carefully planned opportunities contribute significantly to social relationships and enable pupils to participate fully in the life of the school.

44. The school's provision for cultural development remains satisfactory. The multicultural policy is clear and supports the development of the pupils' tolerance and understanding of a range of cultures. There are significant strengths to the way the school enables the pupils to understand their own cultural backgrounds. The pupils celebrate their local culture through singing, dancing, music, history and geography. They have planted trees and plants in a local park and enjoyed visits by musicians and artists. The children from travelling families are well established in the school. Religious education makes a significant contribution to the pupils' cultural development. The children visit the local church. Islam is the chosen world religion and some festivals are celebrated. The school makes a clear statement about intolerance to racism. However, whilst in the past the pupils visited the local mosque and explored Islamic patterns in mathematics, the current provision does not fully reflect the fact that the city nearby is rich with a mix of non-European cultures.

Support, guidance and pupils' welfare

45. Since the last inspection, the school has maintained high standards in its support, guidance and pupils' welfare. There is good provision for monitoring the progress and personal development of children under five and the pupils in Key Stage 1. The school successfully provides a very caring, supportive environment for its pupils. The mutual respect between pupils and teachers is good and promotes harmonious relationships. This contributes significantly to the quality of learning and standards of achievement. Notwithstanding the absence of the senior teacher in Year 2 and pupils being taught by a substitute teacher who did not know the pupils well, the teachers overall know the children well. Personal development, individual contributions to the life of the school and the

production of significantly good work are celebrated through whole-school assemblies and a record is kept of such achievement. Such encouragement has a positive effect on pupils self-esteem. Pupils' academic progress, including that of pupils with special educational is monitored very effectively and all pupils receive good and effective support. Very good provision is made for children under five to enable them to settle quickly into school. Pupils in Year 2 are well prepared for transition into the junior school.

46. Measures to promote high standards of behaviour are very good and are applied consistently. The school has very high expectations of behaviour based on self-discipline and respect for others, which are shared effectively with parents and pupils. The policy is successfully and consistently applied. There are effective procedures for the recording and reporting of attendance. The school is successfully involved in a local initiative to improve attendance and punctuality. The attendance assistant efficiently notes and monitors lateness and checks the registers to ensure the reason for any absence is ascertained. Unauthorised absences are quickly followed up. This is having a positive effect on the attendance of the vast majority of pupils. The school is working closely with the educational welfare officer.

47. Child protection procedures are good. Other health and safety issues including first aid and fire inspections are dealt with very effectively. Although there is no medical room, procedures for dealing with sick or injured pupils are very good; they are well cared for and detailed logs are kept of such incidents. There is a good programme of health education that is well supported by appropriate visitors such as the "Life Education Bus". Liaison with other support agencies is very good and teachers are sensitive to pupils needs.

Partnership with parents and the community

48. The school has good links with its parents and the community. It has worked hard to make parents feel welcome by seeing them individually at suitable times and holding a good variety of meetings and events. Parents appreciate this openness, approachability and support. Parents are welcomed into classrooms in the morning thus providing helpful opportunities for discussion with the teachers.

49. Parents who attended a meeting before the inspection considered that they were kept well informed. The annual report on their child's progress is good quality. It contains all the necessary information, although it does not generally set any targets to help the pupils improve. Other information provided is also of good quality. Parents receive newsletters that give them valuable information on the

curriculum, such as what topics are being covered in various subject areas, and reminders of forthcoming activities and events. There are notices for parents helpfully provided in the cloakroom entrance and individual classes. Information about homework is posted in each classroom. The parents would welcome the provision of an outside notice board, an idea already under consideration by the school. Parents were fully consulted about the home-school agreement and are now being asked to sign it. The governors' annual report to parents does not fully meet requirements as it does not include rates of authorised absence.

50. Termly meetings are held for parents to discuss their child's progress with teaching staff. The pupils' reports are given to the parents too close to the meeting for them to be able to prepare appropriately for the discussion. Those parents who do not attend this meeting are encouraged to come to school at another time that is more convenient. Other regular meetings include drop-in sessions, which deal with curriculum matters identified by parents for discussion. Whilst those which involve the broad areas covered by English, mathematics and information technology are generally well attended, other meetings are not.

51. The parents provide help in the school for reading, educational visits, sewing and cooking; many indicate their readiness to help. The support provided by parents is shown when some take on tasks to do at home if they are unable to come into school. Parents help the school further through their support of the Friends of the School Association, which organises events such as discotheques and fairs. The association raises considerable sums of money to help further the work of the school. Recently money has been spent on computers, software and an adventure trail. It also covers the cost of transport for the theatre trip.

52. Good links exist with the Family Centre which provides sessions for pre-school children and with their families. Liaison with the junior school on the site is developing effectively. There are good links between the teaching staff, involving regular meetings and visits. Useful written and oral information about pupils is also passed on. There are good and appreciated induction programmes for pupils starting school for the first time and for those who are seven years old and moving to the junior school. The out-of-school club run on the school premises, for which a fee is charged, provides a helpful service to pupils and their parents. It is run by a member of the school support staff and provides a good range of activities for pupils such as art work, computers and being able to use the outside facilities.

53. The school has good relationships with the local community. Its immediate neighbours keep a watchful eye on the school and alert the headteacher to any problems which are observed. Pupils make

studies of local buildings and undertake traffic surveys. Some also make regular visits to the local library. The wider community is used to support the curriculum. For example, work on mini-beasts in science being augmented by a trip to the Wildlife Centre, and history and geography with a trip to Clevedon. Pupils take part in local projects, such as planting trees and sowing seeds in a local park, and local competitions such as posters for crime awareness week in conjunction with the local police. The school has been visited by a theatre group and health service personnel, to promote work on 'Ourselves' by the youngest pupils. The pupils are very active in raising money for both national and local charities, for example Red Nose Day, Help the Aged, and a local Meningitis Trust and Winston's Wish.

THE MANAGEMENT AND EFFICIENCY OF THE SCHOOL

Leadership and management

54. The quality of leadership and management of the governors, headteacher and co-ordinators is good. It has a direct impact on the standards achieved and the good quality of education. The headteacher provides calm, clear leadership and promotes a strong sense of purpose and commitment to quality. Her leadership has a positive impact on the hard work, enthusiasm and high expectations shown by all the adults who are involved with the school and significantly contributes to the pupils' attainment and progress. Management at all levels provides clear educational direction to the school.

