

INSPECTION REPORT

**ALMONDSBURY CHURCH OF ENGLAND
PRIMARY SCHOOL**

Almondsbury, Bristol

LEA area: South Gloucestershire

Unique reference number: 109157

Headteacher: Roger McLean

Reporting inspector: Raymond Jardine
7428

Dates of inspection: 9th – 13th October 2000

Inspection number: 191714

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

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INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Type of school:	Infant and junior
School category:	Voluntary controlled
Age range of pupils:	4 - 11 years
Gender of pupils:	Mixed
School address:	Sundays Hill Almondsbury Bristol South Gloucestershire
Postcode:	BS32 4DS
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Appropriate authority:	The governing body
Name of chair of governors:	Mrs Sheila Cook
Date of previous inspection:	03/02/1997

INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Team members		Subject responsibilities	Aspect responsibilities
Raymond Jardine 7428	Registered inspector	Science Information and communication technology	What sort of school is it? The school's results and achievements How well is the school led and managed? What should the school do to improve further?
Catherine Rentoul 7834	Lay inspector	Special educational needs	Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development How well does the school work in partnership with parents?
Gail McLean T12677	Team inspector	English Music Religious education Equal opportunities	How well are pupils taught?
Alison Cogher 24805	Team inspector	Foundation Stage Physical education Art and design	How well does the school care for its pupils?
Jane Morris 18270	Team inspector	Mathematics Design and technology Geography History	How good are the curricular and other opportunities offered to pupils?

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The Registrar
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PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Number of full time pupils:	259		(about the national average)
Pupils for whom English is an additional language:	0		
Pupils entitled to free school meals:	5	2%	(well below the national average)
Pupils on register of special educational needs:	35	13.5%	(below the national average)
Average class size:	29		

Almondsbury Church of England Primary School serves the village of Almondsbury near Bristol. Most pupils come from the village and Bradley Stoke North. The school is very popular and a significant number come further distances from such areas as Severn Beach, Easter Compton and Pilning. The pupils' standards on entry into the school are a little above average.

HOW GOOD THE SCHOOL IS

Almondsbury Primary is an effective school. The school achieves its aims well because governors, all staff, parents and the local community share a strong commitment to achieving high standards for their pupils. Teaching is good and pupils enjoy learning at the school. The school's Christian ethos and caring relationships throughout promote very good attitudes and values amongst pupils. The school provides good value for money.

What the school does well

- The school's aims and values very effectively underpin its work.
- Standards in English, science and music are well above average.
- Pupils have very positive attitudes, enjoy school and behave very well.
- Teaching is good and pupils make good progress.
- Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is very good.
- Parents and the community very effectively enhance the school's curriculum.
- The governing body carries out its role in supporting and accounting for the school very well.

What could be improved

- The school's long-term curriculum plans do not guide pupils' progress through classes with mixed ages and key stages sufficiently to ensure they have similar experiences.
- The school's monitoring of the curriculum, particularly where classes have mixed ages, is insufficient to ensure all pupils have equality of access.

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

HOW THE SCHOOL HAS IMPROVED SINCE ITS LAST INSPECTION

The school has made good progress since the last inspection in February 1997. Standards in music and history are improved while both the school's provision for information technology and pupils' standards in the subject are much improved. Extensive training in teaching literacy, numeracy and in science has helped maintain the school's good standards. The curriculum for the Foundation Stage is much improved because plans are targeted closely around specific goals and teachers use their assessments of pupils to inform their teaching well. The quality of teaching has improved and is now good with some very good and excellent features.

The school has addressed all the issues raised in its last inspection well. There is a new computer suite in the school's library and up-to-date computers in every classroom, funded by The Parents Association. This, together with improved planning and guidance from the information technology co-ordinator, has led to rapid improvements in pupils' standards in the subject. Revised schemes of work in a number of subjects are providing better guidance to teachers planning their lessons. The school evaluates its performance, particularly teaching, better to help bring about improvements and pupils' standards and progress are more closely monitored and reviewed. Co-ordinators of subjects have developed their role well in this respect. The school has worked hard to involve the community, especially parents, more closely in the life of the school. Parents like the information about the curriculum and guidance on supporting their children that the school now provides.

STANDARDS

The table shows the standards achieved by 11 year olds based on average point scores in National Curriculum tests.

Performance in:	compared with			
	all schools			similar schools
	1997	1998	1999	1999
English	B	A*	A	B
mathematics	A	A	B	C
science	A	A	B	C

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

Standards in all the core subjects of English, mathematics and science have been maintained above the national averages over several years. In 1999, the school achieved standards broadly in line with those of similar schools except in English where they were above average. In 2000, the proportion of 11 year old pupils achieving the expected level in English and in science were in line with those of similar schools and well above national averages. Standards in mathematics were a little lower than in previous years. The results in science were particularly pleasing since they reversed a falling trend in previous years. Higher attaining pupils have achieved well in all these subjects. The school exceeded its 2000 targets in English by some margin but the results in mathematics were just below the targets set by the school.

Standards seen during the inspection have been maintained and are above the national expectations in both Key Stages 1 and 2. Pupils achieve well in most subjects as they progress through the school. Eleven year old pupils achieve standards well above the expected level in English, science and in music while they are above in mathematics, history and in information technology. There are no subjects where standards are unsatisfactory. Pupils with special educational needs make very good progress throughout the school.

PUPILS' ATTITUDES AND VALUES

Aspect	Comment
Attitudes to the school	Pupils like coming to school. They respond well to the good teaching and the positive behaviour policy. They take responsibility in the day-to-day life of the school and value the successes of their friends.
Behaviour, in and out of classrooms	Very good in and around the school. Pupils are developing a strong sense of self-discipline as they mature.
Personal development and relationships	The caring ethos of the school is reflected in the very good relationships amongst staff and pupils. Pupils work together very well, support each other and gain in self-confidence and esteem.
Attendance	Good. There is no unauthorised absence. Punctuality is very good.

TEACHING AND LEARNING

Teaching of pupils:	Aged up to 5 years	aged 5-7 years	aged 7-11 years
Lessons seen overall	Good	Good	Good

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

Teaching of both English and mathematics is good throughout the school. Teaching in the upper end of Key Stage 2 is very good. All the lessons observed were satisfactory or better and 27 per cent were very good or excellent. Teachers' plans are detailed and guided by clear objectives for developing pupils' knowledge, understanding and skills. Lessons are interesting and appropriately demanding. Pupils respond well to teachers' questions. They are challenged to think, explain and make decisions. Teachers skilfully adapt their teaching for pupils of different abilities and make very good use of support assistants and helpers when pupils are working in groups. Teachers manage pupils well, expect high standards of behaviour and relationships throughout are very good. However, some teachers provide insufficient guidance to pupils on ways of improving when marking their work.