55. Since the last inspection, the school has maintained the quality of management and leadership. It has made good progress in the key issue related to the school development plan. Development planning is now good. The plan has significantly improved to include clearly identified time scales, necessary financial information and appropriate criteria to measure success. Priorities are defined following careful analysis of information on the budget, school performance and provision. Staff benefit through the allocation of funds that allow targeted training, release time away from classroom responsibilities and resources enhance identified curriculum developments. Effective procedures to monitor teaching and the curriculum are in place. Helpful evaluation of developments occurs through the submission of written reports, interviews with the head teacher and critical consideration of the impact on pupils' achievement, curriculum provision and the ethos of the school. The headteacher plays a significant rôle in supporting numeracy through frequent monitoring of teaching and support for the co-ordinator. Curriculum co-ordinators have had a significant impact on raising standards in experimental and investigative science, design and technology and information and communication technology.

56. The governing body is of high calibre. Members have a range of relevant expertise from outside education, which they put to very good use for the benefit of the school. Responsibilities are appropriately identified and sub-committees for finance, premises, personnel and curriculum meet regularly. There is successful communication between these groups and the full governing body. The governors have a good knowledge and understanding about the school. Many are actively involved in the day-to-day activities. They have attended training sessions for literacy and numeracy and two of them assume responsibility for supporting the implementation of the national strategies. The governors are well informed by the headteacher.

57. The ethos of the school is strong and successful. It achieves its aims well. Good provision is made for all pupils to have equal access to the full curriculum. The quality of education and support of the children from travelling families successfully integrates them into the life of the school. They make good progress with well managed teaching from class teachers, support workers and the local authority's specialist teacher. The management and organisation of special educational needs is effective, ensuring that the policy of the school meets the requirements of the Code of Practice. Relationships are very good. High value is placed upon both staff and the pupils doing well. The school provides a very effective learning environment. There is a strong commitment to high achievement, close relationships and equality for all. Nearly all statutory requirements are met. However, there are omissions in the governors' annual report to parents.

Staffing, accommodation and learning resources

58. Since the last inspection, the school has maintained the level and quality of provision for staffing, accommodation and learning resources. Despite many efforts on the part of the headteacher and governing body there is still intrusive sound transfer between two teaching areas in Year 2 and the drainage problem in the staff toilet has not been solved.

59. Currently the school has sufficient qualified teachers for the number of primary age pupils on roll and for children under five. An experienced substitute teacher took over a class in Year 2 in the absence of a senior member of staff. All have a sound range of expertise and experience for the subjects and age groups taught. There is a good number of non-teaching staff who provide effective support for the teaching of children throughout the school and for pupils with special educational needs. Members of outside agencies such as the traveller support worker provide successful support. There are appropriate numbers of volunteer helpers who make a positive contribution to pupils' learning. Administrative staff enable the school to operate effectively. The caretaker and cleaning staff take a pride in the school. Assistants that work in the school at lunch times are effective in catering for the

pupils. All teaching and non-teaching staff consider themselves valued members of the school community. They are clear about the aims of the school and are an excellent team of dedicated hard working people. This dedication has a positive effect on the standards of behaviour and the pupils' progress throughout the school.

60. The provision for the professional development of staff is good. There is a regular programme of in-service training, meetings and appropriate external courses. Professional development has a positive impact on teaching and the pupils' progress through, for example, the use of literacy and numeracy and in raising standards since the last inspection in design and technology and information and communication technology. All support staff work effectively with teachers to plan and record progress. They are skilled at their work and are very effective in supporting learning.

61. All job descriptions are appropriate and newly appointed staff are given effective support as their rôle develops. The procedures for staff development are good. The school uses a system of staff interviews effectively to set expectations for curriculum development. The school has had five initial teacher training students in the last two years.

62. Overall, the accommodation is satisfactory. The buildings and grounds are in good condition, well maintained, and are regularly monitored by the governors and the headteacher. The Friends of the School Association have recently provided an adventure playground. Adult learning courses are provided at the Family Centre and appropriate lettings take place. Such care of the school premises and close involvement with the local community makes a very positive contribution to the ethos of the school.

63. The hall is large and makes good provision for physical education and whole-school collective worship. Currently there are still problems with drainage from the staff toilets. There is no medical room but procedures for dealing with sick or injured pupils are very good. The teaching areas in the middle of the school are arranged on either side of an open plan corridor. Sound travels between the areas. Teachers speaking in a normal voice, for instance reading shared text as part of a literacy lesson, were noted to cause distraction to pupils in the parallel class and to affect their ease of following their own text. This noise sometimes constrains pupils' concentration and the progress they make. The school has a good number of storage areas. All internal areas have a variety of attractive displays that enhance the pupils' learning and celebrate their achievements. This reinforces the caring ethos of the school.

64. The school grounds are of a good size. The playground is attractively marked for educational

games. These markings are well used by the pupils at breaktimes and contribute positively to their behaviour. The school does not have an environmental area but makes appropriate use of a garden in the Family Centre. The pupils have also been involved in the development of a local park, including the planting of a meadow, which has provided an adequate extension of the environmental science curriculum. There is no secure outdoor education area for children under five. However, there are adequately supervised outdoor activities for these children in the main playground and on the adventure playground.

65. Resources for learning are good they are readily accessible and of at least sound quality in all subjects, including large outdoor apparatus for children under five. Information and communication technology resources are adequate and used satisfactorily to provide appropriate support for work with the curriculum. Resources are used effectively and have a positive impact on the standards attained. The classrooms have adequate stocks of books, including poetry, information books and 'big books'. The library is attractive and well organised, and the range of books available is good and they are used well. The use of resources beyond the school to enrich pupils' learning is good. The school makes good use of visits such as to a farm and seaside town, for example.

The efficiency of the school

66. The overall efficiency is good and the school development plan is well supported through effective financial planning. The school has maintained the good standards identified during the last inspection. The governors' finance committee has a clear overview of financial resources and provides helpful support to the headteacher. The governors have a long-term and realistic view of how the finances of the school can be managed. The governors and staff fully understand how the finances are linked to the priorities in the school development plan. There is an appropriate contingency fund carried forward from the previous financial year. It has enabled appropriate teacher-pupil ratios and classes organised in year groups to be maintained, and an increase in learning assistants.

67. The teachers are effectively deployed to maximise their strengths. Morale is high and teachers plan effectively together. The pupils are well managed and this helps them to learn successfully. The monitoring of teaching and learning is developing appropriately and ensures that the experienced teaching provision is cost effective. Co-ordinators have many responsibilities and have an appropriate knowledge of the subjects they manage. This has been particularly effective in the way the co-ordinators have managed the successful implementation of the National Literacy and Numeracy Strategies. The time allocated for co-ordinators to develop their subjects is carefully planned and targets are set for work to be covered in that time.

68. The headteacher and senior staff carefully analyses test results and use information to set targets and deploy resources to raise standards. Test results indicate a rise in the numbers of pupils attaining the higher Level 3. This analysis is cost-effective and the pupils make good progress from the reception class to Year 2. Support teachers and learning support workers are used effectively to promote the pupils learning. The grants allocated for special educational needs are used efficiently and effectively and the provision has an impact on the good progress the pupils make.

69. The accommodation is efficiently and effectively used despite difficulties of echoes in the open plan classrooms that sometimes distracts lessons. The library and the hall are well used. Information and communication technology is used successfully to support a range of subjects such as English, mathematics, science and geography, for example. Overall, staff makes good use of the resources available to them. However, the wide range of attractive books available in the school is insufficiently prominent in classrooms and around the school to promote literacy. Time is generally used efficiently. The school works hard to encourage pupils to arrive on time. The pupils are learning to move around the building quickly and lessons generally start on time.

70. Financial controls and administration are good. Finances are carefully monitored. There are effective systems to ensure that spending is kept within agreed limits. The school is an orderly and effective organisation. The office is very efficient and knowledgeable about the procedures in the school. Administrative systems are clear and unobtrusive and enable teaching staff to focus their work on the pupils. The most recent financial audit raised no significant issues and the minor recommendations have been adopted.

71. The school has made good improvement since the last inspection and has a good capacity for further improvement. Standards are steadily rising in the national tests. In lessons, the pupils are attaining levels in line with expectations for the age group and good progress is made in English, mathematics and science. Satisfactory and steady progress is made in other subjects. Progress is good over time from when the pupils enter the school in the reception class with below average attainment, through to the next two years to Year 2 when average standards are reached. The pupils with special educational needs make good progress and the quality of teaching is good. Pupils are well managed and their behaviour is good. Leadership in the school is good. Relationships are very good at all levels. The school, therefore, continues to provide good value for money.

PART B: CURRICULUM AREAS AND SUBJECTS

AREAS OF LEARNING FOR CHILDREN UNDER FIVE

72. Attainment on entry to the reception class is below average. However, because of the very good teaching and successful provision available in the reception unit, all children make good progress in all areas of learning. By the time they are five years old, the majority of children are expected to reach the nationally expected learning outcomes. The very appropriate emphasis on the development of children's personal and social skills enables them to exceed expectations in this area of learning.

73. The personal and social skills of most four year-olds develop very well and they make very good progress. After a very short time in the reception classes the children are secure and confident. They leave their parents and carers readily and enjoy the care of the teaching and non-teaching staff. The teachers and assistants make children familiar with the classroom routines and resources very effectively. The children quickly learn what the school's expectations for appropriate behaviour are and they acquire positive, co-operative attitudes to learning. They work hard at playing and being active together. Most take turns, share equipment and show consideration for others. They enjoy themselves with their friends in the "play house" or when involved in sand and water activities. Their behaviour is good both in the classroom and when moving around the school. On occasions when their behaviour is unacceptable, they quickly heed adults' intervention. By the time they are five years old the children should exceed the desirable outcomes for their personal and social development.

74. The children's skills in language and literacy are developing well and good progress is made in line with agreed outcomes. All are responding with increasing confidence to the teachers welcome at the beginning of morning and afternoon sessions. Speaking and listening is developing successfully. Snack time provides good opportunities for children to listen to others at their table and to develop their skills of conversation. They handle books carefully and clearly enjoy choosing books to look at, which successfully develops a positive attitude towards reading. They hold books correctly, locate pictures and comment on them. However, most children have yet to understand that print carries meaning and is linked to the pictures. They memorise rhymes and join in with obvious enjoyment. Children's skills in hearing and identifying letter sounds is developing well as they participate in a variety of enjoyable tasks such as sorting objects beginning with "s" sound from an imaginative selection. Their writing skills develop well as they make the letter shape. Whilst encouraged to write their name unaided, most are unable to do so with recognisable letters and good pencil control so soon after entry to school. All aspects of language and literacy are very well taught and the pupils' learning is enhanced by opportunities to take part in purposeful role-play activities. The children are on course to meet the

desirable outcomes for language and literacy by the time they are five.

75. Children are making good progress in their mathematical development. They are on line to reach the levels of attainment expected by age five. They enjoy joining in number rhymes and counting activities. There are considerable variations in levels of attainment at this early stage of the term, approximately half of the children are counting only to three and a small proportion competently counting to ten and beyond. Regular opportunities to listen to adults counting and to practise counting themselves in a variety of ways rapidly increases their number expertise, for example at registration. Working individually with their teacher, they make good progress in matching the correct number of fruits for the line of ten teddies. They are beginning to understand space and the terms big and bigger. They explore quantities and shapes in sand, water and play-dough. During a potato printing activity, some children were attempting to make patterns with the shapes. With support from a class assistant, they make good progress in matching shapes and colours in an attractively-made clown game. Teaching is very good and has a positive impact on attainment and progress.

76. Children steadily develop their knowledge and understanding of the world from the carefully planned activities provided. They make good progress and are on course to reach appropriate levels by the age of five. The provision in the reception classes is helping children gain confidence in exploring resources around the classroom. Already, they use the computer on their own and experiment with the keyboard to change the picture of the clown on the screen. They play with a camera in the “play house”. Some children talk confidently about their own families and describe where they live. Their curiosity and imagination is aroused as they play with the seal and the snake, for example, in a bag of objects beginning with the ‘s’ sound. Their interest encourages the use of questions to find out more information. Delight is evident when they discover “s” pictures in one of their books. The children are very well taught and teachers use skilful questioning to extend their learning and sense of chronology.

77. Many children enter school with poor co-ordination. However, their physical skills develop well as they play outside at playtime or in physical education in the school hall. Despite having very few lessons in the hall some children made good progress exploring the space, moving as directed, taking good care to avoid others as they make giant strides. The children are very well taught and safety is appropriately emphasised. Children learn to take care of themselves and others. In a vigorous and enjoyable hall session with a small group children demonstrate increasing control as they attempt to throw and catch balls. All can change their clothes for physical activities in the hall and attempt to dress themselves afterwards. There are good facilities for climbing and playing with large toys outside but currently there is no secure outside area for energetic activity. Consequently, these resources are restricted to times when a high level of supervision is available. Good gains are made in control as

children practise smaller manipulative movement. They shape play-dough, experiment with fingers and brushes and use pencils and crayons with increasing control. The children are on line to reach the desirable outcomes when they are five.

78. Good progress is made in the development of creative skills. The quality of teaching is very good and the pupils are on line to reach the required levels by the age of five. Children make good progress in singing and responding to rhythm in the enjoyable class sessions. They sing well with others and join in during assemblies. Activities to provide opportunities to develop all their senses are well planned. A large plate of familiar and unfamiliar fruit enabled the children to observe closely by looking, smelling and tasting. They were then able to suggest many descriptive words such as “spiky” and “squeaky” to describe what they had experienced.