OTHER ASPECTS OF THE SCHOOL

Aspect	Comment
The quality and range of the curriculum	Good. A strong emphasis is placed on English and mathematics. Information technology is used well to support other subjects of the curriculum. The excellent support provided by the wider community strongly enhances the school's curriculum. A very good range of extra-curricular activities is offered to older pupils. However, long-term curriculum plans provide insufficient guidance on pupils' progress through mixed age classes.
Provision for pupils with special educational needs	Provision for pupils with special educational needs is very good. Appropriate and precise targets are set and taken account of by experienced teachers and support staff.

Provision for pupils' personal, including spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	This is a strength of the school. Pupils exhibit high moral standards, they respect and care for each other. They effectively learn about their own and other cultures, values and beliefs within the school's strong Christian ethos.
How well the school cares for its pupils	Good. Effective procedures enable the school to successfully monitor all pupils' academic and personal development. These are particularly well developed in literacy and numeracy and for pupils with special educational needs. Procedures for monitoring attendance are excellent.

The school works in very close partnership with parents. Parents are well informed about their children's curriculum and guidance is provided to enable them to help their children with reading and spelling at home. Parents are very supportive of the school, both financially and in giving time to help in school. Reports describe what pupils have studied and their achievements well but make insufficient reference to ways of improving.

HOW WELL THE SCHOOL IS LED AND MANAGED

Aspect	Comment
Leadership and management by the headteacher and other key staff	Good. The headteacher and senior management team provide a clear direction for the school and promote close teamwork and mutual support throughout the staff. Day-to-day management is effective.
How well the governors fulfil their responsibilities	The governing body is very effective in challenging and supporting the school. Governors know the school well and do much to bring the community into close partnership.
The school's evaluation of its performance	Teaching is monitored and supported to promote improvements well. The school compares its standards rigorously against a range of measures and action taken, for example, to improve pupils' writing. However, the curriculum, especially for mixed age classes, is not monitored sufficiently to ensure pupils receive their full entitlement.
The strategic use of resources	Resources are used well throughout. The school is very effective in attracting additional funding and expertise from a variety of sources to enhance the curriculum and to achieve its priorities.

The school achieves its aims very well in providing a caring community that promotes effective learning. Relationships throughout the school are very good. The school consults parents and the community, compares its standards rigorously and uses its resources wisely to achieve best value.

Staff, including support assistants, are well qualified and trained, with a good spread of expertise covering the subjects of the curriculum. They are hard working and support each other well. Parent helpers are dedicated and do much to help pupils to progress. The school buildings are just adequate in size for the numbers on roll but their design very effectively supports the school's aims and curriculum. Resources for learning are generally very good, particularly for English, science, music, information technology and food technology. The school's well-stocked library encourages pupils' love of reading.

PARENTS' AND CARERS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

What pleases parents most	What parents would like to see improved
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Their children like coming to school.• The caring, Christian ethos which instils high spiritual, moral and social values and helps children to mature.• Teaching which enables their children to make good progress.• Children are expected to work hard and behaviour is very good.• Information provided to parents is much improved.• The excellent relationships throughout.• The leadership and management of the school.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Some parents of older pupils think their children do not receive the right amount of work at home.• A minority think the range of activities outside lessons too narrow.

Inspectors fully endorse the parents' positive views about the school. The school offers a very good range of extra-curricular activities for pupils, mainly from seven years of age, for example, new French and information technology clubs have been added to the range of sporting and music and drama activities offered. Homework seen during the inspection was appropriate and demanding.

PART B: COMMENTARY

HOW HIGH ARE STANDARDS?

The school's results and achievements

1. Standards seen during the inspection are above the national expectations in both Key Stages 1 and 2. Pupils achieve well in many subjects as they progress through the school. By the end of Key Stage 2, pupils achieve standards well above the expected level in English and in science, while they are above in mathematics.
2. Both the 1999 and 2000 national test results at the end of Key Stage 2 broadly reflect inspection findings. Standards in English were well above the national average for those achieving the expected level of Level 4 and above in both years. In mathematics, standards were above the national averages in 1999, but were broadly in line in 2000, although the proportion attaining Level 5 was well above national averages. Science in contrast, improved in 2000 over the 1999 results with pupils achieving well above the national average. This reversed a falling trend. Standards have been maintained above the national average of pupils achieving the expected level for several years.
3. In comparison with similar schools, the school's Key Stage 2 results are broadly in line, although there are some variations between subjects and over time. The proportion reaching the expected Level 4 or more in English was above similar schools in 1999, but broadly in line by 2000. Mathematics standards were a little lower than English in both years. Science results were in line with similar schools in both years. Higher attaining pupils achieved well in both mathematics and in science. In 2000, because three pupils were dis-applied from the national tests, the average levels achieved overall was low compared to those of similar schools.
4. The 1999 Key Stage 1 results showed standards were well above national averages in reading, and above in writing, while standards in mathematics were well above national averages. In 2000, the results for reading and writing were similar to 1999 but standards in mathematics were a little lower than the previous year. In relation to similar schools, the school's Key Stage 1 results show reading standards as above average in both years, while writing and mathematics standards were both broadly in line with similar schools.
5. Children are assessed on entry to school using the local authority's baseline assessment scheme. The results of these assessments and other inspection evidence show that attainment is just above average and has been declining in recent years. Prior to starting school most children attend a pre-school setting. By the end of the Foundation Stage, almost all pupils achieve the expected goals in all areas of learning.
6. Pupils make good progress across Key Stage 1. By the end of the key stage, pupils achieve well above national standards in reading and above in writing and in mathematics. This finding reflects standards shown in national test results for the past two years. The high standards in reading are due to enthusiastic and well-structured teaching and very effective support from parents. Writing standards are also good because teachers insist on good presentation, imaginative writing and pupils know what is expected of them.