79. The curriculum for the under fives is clearly guided by the six areas of learning and is developed, when appropriate, into the National Curriculum. The quality of teaching is very good in each area of learning and is supported well by classroom assistants. There is a secure knowledge and understanding of the needs of young children. A well-organised and stimulating environment is provided where purposeful play and first-hand experiences promote the areas of learning. Lower-attaining children and those with special educational needs are successfully supported and make good progress. The school’s admission policy which admits the under fives gradually at the beginning of the autumn term, and for part-time initially, is successful in securing a calm and settled start to school. In the small groups, teachers are able to assess each child individually through effective procedures and plan appropriately to meet their needs. Overall, the provision for children under-five is good and a strength of the school

ENGLISH, MATHEMATICS AND SCIENCE

English

80. In the national tests for reading in 1998, the percentage of pupils reaching the average Level 2 and above was below the national average. The percentage reaching the higher Level 3 was close to the national average. The pupils’ performance was close to the average for schools with pupils from similar backgrounds. The percentage of pupils reaching Level 2 and Level 3 in writing was well below the national average and below the average of schools with pupils from similar backgrounds. There are variations in the pupils’ results over the last three years. The school carefully analysed results to discover what pupils were getting wrong. Targets for improvement were set and the introduction of the National Literacy Strategy led to careful planning of work to raise levels of attainment. These

procedures were effective. The test results for 1999 indicate a significant improvement in attainment in both reading and writing. More pupils are reaching a higher Level 3. The school is already close to its targets of eighty per cent of pupils reaching Level 2 for 2000. At the time of the inspection, no figures are available to compare this year's improved results with national figures. The inspection findings reflect this improvement in reading and writing. There are variations in the attainment of boys and girls.

81. The pupils attainment in English overall is in line with the national expectation. By the end of Key Stage 1 standards in speaking and listening are satisfactory. All pupils speak clearly and most speak confidently in class and assembly when talking about their work and in answering teachers' questions. All pupils, including those with special educational needs, listen well. They are attentive to their teachers, listening carefully to instructions. Progress in speaking and listening is good for pupils of all levels of attainment. In the literacy hour, most pupils in Year 2 speak with confidence of their achievements. The youngest pupils in Year 1 make good progress providing explanations, for example, giving relevant detail when explaining where to put capital letters and full stops in a sentence. However, progress is sometimes compromised in Year 2 when even the noise of teachers' speaking in other classes echoes in the open plan building. It becomes difficult to hear individuals speak and for others to listen effectively.

82. The pupils' attainment in reading is in line with expectations by the end of Key Stage 1 and is clearly improving. A significant proportion of the pupils is reaching higher than average levels and all pupils, including those with special needs, are making good progress. By Year 2 they are reading well and are learning new strategies to help them read unfamiliar texts. The majority of pupils are generally reading accurately with little help and many are using their knowledge of letter sounds and clues from the pictures to read new words. At the start of the school year some higher-attaining pupils are reading fluently, accurately and independently, succeeding by using several strategies such as word patterns and the meaning of the text to find out unfamiliar words. In all classes pupils have opportunities to choose their own books to look at and read, with several choosing from the range of picture dictionaries. Pupils have a good, wide and varied range of interesting books to choose from during their sessions in the library, whilst their choice within the classroom to engage their interest is sometimes limited. During the literacy hour, pupils are making good progress in developing their skills of reading with expression and understanding as they participate with the whole class in reading from a big book or reading together in a small group. The pupils know how to find the name of the author, what the book contains from the contents page or recognising the difference between diagrams and photographs.

83. Attainment in writing is in line with the national expectation for pupils at the end of Key Stage

1. The recent target which the school set to improve attainment in spelling and writing has been successful as is reflected in the national tests and teachers' assessment. Progress in writing is good. By the end of the key stage, in Year 2, pupils write extended stories, compiling illustrated storybooks. They spell simple words accurately. Good gains in spelling can be attributable to the emphasis on identifying rhyming words and sounds in concert with systematic learning of phonics. They experiment with words in poetry and provide carefully stated reasons for not wishing to live in a different area from Churchdown. Some pupils re-draft their work for an improved version. Writing is well presented and handwriting is neat. The pupils progressively extend and use their knowledge of punctuation and grammar. One pupil, having identified an exclamation mark, was able to demonstrate its use. Since the previous inspection pupils have become more confident in using dictionaries.

84. Overall, progress in English is good and pupils of all levels of attainment make significant gains in their learning from when they start school to the end of the key stage two years later. The most able pupils make particularly good progress in reading, writing and spelling. In lessons during the literacy hour, the pupils' progress is clear. They are building successfully on what they have learned in previous lessons. Pupils with special educational needs make good progress in their literacy lessons and when they are withdrawn for specific and effective direct teaching. Progress in handwriting neatly is satisfactory. There are clear and successful links with other subjects that enable the pupils to practise their literacy skills. For example, in science pupils record their findings in diagrammatic and written form. The pupils wrote an account of the life of Samuel Pepys in history. They extend their knowledge of vocabulary in mathematics.

85. Pupils in both year groups demonstrate good, positive attitudes towards English. They settle eagerly to literacy lessons. They enjoy reading the "big book" stories and are keen to contribute to the discussions that follow. Concentration is generally well sustained throughout the lessons despite some distraction from adjoining areas. Behaviour in lessons is good. The pupils' good response in lessons makes a significant contribution to their attainment and progress.

86. The quality of teaching is good. It is always at least satisfactory, and it was good in half the lessons observed. The teachers have a secure knowledge and understanding of literacy. They use challenging vocabulary related to the elements of the English curriculum. An increasing range of reasons for writing is evident throughout the school. Lesson planning successfully guides their teaching and the literacy hour has clear teaching and learning objectives. The teachers carefully plan work for different groups, matching their abilities effectively. Group work is generally well supported. However, teachers do not always intervene in the tasks for the higher-attaining pupils to foster further

progress. In the best lessons, the pupils are motivated by a sense of fun and enjoyment in the text, for example. These lessons progress at a lively and brisk pace. The pupils' involvement is ensured by well-defined questions, clear instructions and tasks which are challenging and interesting. The day-to-day assessment of reading and writing is used effectively to plan future work. The pupils with special educational needs benefit from their carefully constructed literacy lessons when they are withdrawn in small groups.

87. The subject is well led and the school has implemented the literacy hour well. There is an effective strategy for further improvement. The co-ordinator and headteacher carefully monitor teaching and learning in English. Careful records are kept and the school is developing and improving records further following evaluations of the effectiveness of what is in place. Resources are adequate overall, and the school has a good range of reading books. However, the school does not always promote books sufficiently to stimulate pupils' enthusiasm for reading. Book displays are sparse and book corners insufficiently inviting. Parents have good guidance on hearing their children read at home.

Books are regularly taken home and this practice successfully supports the good progress the pupils make. There has been improvement in English since the previous inspection particularly in spelling and writing.