7. Pupils continue to achieve well throughout Key Stage 2, especially in English and in science, and in Year 6 where teaching is very good. Reading standards remain better than writing. Teachers provide appropriately demanding work and challenge pupils to think and to explain through their good use of questions. Higher attaining pupils achieve well in all their subjects. Pupils apply their literacy and numeracy skills well in other subjects across the curriculum because their teachers build good opportunities into most lessons. The school has set appropriately challenging targets and exceeded that for English in 2000 but was just short of it in mathematics.
8. Pupils with special educational needs make very good progress. Their needs are assessed carefully and appropriate and precise targets set. The special educational needs co-ordinator and learning support assistants work very effectively with these pupils using the very good resources available. Parents also provide support, especially for reading, and teachers give careful thought to the needs of particular pupils in their planning. There are no significant differences between the achievements of boys and girls compared to those nationally. Standards in the foundation subjects are never less than satisfactory and in some subjects they are above the national expectation by the end of Key Stage 2. Standards in music by the end of Key Stage 2 are high, while in history they are above average in both key stages. Pupils achieve at least satisfactory standards in their skills with information technology by the end of Key Stage 1. Their standards are good by the end of Key Stage 2 in a range of aspects of information technology because teachers routinely incorporate the use of computers into their lessons using a variety of applications. Standards in religious education by the end of Key Stage 2 are in line with those expected in the locally agreed syllabus.

Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development

9. Pupils have very positive attitudes and like coming to school. Even in the early weeks of the Foundation Stage they were seen to arrive promptly and confidently in the mornings and once in the building, settle down to the life of the school making friends and accepting their responsibilities as part of the school community. A particular strength of the school is the way pupils relate to each other and are eager to acknowledge and celebrate other pupils' achievements regardless of age or special educational needs. For example, they clap when one of their classmates is praised in front of the class or in an assembly. They are tolerant of pupils who are in a younger age group or who are finding it difficult to fit into the school community. In conversation with visitors they spontaneously point out the good work of their friends. They are keen to take advantage of the extra-curricular activities, which increase as they go up the school. Overall, the pupils' very good attitudes, values and behaviour have been maintained since the last inspection.
10. The pupils' very good behaviour is another strength of the school. Pupils respond well to the good teaching by taking an interest in their work and contributing to class discussions. They work well together in groups. They behave sensibly at lunchtimes and in the playgrounds. There have been no exclusions in recent years. Pupils do not fear bullying because of the very effective school policy on bullying and their confidence in the staff to implement it. They show respect for other people's property and neither vandalism nor litter is a significant problem for the school.
11. Opportunities for responsibility increase as pupils move through the school from year to year. All classes appoint pupils to be monitors for aspects of classroom life such as tidiness or delivering registers back to the school office after registration. All pupils discuss their classroom rules at the beginning of the year. Key Stage 1 pupils change

their library books independently knowing which range to choose from. By Year 6, pupils are given duties during the lunch-break such as being monitors to support younger pupils, or helping to run the school office by delivering the mail to class teachers or answering the telephone.

12. Attendance is good, and is closely monitored by the headteacher, for example, with respect to pupils taking holidays in term time.
13. The pupils enjoy very good relationships with their teachers and fellow pupils. They are interested in their work and in the whole life of the school. Working together, pupils and teachers make a valuable contribution to the school's caring ethos and positive learning environment so that individual pupils, whatever their ability, are encouraged to achieve well during their time at the school. Inspectors endorse the parents' very positive views expressed in this respect.

HOW WELL ARE PUPILS TAUGHT?

14. Overall, the quality of teaching is good with very good features. It is of a particularly high standard at the upper end of Key Stage 2. This represents an improvement since the last inspection. Over half of all lessons seen are good, about a fifth are very good and a small percentage (six per cent) is excellent. No unsatisfactory lessons were observed throughout the inspection. The last inspection reported that teachers' subject knowledge was insecure in some aspects of mathematics, geography and physical education. These weaknesses have been fully addressed. Both teaching and standards in these subjects are now at least sound or better.
15. The good standard in teaching has many notable features that have a positive impact on pupils' learning. Teachers plan and prepare lessons very carefully. They clearly understand how pupils learn, and choose appropriate activities and resources which appeal to pupils' ages, interests and levels of maturity. The use of information technology features in many lessons, with small groups of pupils regularly undertaking tasks that enhance their understanding of key ideas. They provide a stimulating context for learning and pupils respond by being interested, enthusiastic, alert and diligent. A good illustration of this was in a Year 3 history lesson, where the teacher prepared a digging and delving activity in sand to promote pupils' understanding of archaeology and how we find out about the past.
16. Another good feature of teaching in the school is the way in which teachers use open-ended questions to challenge pupils to think, solve problems and make decisions. By skilfully adapting questions to the different abilities of their pupils, teachers extend their knowledge and understanding, assess levels of comprehension and pace lessons effectively. This ensures that all pupils make at least sound progress and participate fully in lessons. During a Year 6 science lesson on what affects the brightness of electric light bulbs, the teacher's skilful questioning enabled pupils to interpret results from their trial experiments, successfully consider shortcomings in their observations and identify ways of improving their measures.
17. The use of praise and oral feedback to pupils on what they have done well and what they need to do next to improve is well established and evident in all subjects. In a Year 2/3 physical education lesson, the teacher assessed performance throughout and gave specific advice on how pupils could improve their throwing and catching skills. She successfully set extension tasks for the more advanced pupils in response to their skill level, while the lesson was in progress. However, the lack of specific

written feedback to pupils on their work limits the school in its ability to use marking as an effective tool for helping pupils to develop their own learning.

18. The emphasis placed on respect for the individual, contributes significantly to the good progress made by all pupils, especially the more able and those with learning difficulties. In a Year 5 literacy lesson the work produced by lower attaining pupils was used sensitively during the plenary part of the lesson to enable these pupils to show what they had learned and refresh prior learning of more able pupils. Furthermore, the support and encouragement given by the teacher, ensured that the achievements of all pupils were valued, respected and celebrated. The good use of the plenary session in this lesson to focus on learning is generally the norm. However, in a small number of lessons, particularly at Key Stage 1, the opportunity for pupils to reflect on what they have learned, found difficult or interesting is missed because pupils only read their work rather than reflect on what they have achieved.
19. Relationships are good in all respects and the focus in all lessons is clearly on learning. Teachers identify what it is pupils need to learn next and talk about these objectives with pupils at the beginning of lessons. This good practice is embedded in the school's culture and is very evident in literacy and numeracy lessons. Furthermore, many teachers, especially in Key Stage 2, write the objectives on special display boards so that they are visible throughout the lesson and underpin it effectively.
20. There is a very positive, business approach to lessons. The pace is varied to suit the tasks but is sufficiently brisk to ensure pupils maintain interest and enthusiasm. Teachers are friendly, approachable, firm and fair. This ensures that pupils contribute confidently to discussions and work well in groups, pairs or individually. During all lessons, but very noticeably in literacy and numeracy lessons, pupils understand their tasks, know how long they have to do it and work quietly. When teachers and support assistants are working with particular groups or individuals they are not disturbed because all other pupils sustain concentration and work hard. The insistence on good behaviour and the good management of potentially disruptive behaviour ensures that all teaching and learning time is used very well.
21. Teachers and support staff work well together. Support staff know how they can contribute to pupils' learning and how they can support teachers in the accurate assessment of pupils' achievements. In the majority of lessons the skill, expertise and time of support staff is used efficiently and effectively. Occasionally, teachers do not use learning support assistants' time to best effect, for example, when they sit passively during whole-class question and answer sessions.