Mathematics

88. Overall, attainment in mathematics is in line with the expectations for pupils at the end of Key Stage 1. In the national tests for 1998, the percentage of pupils reaching the average Level 2 and the higher Level 3 was below the average at other schools nationally. The pupils' performance was close to the average for schools with pupils of similar backgrounds. The teachers' assessment indicates that the pupils perform better in number and algebra (Attainment Target 2) than in shapes and measures and data handling (Attainment Targets 3 and 4). Pupils' performance in using and applying mathematics (Attainment Target 1) was below average. There is no evidence of any differences in the attainment of boys and girls in the inspection findings. The results of tests in 1999 indicate an improvement and a significantly higher percentage of pupils reached Level 3. However, as yet, there are no national averages against which to gauge the significance of this improvement.

89. The inspection findings reflect the test results for 1999. Despite the inspection being so early in the school year, the pupils are reaching average standards in number. However, there is a significant proportion of pupils, particularly higher attaining children, who at the end of Year 1 were attaining above average standards in aspects of numeracy related to numbers up to 100. They have a clear understanding of what is longer or shorter than a metre and recognise what shapes are symmetrical,

knowing how many sides an octagon has. Overall, the majority of pupils accurately add single-digit numbers in their heads and some expand the pattern of $1+10$, $1+20$ to $1+100$. They predict the patterns when adding numbers facts up to 10 and describe methods of reversing numbers and getting the same answers e.g. $4+6=10$ and $6+4=10$. Lower attaining pupils and those with special educational needs recognise doubles of numbers and recall some number facts up to ten. However, they cannot yet recognise the patterns in number or order their work carefully. The school is well placed to meet its targets.

90. From the reception classes to the end of Year 1 and beginning of Year 2 the pupils' progress is good. This reflects the improvements made in mathematics lessons related to the implementation of the numeracy strategy. The pupils are clearly building on what they already know. The most able pupils apply their knowledge to the new situations they meet in numeracy lessons, in particular when calculating mentally. They are able to calculate in doubles developing the ideas they have previously learned. Average-attaining pupils are using numeracy skills across other subjects such as measurement in geography and data handling in geography and science using information technology to represent their tally charts of data collected on eye colour or countries visited. The pupils are developing a sound understanding of the measurement of time with clocks and calendars. Lower-attaining pupils and those with special educational needs are making good and steady progress in number. This is evident in lessons where they are confident to show their calculations to their class mates and use apparatus to match numbers with counters and then partition them to show other ways of making the numbers. This good progress is an improvement on the previous inspection. However, there are times when the most able are still not challenged enough through the teachers' intervention in their learning with questions and problems that would enable them to show the extent of their knowledge and understanding.

91. The pupils' attitudes to mathematics are good and they generally enjoy their lessons. They particularly enjoy the number games that encourage them to calculate in their heads. Their response in lessons has a positive impact on their attainment and progress. Behaviour in lessons is generally good and they concentrate well. In the very few instances where the pupils lost their concentration, it was due to having to sit and listen for too long or the challenging behaviour of one or two pupils that had to be checked by the teachers.

92. The quality of teaching is good overall in three-quarters of lessons and no unsatisfactory teaching was observed. Teaching in mathematics has a positive impact on the pupils' attainment and the good progress they make over time. The teachers have worked hard to enhance their knowledge and understanding of mathematics through the numeracy strategy. There are improvements in the amount of time spent on mathematics since the last inspection and the pupils now have at least one numeracy

lesson each day as a whole class. Lesson planning has improved and is closely linked to the strategy. Work is appropriately matched to individuals or groups of pupils, taking careful account of their different abilities. Pupils are well managed. Clear routines and expectations are set for the numeracy lessons. Day-to-day assessment is generally effective and teachers ask skilful questions to encourage pupils and find out what they know and understand. However, the pupils have few planned opportunities to reflect on their own achievement in mathematics and the achievements of others. Teachers' questioning is a particular strength with the least able, but still not as effective with the most able. There are times when opportunities for extending the learning of the most able are missed by insufficient discussion with the teacher. Work is appropriately marked and there are good examples where homework is effectively used in lessons. For example, the pupils were pleased to show their classmates that they had practised counting to 20 and back at home. This contributed greatly to the part of the lesson where the pupils were asked to calculate mentally. However in other classes there is limited evidence to show that homework is consistently used in each class.

93. The mathematics curriculum is reasonably broad and balanced. The current strong emphasis on number and algebra appropriately reflects the good work of the school in meeting the requirements of the numeracy strategy. Planning is good and has improved since the last inspection. The school is sensibly using the schemes of work related to the national strategy. All pupils have appropriate access to the curriculum by well-planned tasks and pupils with special educational needs are well supported in lessons. The children of travelling families are given effective support from their own teacher, learning support worker and a support worker for children of travelling families from the local authority. The subject is well led by a knowledgeable co-ordinator whose role is clear and has a positive impact on raising standards. Mathematics is well resourced. Whilst the accommodation is adequate for the delivery of mathematics some lessons are disturbed by noise travelling through the open plan space. Effective developments have been implemented following a helpful audit of mathematics in the school. Monitoring procedures are in place and the school has an effective strategy for further development.

Science

94. The results of the 1998 National Curriculum teachers' assessments show that the percentage of pupils reaching Level 2 or above was broadly in line with the national average. The percentage of pupils attaining the higher Level 3 was above the national average. Teacher assessments for 1999 indicate a significant improvement, particularly for experimental and investigative science. However, currently there are no national averages available for comparison.

95. The attainment of pupils of all abilities in lessons and their previous work at the end of Key

Stage 1 is at least in line with levels expected nationally and, however, a significant proportion of pupils exceeds expectations. Attainment is even across all aspects of science, namely experimental and investigative science, life processes and living things, materials and their properties and physical processes. With the help of their teacher, the pupils examine fruits such as apples and pomegranates to establish how seeds are formed. They plant seeds and store them under different conditions, for example some with water in a dark cupboard, others with water on a window ledge. They examine the results carefully, noting comparative growth through diagrams and written comments. About one third of the pupils can, with help, make realistic predictions and appropriate evaluations of their records and can talk about what they have found out, which is beyond the national expectation for pupils of this age.

96. Overall, progress in science is good, particularly in lessons where they receive direct teacher support. In a lesson on seeds, careful questioning by the teacher and the high expectation that pupils would summarise their findings in a written form, led to good progress in understanding the life cycle of some fruits. In another lesson, the teacher's insistence on accurately identifying small variations in hair or eye colour led to good progress in understanding subtle differences between human beings. Pupils with special educational need make good progress.

97. Pupils' attitudes to science are positive and their behaviour in lessons is good. Their relationship with each other and with teachers and adults is very good. They share equipment well, listen carefully to adults and are willing to express ideas, for example explaining clearly to the class the difference between themselves and a friend in a respectful manner. Throughout the school pupils are keen to carry out science; they work well, concentrate effectively and record work with care. This concentration makes a very positive contribution to pupils' personal development.