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

22. Almondsbury School offers all its pupils, including those who are in the Foundation Stage, a good quality curriculum and a very wide range of learning opportunities. It interprets statutory requirements, including the provision for religious education, in stimulating ways. A strong emphasis is placed on English and mathematics. Information and communication technology is used well to support other subjects of the curriculum. Excellent contributions from the community give pupils a wealth of additional educational opportunities.

23. At present the school is introducing and adapting national exemplar schemes of work in a range of subjects. Plans are in place to review their impact on learning during the course of this year. Inspection evidence shows good progress has been made in improving the quality of curriculum plans with a positive impact on pupils' learning. The school's curriculum provision has improved significantly since the last inspection in a number of subjects. However, one important issue remains unresolved across a number of subject areas: the school's long-term curriculum plans and topics do not provide sufficient guidance to ensure pupils have access to similar experiences as they progress through classes with mixed ages and key stages.
24. Both the National Literacy and Numeracy Strategies are planned and implemented well. They are having a positive impact on the above average standards achieved in English and mathematics. High priority is given to developing pupils' basic skills across all subjects. For example, Year 5 pupils are confident when posing and answering questions in a written format during a lesson on children's experiences of school in Victorian Times. They measure the fragments of pottery found in their simulated 'archaeological dig' in a history lesson. Year 1 and 2 pupils confidently record the outcomes of their circuit investigations in a science lesson.
25. Very good provision is made for pupils' personal, social and health education. These aspects feature specifically within the school's curriculum planning and is scheduled for review within the school's development plan. Pupils and their parents are offered guidance and support on drugs and their misuse. Year 5 and 6 pupils follow a 'Growth' topic to incorporate sex education.
26. The provision that the school makes for pupils with special educational needs is very good. Teachers' lesson planning highlights specific learning opportunities that are tailored to the needs of these pupils. Classroom assistants are well briefed and provide very useful and effective support for pupils. For example, an assistant worked with two younger pupils in Key Stage 1 to help them understand the value of coins. They used real money to work out what was needed for purchases up to 20p, gaining in confidence from the support provided.
27. The school's provision of extra-curricular activities is very good. A significant minority of parents feels that the school could provide more, but inspectors disagree with this view. The school clubs offered are many and varied. They have a very significant impact on the overall good standards that the school achieves, for example, with music. Pupils are encouraged to participate in sporting activities, drama, environmental work, stamp collecting and French to name but a few.
28. Pupils are very well provided for in the spiritual, moral, social and cultural aspects of their development. This whole area is a great strength of the school. The school aims to "Show respect for religious and moral values and an understanding of all races, beliefs and ways of life". This it does very well. Achievement Awards given out during assemblies recognise not only academic success but also kindness and trying hard.
29. Pupils exhibit very high moral standards. Incidences of theft are very, very rare and are dealt with quickly, appropriately and sensitively. Pupils respect and care for each other at all times. All members of the school community respond very well to each other's individual and personal needs. Pupils co-operate well during group activities. Older pupils support younger ones at lunchtimes. Recent school productions such as the very successful 'Joseph', inspire the whole school and the local community to work together.

30. Pupils very effectively learn about their own and each other's cultures, values and beliefs within the school's strong Christian ethos. Pupils gain much from the school's close ties with the vicar and local training colleges for Church of England and Baptist clergy who visit regularly. Pupils' social development and awareness are also actively promoted through a variety of successful charity work including a 'Blue Peter' Bring and Buy sale, support for local hospitals and 'Homeless at Christmas'.
31. Visits to the immediate local area, to museums and castles, venture weeks and educational trips to the shopping mall and to Weston-Super-Mare, all add to the curriculum significantly. These experiences give pupils opportunities to learn about themselves and the richness and diversity of their own heritage. Visitors who come to the school offer chances for the pupils to discover more about different cultures. For example, an African music and dance workshop and a Caribbean art extravaganza gave pupils insights into the diversity of music and art from other cultures. A design project for the Millennium involving a local sculptor enabled pupils to learn about the skills and techniques used by an artist.

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL CARE FOR ITS PUPILS?

32. Almondsbury is a caring school. It supports its pupils effectively and staff work hard to promote their welfare. The school's strong Christian ethos and values contribute much to a learning environment in which pupils feel secure and where they can succeed both academically, spiritually and personally.
33. Procedures are in place which enable the school to successfully monitor pupils' academic and personal attainment and progress. A wide range of assessment is used to give a comprehensive picture of each child's development. The headteacher, class teachers and support staff know the pupils very well and have a good understanding of their individual needs. Pupils' academic performance is closely monitored by the headteacher through the analysis of assessment data. This analysis is shared with teachers and action taken with targeted pupils. It is particularly effective in literacy and numeracy where targets are set for all year groups, and for individual pupils. Teachers also use this assessment information to inform their teaching plans, for example, each half term, they review the progress being made by pupils. Assessment information is also used effectively to target additional support for Year 6 pupils. This good practice in the use of assessment in English and mathematics should be spread more widely to encompass other subjects such as geography, history and especially in relation to assessing pupils' skills in information technology.
34. Pupils with special educational needs are very well supported. The school makes good use of external agencies. Pupils' detailed and very specific individual education plans are fully implemented in the classroom. The use of weekly, targeted programmes of work enables teachers and support staff to have a very positive effect so that these pupils make very good progress. Teachers are very well supported by the special educational needs co-ordinator. The school encourages parents of children with special educational needs to be fully involved at all stages in their reviews of progress and in setting of targets.
35. Very good child protection measures are in place. The headteacher, as the named person, deals with problems sensitively and effectively and all staff are aware of how the procedure works. Governors and staff have worked hard to ensure pupils are safe, secure and free from harassment and bullying. Health and safety procedures and practices in and around the school are good. The playgrounds have plenty of

activities such as play equipment, snakes and other line markings to encourage positive play and discourage poor behaviour due to boredom. The small pond in the environmental area is properly fenced. Lunch and playtime supervision is effective and staff have had suitable first-aid training but the accident book suggests that playground incidents are few. Encouraged by a healthy eating programme, children choose their break time snacks sensibly. School lunches are good and carefully served and supervised. The school undertakes a wide programme of outside visits and plans these carefully, expecting pupils to behave well and calling upon parents as additional escorts if necessary.