98. The quality of teaching is good. The particularly effective features of teaching include the brisk pace and detailed and searching questions. Positive and continuous feedback on the results of pupil's observations ensure good progress, for example in their understanding of conditions for growth and the life cycle of plants. However, there are few opportunities for pupils to express their wonder at the natural world. Throughout the school teachers use every appropriate opportunity to extend pupils' understanding and the correct use of scientific vocabulary. A range of appropriate recording and reporting strategies is used well by pupils. Good awareness of other subjects such as language and writing, successfully extends pupils work in literacy. Teachers use database programs to assist pupils in analysing data, for example on hair colour. They link pupils' experiences in mathematics to the use of tables for recording results and the presentation of findings in a variety of graphical forms, including computer-generated colour print outs.

99. The school has established an effective scheme of work that addresses all Programmes of Study during the key stage. It is comprehensive, clear and successfully aids teachers' planning. There is a programme for health education that includes drugs education and sex education appropriate to this age group. There are successful strategies for assessment which are used well and linked closely to the scheme of work. The use of prior assessments to inform planning is good and has been used successfully to raise attainment in experimental and investigative science. There is an appropriately qualified co-ordinator for the subject. The co-ordinator has been well supported by the head and staff in raising standards, particularly in experimental and investigative science work. There is a clear policy statement. Resources are adequate, well stored, readily accessible and are used well by staff and pupils. The school does not have an environmental area but has access to a garden in the Family Centre, which is on the school site. The school has also been involved in the development of a local park, including the planting of a meadow, and this has provided an adequate extension of the environmental science curriculum.

100. Since the last inspection there has been improvement in attainment in experimental and investigative science and in pupils' progress in the skills required to carry out such work. The quality of teaching has become more consistent and teachers' subject knowledge has improved. The scheme of work has aided teachers in planning for progression. The school is well placed in science to make even further improvements in attainment.

OTHER SUBJECTS OR COURSES

Design and Technology

101. During the inspection, no lessons were planned to take place and it is therefore not possible to make a judgement about the quality of teaching. However, from the scrutiny of work, discussion with pupils, teachers' plans and photographs of models, the pupils' progress throughout the school is satisfactory. They design and make increasingly complex models and undertake activities that are more demanding as they progress through the key stage. They build appropriately on their previous experiences.

102. Younger pupils design toys such as model prams for their dolls and consider the purpose of an artefact they are manufacturing. In their designs they consider the materials to be used, decoration to be applied and ways of fixing such items as axles, wheels and handles and, with the help of an adult, list these requirements. Older pupils, having constructed their model from a mixture of found items

such as clear plastic bottles, wooden dowel and wheels, successfully evaluate the result against their original design, making sensible practical suggestions as to improvements that could be made. Pupils accurately cut and assemble wooden dowel, plastic corrugated board and acetate to make model vehicles, some having up to ten freely turning wheels. They design and make winding gear for model cranes and boat davits, considering the crank action of the handle. Pupils with special educational needs make satisfactory progress.

103. From discussion with pupils, their attitudes to the subject are judged to be good. Pupils are enthusiastic, willing to express an opinion or contribute sensible comments to discussions.

104. Planning at all levels is satisfactory and plans take into account many aspects of designing and making. The pupils are given appropriate opportunities to develop their skills in these aspects. Food technology is undertaken successfully through the preparation of foods relevant to the topics. Appropriate attention is paid to the health and safety aspects of the work being undertaken. Design and technology is well led. The scheme of work sets out clearly the skills to be covered as the pupils move through the school. The teachers appropriately identify opportunities to practise these skills through class topics, for example through a topic on vehicles or preparing food for Christmas. Such innovation aids pupils understanding of the essential place of design and technology in everyday life. The resources for the subject are adequate, including food technology, and they are readily available and used satisfactorily.

105. Since the last inspection, the school has raised teachers' understanding of the requirements of the National Curriculum. The school has made good progress in this Key Issue. The range and application of pupils' skills including design skills have improved and pupils now confidently use a variety of both flexible and rigid materials.

Information Technology

106. At the end of the key stage, the pupils' attainment is in line with national expectations. They use word processing to draft and then amend a report on the life cycle of a butterfly. They gather statistics regarding hair and eye colour and, using a database with help from a teacher enter, store, sort, prepare and print a pictorial representation of their findings. They then analyse this information to identify the most common colour in the class.

107. The pupils make satisfactory progress throughout the school. They use increasingly complex programs as they get older. For example, younger pupils program a small vehicle to follow a simple

route on the hall floor. Older pupils plan a route for the vehicle on computer before entering and testing their program over a more complex route. The progress of pupils with special educational need is satisfactory.

108. Pupils' attitudes are predominantly good. Throughout the school they enjoy using information and communication technology. Younger pupils are confident in the use of the mouse and keyboard. Older pupils are keen to use information and communication technology to support their work in lessons. They often work in pairs or small groups. They concentrate hard and behave well when doing so. They work well together, help each other and share computers sensibly. Such responsible behaviour positively enhances personal development.

109. The quality of teaching is satisfactory. Teachers draw up appropriate plans to use information and communication technology to support their teaching. For example, pupils were confidently using the mouse to pick up, drag and drop facial features as part of a science project on similarities and differences in living things. Scrutiny of work demonstrates that teachers encourage pupils to use an art package to draw spiders, ladybirds and wood lice as part of a project on mini beasts. Data handling and spreadsheets are used well to support work in mathematics and science through, for example, the recording and analysis of means of transport used to reach school. Teachers draw appropriate attention to the use of common communication devices such as the video or tape recorder. Such activities make a positive contribution to literacy and numeracy work and to the understanding of pupils to the value and place of information and communication technology in the everyday world.

110. The scheme of work is clear and helps teachers in their planning. There are class assessment and record keeping systems. As yet, these do not form a continuous record of achievement as pupils move through the school. There is an enthusiastic co-ordinator. She has had a significant impact on the provision of the subject and the confidence of the teachers in the planning of information and communication technology to support a wide range of curriculum areas. Resources both hardware and software, are being updated and, although the pupil numbers to individual computer ratio is high, they are of good quality, readily accessible and used well by both teachers and pupils.

111. Since the last inspection the school has raised standards of attainment at the end of the key stage and the range and competence of pupils' skills. An appropriate scheme of work is in place. Teacher confidence and expectations have improved and they now integrate information and communication technology more confidently across the curriculum. The school is well placed to further increase the use of information and communication technology to support learning across the curriculum and so enhance overall standards. The school has made good progress in this Key Issue.

History and Geography

112. During the inspection, no geography lessons were seen as the subject is not taught at this time of year. Very few history lessons were planned to take place and consequently it is not possible to make a secure judgement about the quality of teaching. However, from the teachers' planning, displays, discussion with the pupils and a scrutiny of their past work, there is suitable provision for the subjects and the pupils are learning what they should for the age group. They are making good progress in developing their historical and geographical skills.