36. Attendance records are meticulously kept and absences followed up promptly. Classes with 100 per cent attendance in any week receive awards at celebration assemblies. The school has also established a pattern of very good punctuality helped by the pupils' eagerness to come to school. Good behaviour is also recognised at assemblies as part of the positive behaviour policy that does so much to make the school a secure and happy place for all pupils.

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL WORK IN PARTNERSHIP WITH PARENTS?

37. The school's partnership with parents is one of its strengths. The school sends out regular newsletters giving information about the school calendar and the curriculum. There is a specific parents as co-educators policy and home-school agreements are in place. Many parents of younger pupils appreciate the guidance they have received to help them with their children's spelling and reading. Parents are generally very satisfied with the school, particularly its caring Christian ethos, the good teaching and high standards of behaviour shown by pupils in and around the school.
38. Parents show their commitment to partnership in a number of ways. Many parents give time to help in and around the school, hearing pupils read, helping in classrooms and supervising at lunchtimes. They also help with out of school visits. Parents even respond to requests for help with washing classroom resources at home. Teachers are always accessible if parents want to discuss problems and they encourage contact, for example, through the reading diaries. The school provides a valuable induction process for children entering the school and also involves parents in their children's transition to secondary education. Parents and teachers give their time to provide a good range of extra-curricular activities for pupils. Families who have experienced a personal crisis speak highly of the support that the school had given them.
39. The Parents Association makes a very significant contribution to the life of the school. It raises a lot of funds for specific projects and organises a variety of social events. For example, it has provided computers for classrooms and increased the number of books in the library. It also runs the uniform shop so that shopping is easier and more economic for all parents. Parents enjoy working together, for example, serving as committee members. They are imaginative about finding ways to help the school and all their children benefit from their efforts.
40. Teachers and support assistants welcome parents into the school and always ensure that they know about their children's achievements. Parents receive an informative annual report on their child's progress in the summer term. The school has made some improvements to the quality of these reports since the last inspection and more information is now given on all subjects. While these report details of pupils'

experiences and progress, specific targets for improvement are still infrequently included.

HOW WELL IS THE SCHOOL LED AND MANAGED?

41. The school achieves its aims very well in providing a caring community that promotes effective learning and where pupils develop a sense of responsibility and pride. All those involved with the school, governors, staff and parents work effectively together to help the school to succeed and to improve. Relationships throughout the school are very good. The headteacher provides good leadership and direction for the school and is ably supported by his acting deputy and key staff. Together, they have created a climate of close teamwork, mutual support and a determination to succeed. Day-to-day routines and procedures are clear and effective so that staff and pupils work in an orderly and calm atmosphere throughout the day. The school's office manager is experienced, very committed and skilled in her work. She provides an efficient and welcoming point of first contact for visitors and parents and manages the school's financial procedures very well. The school uses information technology effectively in a variety of ways to enhance aspects of management, for example, in maintaining and analysing records of pupils' progress and in managing the school's finances.
42. The headteacher rigorously compares the school's standards using a variety of measures. Staff and governors know the school's strengths and weaknesses. Individual pupils receive extra support, for example, through booster classes, to help them meet their targets and the English and mathematics co-ordinators have targeted aspects of their subjects for further improvement. The senior management team are developing their role in monitoring standards and teaching well, as are subject co-ordinators, particularly in English, mathematics, science, information technology and in music. Many co-ordinators have visited colleagues' classrooms and used their observations to provide targeted support and training. This aspect of the school's leadership and management represents a significant improvement since the last inspection.
43. The school is committed to providing equality of opportunity for all its pupils. The management and provision for pupils with special educational needs are very good. However, coverage of the curriculum should be monitored more closely, especially as pupils progress through mixed age classes, to ensure they have similar experiences and do not miss aspects of the school's provision.
44. The school's development plan is well structured and costed over a period of four terms and is effective in guiding change. Appropriate priority subjects such as literacy, numeracy and information technology, have useful action plans to guide developments and use of resources. However, all subjects feature in the school's plan rather than just developmental areas. Both the chair of governors and the headteacher have a very clear vision for the development of the school, in terms of standards, expansion in size and the involvement of the community. This vision should be articulated more explicitly through a development plan over a longer term, setting out the strategic direction of the school so that it is shared with all those involved.
45. The governing body carries out its duties in supporting and challenging the school very effectively. The various committees have clear terms of reference and responsibilities and the governing body as a whole is very well led. They understand the school's strengths and are well informed on progress in the school's priorities

through a variety of means. The curriculum committee receives reports from subject co-ordinators, governors make regular visits and report back their findings and the headteacher provides reports and analyses of the school's standards. The governors have been particularly effective in bringing the local community into closer partnership with the school. The Parents Association is very supportive in providing extra funds, for example, to pay for computers in classrooms. Financial planning is very good. The school's budget is monitored closely and the school uses specific grants appropriately for their purpose, adding additional funding in support of pupils with special educational needs. Resources are directed to appropriate priorities, for example, in expanding the school's library in support of literacy. The chair of finance undertakes careful strategic analysis of likely future income and plans are well advanced for the expansion of the school.

46. The school consults on major curriculum developments such as improvements to the school's resources for information technology and parents in particular have been influential in their use around the school. The school's secretary ensures several sources are compared when purchasing new resources and the school's premises costs are relatively low because maintenance measures tend to be preventative. Overall, the school is implementing the principles of best value well. The school is effective in maintaining good standards and quality of education and, taking account of the context of the school and its unit costs, it provides good value for money.
47. Staff are well qualified and trained, with a good spread of expertise covering the subjects of the curriculum. They are hard working and support each other well. The school has recently undergone significant changes in staffing, with three new teachers this term. Their induction into the life of the school has been satisfactory and all have settled in well. Learning support assistants have a good range of expertise, including supporting the use of information technology with pupils. The school welcomes many parents into the school. Teachers guide their assistants and helpers effectively so that they make a very significant contribution to pupils' progress, especially those with special educational needs. Lunchtime supervisors have clear and useful guidelines which enable them to work effectively and contribute to the safe and caring ethos of the school.
48. Arrangements for the professional development of staff are good. The school has agreed its policy for implementing performance management and systems are in place to enable teachers to set targets and review progress. The school uses information gained from its monitoring of teaching to support and develop all staff effectively. Professional development is closely linked to the school's priorities.
49. The school's accommodation is very effective in supporting the curriculum, but is only just large enough for the number of pupils on roll. It is clean, tidy and well looked after by a good site manager. Part of the building dates back to 1900 but is in very good order. The school's hall is used well for lunches, as a good gymnasium, for school assemblies and for dramas such as the recently staged and very successful presentation of Joseph and His Technicolour Dream Coat. Classrooms are adequate in size with good use made of displays to enliven the environment for learning. Playground areas are adequate and include markings for play, chalk boards and seats for quiet areas. The school has access to its own playing fields for a variety of team sports.
50. The school's library is well managed and very well stocked and the newly acquired information technology suite is already having a significant impact on pupils' standards. Resources for teaching the subjects of the curriculum are at least

adequate and for many subjects, such as English, science, music and food technology, resources are very good. The school makes excellent use of the wider community to enhance its curriculum, through raising extra funds, and through access to special expertise and experience. Pupils regularly make visits to industry such as a recent visit to an aerospace company as part of a numeracy project about estimating and measuring. Many visitors enrich the curriculum and provide valuable support, for example, visiting artists, the local Mother's Union and some elderly people who share their perception on past events.

51. The school meets statutory requirements in all respects except for a few omissions from its prospectus, namely: the national comparative data for standards; parents' right of withdrawal from assemblies; a policy summary for pupils with special educational needs.

WHAT SHOULD THE SCHOOL DO TO IMPROVE FURTHER?

52. In order to raise standards further and to provide equality of access for all pupils, the school should:
- Plan the long-term curriculum more carefully, taking account of the mixed age classes and key stages, to ensure that all pupils have access to similar experiences in the subjects as they progress through the school (paragraphs 23, 74, 84, 90, 103, 108);
 - Monitor pupils' progress to ensure they are receiving their full entitlement (paragraph 43).
53. In addition, The school may wish to take account of a number of other minor issues raised in this report when drafting its action plan. These issues are discussed in the following paragraphs:
- feedback to pupils on their written work - paragraphs 17, 73, 82, 89;
 - spreading good practice in assessing pupils in English and mathematics to other subjects such as information technology, history and geography - paragraphs 33, 103, 108, 114, 134;
 - improving reports to parents further by including guidance on ways in which pupils can improve - paragraph 40;
 - improving the school's development plan by extending the period it covers to three years or more and including the school's longer-term ambitions - paragraph 44;
 - eliminating omissions in the school's prospectus - paragraph 51;
 - improving under five pupils physical development in unstructured sessions - paragraph 61;
 - incorporating the use of data-loggers in science lessons - paragraphs 90, 114;
 - producing a portfolio of art work to guide the assessment of standards in the subject – paragraph 96.

PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS

Summary of the sources of evidence for the inspection

Number of lessons observed	68
Number of discussions with staff, governors, other adults and pupils	41

Summary of teaching observed during the inspection

Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
6	21	54	19	0	0	0

The table gives the percentage of teaching observed in each of the seven categories used to make judgements about lessons.

Information about the school's pupils

Pupils on the school's roll	YR – Y6
Number of pupils on the school's roll (FTE for part-time pupils)	265
Number of full-time pupils eligible for free school meals	5

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Special educational needs	YR – Y6
Number of pupils with statements of special educational needs	4
Number of pupils on the school's special educational needs register	29

English as an additional language	No of pupils
Number of pupils with English as an additional language	0

Pupil mobility in the last school year	No of pupils
Pupils who joined the school other than at the usual time of first admission	14
Pupils who left the school other than at the usual time of leaving	10

Attendance

Authorised absence

	%
School data	5.7
National comparative data	5.4

Unauthorised absence

	%
School data	0.0
National comparative data	0.5

Both tables give the percentage of half days (sessions) missed through absence for the latest complete reporting year.

Attainment at the end of Key Stage 1

Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 1 for the latest reporting year	Year	Boys	Girls	Total
	1999	13	14	27

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		Reading	Writing	Mathematics
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	13	13	13
	Girls	14	14	14
	Total	27	27	27
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	100	100	100
	National	82	83	87

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	13	13	13
	Girls	14	14	14
	Total	27	27	27
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	100	100	100
	National	82	86	87

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

Attainment at the end of Key Stage 2

Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 2 for the latest reporting year	Year	Boys	Girls	Total
	1999	16	19	35

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys	14	14	15
	Girls	17	14	15
	Total	31	28	30
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	89	80	86
	National	70	69	78

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys	14	14	16
	Girls	18	17	17
	Total	32	31	33
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	91	89	94
	National	68	69	75

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

Ethnic background of pupils

	No of pupils
Black – Caribbean heritage	0
Black – African heritage	0
Black – other	0
Indian	0
Pakistani	0
Bangladeshi	0
Chinese	0
White	209
Any other minority ethnic group	16

This table refers to pupils of compulsory school age only.

Teachers and classes

Qualified teachers and classes: YR – Y6

Total number of qualified teachers (FTE)	10.3
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	26
Average class size	29

Education support staff: YR – Y6

Total number of education support staff	6
Total aggregate hours worked per week	94

Exclusions in the last school year

	Fixed period	Permanent
Black – Caribbean heritage	0	0
Black – African heritage	0	0
Black – other	0	0
Indian	0	0
Pakistani	0	0
Bangladeshi	0	0
Chinese	0	0
White	0	0
Other minority ethnic groups	0	0

This table gives the number of exclusions of pupils of compulsory school age, which may be different from the number of pupils excluded.

Financial information

Financial year	1999-2000
	£
Total income	472,084
Total expenditure	462,121
Expenditure per pupil	1,777
Balance brought forward from previous year	23,155
Balance carried forward to next year	33,188

Results of the survey of parents and carers

Questionnaire return rate

Number of questionnaires sent out

265

Number of questionnaires returned

96

Percentage of responses in each category

	Strongly agree	Tend to agree	Tend to disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know
My child likes school.	57	42	1	0	0
My child is making good progress in school.	44	49	1	2	4
Behaviour in the school is good.	69	31	0	0	0
My child gets the right amount of work to do at home.	28	35	21	4	11
The teaching is good.	60	39	0	0	1
I am kept well informed about how my child is getting on.	31	45	17	1	6
I would feel comfortable about approaching the school with questions or a problem.	56	32	11	0	0
The school expects my child to work hard and achieve his or her best.	65	35	0	0	0
The school works closely with parents.	39	42	16	3	1
The school is well led and managed.	75	24	1	0	0
The school is helping my child become mature and responsible.	58	38	0	0	4
The school provides an interesting range of activities outside lessons.	26	42	22	2	8

Other issues raised by parents

Parents think that the school's provision for music and information technology has improved, but some are concerned at the size of classes in Year 6 and that some classes are of mixed age.