113. In geography all pupils, including those with special educational needs, make good progress in knowledge and understanding of environments different from their own. Their awareness of the locality is built upon as they move through the school. In Year 2, they make satisfactory progress in contrasting life on the Isle of Struay with the community in Churchdown. They make good comparisons and write clearly their reasons for where they prefer to live, expressing views about unattractive and attractive aspects of the environment. They develop mapping skills using a key to plot human and physical features on an outline sketch map. They correctly identify the countries of the United Kingdom on a map. World maps are used effectively to trace pupils' holiday destinations during the summer.

114. The pupils demonstrate their enjoyment by their keenness to talk about and use old Victorian toys, following this with careful observational drawings. They gain a good understanding of the differences between toys of the past and present, recognising for example that plastic and batteries were not available in Victorian times. Their understanding and factual knowledge of major events and people of the past are increased when a study was made of Samuel Pepys and of the Fire of London. Carefully made three-dimensional pictures of houses illustrate well the housing in London during that time in the past, as did the quills made and used to demonstrate differences in tools for writing then and now.

115. Good links are made between history and geography as when, on a school visit to Clevedon to study a seaside town, the historical features were noted. Other subjects in the curriculum support satisfactorily learning in history and geography. For example, historical links are made in religious education when differences in transport in biblical times are pointed out. Mapping skills are supported by work on co-ordinates in mathematics and by seeing maps used in their reading scheme.

116. These subjects are carefully planned into the overall curriculum of the school. They are successfully linked to the programme of topics. Planning continues to be developed and reviewed in order to implement revised requirements. The new schemes of work based on national guidance provide

a good basis for the work, but they have only just been implemented and their success is yet to be evaluated. Resources in school for use in geography and history lessons are adequate. Information technology is effectively used to collect and sort data about countries. They are supplemented well by the loans from the local museum service. There are appropriate plans to expand the resources in line with the proposed new curriculum plans. A clearer role for the co-ordinator with some time available for monitoring has been an important factor in maintaining standards since the previous inspection.

Art

117. Taken overall, progress in art is good over the key stage. The pupils are undertaking work expected of this age group. All pupils, including those with special educational needs are systematically developing their skills and techniques as they move up through the school. For example, in drawing they improve the accuracy with which they record natural objects from simple outline drawings to carefully considered observational drawings of wheat, including individual seeds and curved stalks. They use sketchbooks with confidence, correctly treating them as note books in which to experiment with ideas and techniques. The pupils create bold pictures in paint, metallic papers and a variety of textiles. Printing and three-dimensional work is well represented in displays and folios of work. They consider the work of artists such as Monet and produce effective illustrations using pointillist techniques in the style of Seurat. They confidently use art packages to produce computer-generated designs for imaginary mini beasts.

118. Throughout the school pupils' attitudes are good. They are keen and enthusiastic to undertake the art activities set. The pupils share resources fairly and use them sensibly. They study conscientiously. They are willingly criticise their own work and accept the teacher's criticism. Pupils successfully work together on collaborative work such as a millennium tapestry being prepared with the help of adult volunteers.

119. The quality of teaching is satisfactory with some strengths. The quality of teaching is good and the attainment of the pupils is raised when time is spent with art groups commenting on their work and drawing their attention to specific elements of the activity for example the pale strip on a spider plant leaf or the relative size of the pupil and iris in eyes. When pupils are actively supported by teachers and classroom assistants, and are taught techniques and their work constructively criticised, they persevere with the improvement of their techniques and gain great personal satisfaction from their success. Sometimes, due to the need to concentrate on academic activities, teachers are unable to spend the time they would wish supporting pupils in this way. On these occasions pupils do not make as much progress as they might. There are few opportunities for pupils to express their wonder at the

creative world.

120. There is a comprehensive scheme of work which assists teachers in the planning of their lessons and ensures progression through the school. The subject makes a satisfactory contribution to the development of pupils' knowledge of European culture. Art is well-led by a knowledgeable co-ordinator. The subject is well resourced with a good range of materials and media that are readily accessible. Good use is made of resources including appropriate use of information and communication technology to support the art curriculum. The school celebrates the achievements of pupils in a variety of ways including large displays of pupils' work in all available public spaces in the school, as well as in the teaching areas. Displays show a good range of work including paint, pen, print making, drawings of artefacts, collage, clay work and three dimensional work and demonstrates good progress through the school. Since the last inspection, the school has maintained its good provision of a wide range of art experiences.

Music

121. There were too few lessons in music during the inspection to make a secure judgement about the pupils' progress and the quality of teaching. However, the pupils generally sang well in assembly and in the lessons observed. They take part enthusiastically in action songs and quickly learn new songs. They listen carefully and sensitively to the music played for assembly. These examples indicate that the school has maintained the standards identified in the previous inspection. The pupils have effective opportunities to sing in a choir or learn to play the recorder in the lunch time extra-curricular sessions.

122. Overall, the provision for music is satisfactory and curriculum plans indicate that all the elements of music are covered. Statutory requirements are met. The curriculum is supported effectively by visiting musicians. The published scheme of work provides a helpful support for the non-specialist teachers and enables them to make appropriate provision during the week. The time allowed for music is compromised by the time required for literacy and numeracy. Teachers use the hall for music so that the noise does not disturb other classes in the open plan classrooms. However, the practice of two classes joining for music at the end of the day has both strengths and weaknesses. This organisation is appropriate for singing and provides good opportunities for them to sing familiar songs and learn new ones when teaching is brisk and lively. However, such an organisation limits the opportunities for all pupils to be involved in exploring sounds and creating music and for music lessons to have a balance of experiences of singing and instrumental work. Photographic evidence indicates that the pupils are involved in a range of musical events such as concerts and productions. The choir

has sung in the junior school and entertained senior citizens at Christmas.

123. The subject is well led by a knowledgeable and enthusiastic co-ordinator. Plans are in place for monitoring and supporting teaching. The current policy is sound but does not yet match the new scheme of work. Appropriate plans are in place to review the music curriculum and provide further support for the teachers. The resources for music are generally good and the school has a satisfactory range of instruments.

Physical Education

124. The pupils are reaching standards in physical education similar to those expected for this age group and there are strengths in gymnastics. The pupils including those with special educational needs make good progress in lessons and are clearly building upon what they have previously learned in reception and Year 1. The school is maintaining the standards and quality identified in the previous inspection report. For example, they control their bodies appropriately when running and jumping, using space in the hall well. They respond creatively to music in a dance lesson and enjoy what they achieve when working on the apparatus. Photographic evidence and the pupils' previous work samples show that, by the time they are seven years old, the pupils can devise simple games and record the rules for others to play.