PART D: THE STANDARDS AND QUALITY OF TEACHING IN AREAS OF THE CURRICULUM, SUBJECTS AND COURSES

AREAS OF LEARNING FOR CHILDREN IN THE FOUNDATION STAGE

54. Children under five enter the reception class at the beginning of the year in which they are five. They are admitted on a part-time basis for the first five weeks. At the time of the inspection the children were in their first week of full-time education. A significant minority of the children would not be five until the summer term. Prior to starting school most children attend a pre-school setting. Children are assessed on entry to school using the local authority's baseline assessment scheme. The results of these assessments show that attainment is just above average. However, school data shows that there is a slow but identifiable decline in standards on entry. The learning environment created is positive and caring. Children feel safe and secure and respond enthusiastically. All but a small minority of children reach the expected goals in all areas by the time they are five.
55. Teaching is good and some is very good with some excellent features. Teachers have a good understanding of the foundation curriculum. They are very competent in the teaching of phonics and other basic skills. Lessons move at a good pace, the content is well matched to the children's learning needs and as a result their interest is maintained. All children, including those with special educational needs make good progress. On rare occasions, the opportunity to extend the learning of the older or more able children is not fully explored. Teachers plan effectively for all areas of learning and progress towards the Early Learning Goals is clearly identifiable. Teachers use baseline, and ongoing assessments to monitor children's progress and inform their planning. This is particularly effective in the areas of literacy and mathematics.
56. Classrooms are well organised to cover all six areas of learning. Resources are appropriate and used well to support the children's learning. Classroom assistants are deployed well to make a valuable contribution to children's progress. Parents also make a significant contribution to their children's learning. They support their children's learning at home and many work regularly in school and give financial support to purchase larger and expensive equipment such as playhouses and the play equipment for them.

Personal, social and emotional development

57. Children's skills in this area are well developed because teaching is good. Expectations for behaviour and work are high. Children work hard and are well supported by their teachers and classroom assistants. Children are polite and well behaved. They concentrate well, take turns and are able to share. They confidently communicate their feelings and opinions to each other and to adults. They listen well and are able to work individually and in small groups. For extended periods of time, children are able to work independently of their teacher and other adults. Opportunities for role play encourage co-operation. For example, the creation of a "Bun Shop" provides a situation in which children take on the roles of shopkeeper and customer. Children play constructively, with enjoyment, and demonstrate the ability to make choices. They have good self-help skills, for example, they need little assistance when changing for physical education lessons and are able to select activities and resources without the help of an adult.

Communication, language and literacy

58. Overall children's attainment in this aspect of their work is good. They are articulate and respond well to their teachers' questions. Children use appropriate vocabulary in a range of situations. They show respect for each other's views. Through the use of a structured programme, children learn the sounds that letters make and how to write them correctly. Many can write their own names and copy their teacher's writing with few mistakes. Overall, teaching is good. Teachers' planning is clearly focused, they take into account what children already know, and provide activities to extend their learning. An appropriate range of activities is provided to encourage speaking, listening, reading and writing. Opportunities for children to practise their writing skills are provided through role play. For example, children confidently write shopping lists and receipts in the 'Bun Shop'. Children enjoy listening to stories and talking about books. They know the way a book is organised and that the author is the person who wrote the book. They handle books with care. Some children recognise many simple words and read simple text accurately and fluently. Using their phonic knowledge they successfully build new words orally. Children not yet able to read text confidently, retell stories that are well known to them. Children take books home to read and are well supported by their parents.

Mathematical development

59. Children have access to a range of activities to support their learning in this area. Their overall attainment is good. They count confidently to 20 and beyond. Good use is made of registration time to develop children's counting skills where, for example, children learn rhymes to reinforce their counting skills. These are further developed in play activities in the water tray and role-play areas. Children learn and use appropriate mathematical language and can group objects according to given criteria. For example, most children are able to make sets of squares, circles, rectangles and triangles and name them accurately. They respond well to mathematical activities and complete them successfully. Although the teaching of mathematical development is good, opportunities to extend activities for the more able are not always fully pursued. However, the majority of tasks do match the children's needs and support their interest in learning.

Knowledge and understanding of the world

60. Teaching of this aspect is good because teachers plan lessons carefully and make good use of resources to achieve their objectives. Children's attainment in this area is good. They are curious about the world. They name and talk confidently about animals, describing the patterns on their coats, for example, that leopards have spots. Teachers extend the activity by discussing with the children the environments in which the animals live. When playing in the sand tray, children talk confidently about where snakes live and how they move. They use a range of construction materials, for example, to build homes for Elmer from bricks and talk about how the bricks fit together using appropriate vocabulary. Technology is used well to support children's learning. They operate a listening centre when playing a game to discriminate between everyday sounds. They use a multimedia computer program to create shape and line pictures. The majority of children use the mouse confidently to select colours and shapes from palettes displayed on the screen. They are also able to throw away pictures they no longer want using the recycle bin, and print the pictures they want to keep. Excellent use is made of collective worship to develop children's understanding of their own culture and beliefs.

Physical development

61. Children's attainment in this area of learning is good, as is the teaching. In structured lessons, children move confidently and safely. They are aware of each other and use space safely, for example, children successfully balance bean-bags on various parts of their bodies and run and walk to a given signal. Opportunities for children to develop their physical skills in unstructured sessions are more limited. The enclosed spaces outside the classrooms are small. The use of sit on wheeled toys is very restricted. However, the playground is a large area, which offers children the space they need to fully develop their physical skills. This area is currently underused. Children use a range of tools and materials. They work skilfully with small and large construction equipment, and show good control when using paint brushes and glue spreaders.

Creative development

62. Teaching of creative development is good. Children experience a range of activities to support this area of learning and their make good progress. Children sing a range of songs and rhymes from memory. They are confident performers and enjoy playing percussion instruments. They are developing the ability to sing tunefully and keep a steady beat. Opportunities to learn about colour, texture and shape are well linked to other areas of learning. For example, children make collage pictures of the initial letters of their names and use a range of textured blue materials for a colour display. Good use is made of role-play situations to allow children to express their own ideas and feelings and develop their imaginations.