125. The pupils' attitudes to physical education are good. Their enthusiasm and enjoyment contributes to the progress they make in lessons when they are challenged physically and intellectually. However, at times they become over-excited in dance when left too freely to interpret the music.

126. The quality of teaching is generally good and has a clear impact on the pupils' progress. There are particular strengths in gymnastics. In these lessons, there is very good direct teaching that successfully includes effective attention to safety when using apparatus and the importance of warming up before movement. Pupils are used appropriately to demonstrate creative sequences and good quality movements. However, there are too few opportunities for them to evaluate their own work and that of others in the class. Planning is satisfactory and covers a good range of challenging activities. The teachers' subject knowledge is good and they are well supported by taped sessions for dance. These sessions have a particularly effective impact on the pupils' progress when the tape is stopped to enable the teacher to teach a particular skill or re-enforce an idea. Time and apparatus are used effectively and lessons are generally conducted at a brisk pace. Where teaching is less successful there is too little intervention to promote high standards and an over-dependence on the taped lesson.

127. The physical education curriculum is reasonably broad and balanced, meeting statutory requirements. It contributes effectively to the pupils' moral and social development. The subject is well led and managed by a knowledgeable co-ordinator. There is a good range of resources, including challenging large apparatus in the hall. A satisfactory development plan is in place that includes the monitoring of teaching and lesson plans.

Religious Education

128. Too few lessons were planned to take place during the inspection to provide a secure judgement about the quality of teaching in religious education. However, from looking at the pupils' previous work and talking to them, and from the two lessons observed, the pupils attainment is broadly in line with the expectations of the Locally Agreed Syllabus. The pupils are making satisfactory progress overall. The school has maintained the satisfactory standards identified in the previous inspection.

129. The pupils in Year 2 listen carefully to stories and some relate them to their own lives. For example, when hearing the story of Joseph they can state preferences about multi-coloured coats. They discuss jealousy and a few pupils express examples of personal jealousy. However, some are confused as to what jealousy is, which reflects their stages of development and understanding. They know about the importance of prayer. Through visits to the Church they understand that it is an important place of worship.

130. Overall, pupils of all abilities make sound progress over time. Younger pupils explore the need for rules and are clear about the need for rules. They understand that kindness is important and a small proportion of the classes is making good progress in relating kindness to a consciousness of other people's feelings. The majority of pupils including those with special educational needs know that prayer is significant to worship and that Jesus is an important character to the Christian religion.

131. The pupils have positive attitudes to religious education. They listen with interest to the stories in lessons. They enjoy the involvement of other pupils. They are willing to contribute with appropriate views and ideas.

132. The religious education curriculum satisfactorily meets the requirements of the Locally Agreed Syllabus. The policy is clear and extensive and ensures that the Agreed Syllabus is implemented. Islam is the world religion studied and there are clear multi-cultural links to some of the stories the children are told. Religious education makes a positive contribution to the pupils' spiritual, social, moral and cultural development. School assemblies are carefully planned to complement lessons. At

present worship either begins or ends the weekly lesson. However, the time spent on religious education is, sometimes, insufficient to enable the pupils to reflect on what they have learned or to record their ideas in various ways. The agreed length of lessons is not always implemented appropriately. The teachers are not always involved in assembly and therefore there is very little time for the pupils to follow up the stories and themes. The school has made a successful investment in books and resources for religious education and these include a good range of artefacts to support lessons. The subject is well managed and there is a clear development plan for further improvement.

PART C: INSPECTION DATA

SUMMARY OF INSPECTION EVIDENCE

133. The team of four inspectors worked in the school over a period of four days. There was the equivalent of thirteen days of inspection. Fifty-two lessons were observed and a total of forty-six hours was spent in classes, in discussions with the pupils and evaluating samples of their work.

134. Inspectors visited registration periods and assemblies. All teachers were observed teaching literacy and numeracy at least once. Many teachers were observed teaching several times over the week and all subjects were inspected. Too few lessons took place in history, music and religious education to obtain a secure judgement about the teaching of them and no lessons took place in geography and design and technology. Discussions were held with teaching and non-teaching staff in the school. Inspectors visited the Family Centre and the after-school club. Meetings were held with representatives of the governing body including the Chairman. The pupils were observed at playtime and lunchtime and when entering and leaving the school at the beginning and the end of the day.

135. All the available work of a sample of three pupils, representing the whole ability range in each class was scrutinised. In addition, a sample of work of the pupils with special educational needs was examined in line with their Individual Education Plans. Thirteen percent of the children were listened to reading and their books discussed with them. Many informal discussions took place with children about their work in lessons and their contribution to the life of the school. Planned discussions with pupils took place about literacy, mathematics, information technology, behaviour and the responsibilities they hold.

136. A large amount of documentation provided by the school was examined before and during the inspection. This included the previous inspection report and action plan. The school improvement plan, the development plan, curriculum and lesson plans, minutes from governors meetings, the analysis

of test results, pupils assessments and records were also analysed. The registered inspector held a meeting with fourteen parents before the inspection and the responses from thirty-nine questionnaires were analysed. Additional discussions were held with those parents who help around the school.

137. DATA AND INDICATORS

Pupil data

	Number of pupils on roll (full-time equivalent)	Number of pupils with statements of special educational needs	Number of pupils on school's register of SEN	Number of full-time pupils eligible for free school meals
YR – Y2	164	1	40	43

Teachers and classes

Qualified teachers (YR – Y2)

Total number of qualified teachers (full-time equivalent)	7
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	24:1

Education support staff (YR – Y2)

Total number of education support staff	5
Total aggregate hours worked each week	58

Financial data

Financial year:	1999
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	£
Total Income	263,296
Total Expenditure	264,191
Expenditure per pupil	1,694
Balance brought forward from previous year	19,044
Balance carried forward to next year	18,149

PARENTAL SURVEY

Number of questionnaires sent out:	164
Number of questionnaires returned:	39

Responses (percentage of answers in each category):

	Strongly agree	Agree	neither	Disagree	Strongly disagree
I feel the school encourages parents to play an active part in the life of the school	28	62	8	3	
I would find it easy to approach the school with questions or problems to do with my child(ren)	46	49		5	
The school handles complaints from parents well	18	42	33	6	
The school gives me a clear understanding of what is taught	26	49	15	10	
The school keeps me well informed about my child(ren)'s progress	39	36	23	3	
The school enables my child(ren) to achieve a good standard of work	34	53	11	3	
The school encourages children to get involved in more than just their daily lessons	34	42	18	5	
I am satisfied with the work that my child(ren) is/are expected to do at home	26	54	13	8	
The school's values and attitudes have a positive effect on my child(ren)	42	50	8		
The school achieves high standards of good behaviour	40	55	3	3	
My child(ren) like(s) school	61	40			