ENGLISH

63. Standards achieved in English are consistently high throughout the school. There is no significant difference in achievement between boys and girls. Pupils identified by the school as having special educational needs are well supported and make good progress in relation to their prior attainment.
64. Pupils achieve very well in their National Curriculum tests at age seven and 11. When compared with schools nationally, the results of the 1999 and 2000 Key Stage 1 and 2 national tests indicate that standards are well above the national average. In relation to similar schools, 1999 standards were above and in 2000 they were broadly in line. At both key stages achievement in reading was high and almost as high in writing. The trend over the last four years shows that standards in reading have risen more quickly than in writing.
65. Inspection findings broadly reflect these past test results. Throughout the school standards are high in reading. In writing they remain above average but are not as high as in reading. Given the potential demonstrated through achievements in reading, standards in writing could be even better. The school's performance in English has improved significantly since the last inspection.
66. Pupils' progress throughout the school is consistently good in writing and very good in reading. The school systematically builds on what children know, understand and can do year by year and this is reflected in the high standards achieved by pupils when they leave the school. Relationships throughout are very good. Teachers value the contributions made by pupils in lessons and encourage them to offer their own ideas. Consequently, pupils are confident, use their initiative and apply previously acquired knowledge, skills and understanding to new situations. The vast majority of pupils in

all classes, listen attentively to their teachers and respond with enthusiasm and enjoyment to the work set. Pupils concentrate well when working independently and sustain interest for considerable lengths of time. Pupils, especially at Key Stage 2, engage in lively, meaningful debate when involved in group work. This has a positive effect on the quality of learning and standards achieved.

67. Pupils have very positive attitudes to reading. The vast majority are avid readers who have a love for fiction, poetry and drama. This good level of achievement is due entirely to the well structured approach used to teach reading, teachers' infectious enthusiasm for reading which is conveyed well to pupils, and very good support from parents. Consequently, pupils quickly develop the skills necessary to become independent readers. By the end of Key Stage 1 the vast majority are reading fluently and accurately. They use a wide range of strategies to decode unfamiliar words and establish meaning. By the end of Key Stage 2, they can confidently discuss features of favourite authors and books offering reasons for their views. They have good library skills and know how to interrogate a book to find information and use ideas.
68. In writing, pupils demonstrate considerable pride in their work and even first drafts are well presented, neat and legible. Books and folders are neat, clean and tidy. The policy on presentation is implemented consistently throughout the school. Teachers have high expectations in relation to layout, positioning of titles and underlining. Pupils know what is expected of them and respond well. Handwriting is of a high standard. Pupils are taught to form and join letters correctly and space words evenly. The emphasis on clear, neat presentation is a key factor in enabling pupils to organise their thinking and communicate ideas successfully. Throughout the school, pupils' written work is lively and thoughtful, ideas are sustained and presented in logical order. One very able Year 1 pupil wrote a very entertaining story that spanned 13 pages of his exercise book! The commitment to using information technology is a noticeable factor in most lessons and pupils are increasingly able to use their computer skills to communicate ideas and convey information using text and graphics as appropriate. For example, in a Year 5 lesson, pupils successfully used the word processor to insert punctuation into a given text correctly.
69. Standards in speaking and listening are good at both key stages. The vast majority of pupils have a good command of spoken English. Teachers encourage everyone, even very shy pupils to ask and answer questions, offer ideas and share experiences. They consistently use correct subject terminology and expect pupils to do likewise. The use of prompt cards, for example, 'share your work', 'ask a question', 'answer a question', during the plenary part of some lessons very effectively encourages pupils to formulate questions and prepare themselves to give answers. The links between the key skills of reading, writing and speaking and listening are made effectively in all lessons and this contributes significantly to the progress made by pupils as they move up through the school.
70. The quality of teaching in English is a strength of the school. It contributes significantly to the good rate of learning throughout the school and the high standards achieved by pupils at age 11. No unsatisfactory lessons were seen during the inspection. At Key Stage 1 almost half of lessons were good and the remaining half were very good. At Key Stage 2, two thirds of lessons seen were satisfactory with good features and one third was very good with excellent features. The quality of teaching at the upper end of Key Stage 2 is of a particularly high standard.
71. Teachers have embraced the National Literacy Strategy and have used the techniques suggested for teaching all aspects of English to good effect. The most

striking features of these lessons are that teachers know precisely what it is they want pupils to learn and choose activities that are relevant to the ages and interests of their pupils. They have high but not unrealistic expectations of what pupils can achieve in an hour and set a brisk, lively pace to lessons. This ensures that pupils are hooked on learning. They are enthusiastic, interested, participate fully, sustain their concentration and meet the expectations made of them. Teachers' openness and willingness to employ the principles and practises embedded in the in the National Literacy Strategy have enabled them to support each other well, disseminate good practice and improve their own expertise rapidly. This positive and professional attitude to teaching and learning has permeated through to pupils and there is a healthy buzz of excitement in lessons.

72. An excellent Year 6 literacy lesson on Shakespeare's Macbeth serves to illustrate many of the best features described. The teacher used a range of teaching and learning strategies expertly to motivate pupils, hold their attention and increase their subject knowledge. She incorporated musical elements to help pupils understand the rhythm and dynamics of the witches' chants, masks and witches' hats to enable them to grow into the roles when reading aloud and her own voice to lead by example. Her use of questioning and exposition was very good. This allowed her to deepen pupils' understanding and appreciation of Shakespeare's language, poetry structure and skill in setting mood and portraying characters. Pupils responded by giving of their best throughout and maintaining very good standards of behaviour. The following is typical of the good work produced:

*1st Witch: Chameleon tongue, dragon jaw
Eyes of snake and grizzly's paw
Mix it in, stir it well
Throw the rotten snail shell in.*

*2nd Witch: Then when ready leave to fry
Till fifteen days and nights go by*

*All: Sizzle in pan, leave to froth
With the ingredients of our broth!.....*

73. The use of praise and oral feedback to pupils on what they have learned, what they have done well and what they need to do next to improve, in the main is effective. When giving written feedback to pupils, teachers tend to limit comments to praise, although examples of good feedback were seen in the Foundation Stage and on some pieces of work at Key Stage 2. However, this practice is inconsistent across the school. The lack of regular, specific feedback to some pupils limits the school in its ability to use marking as an effective tool for enabling pupils to have a secure understanding of their successes and targets for future improvement.
74. The English co-ordinator provides strong leadership. She is very knowledgeable about the school's current strengths and weaknesses. She has rightly identified two priorities for development. Firstly, she has recognised that standards in writing could be better in relation to those of reading and is seeking ways of enabling colleagues to make best use of the guided writing sessions which feature in the National Literacy Strategy. Secondly, she is beginning to put in place strategies to ensure that pupils in split year groups have equal access to all components of the National Curriculum for English and have comparable experiences. Her good subject knowledge enables her to support colleagues well, purchase and direct the use of good resources and to monitor lessons carefully. This contributes significantly to the quality of teaching and learning throughout the school.

75. Partnerships with parents are well developed, particularly in relation to reading. The school encourages parents to be actively involved in their own child's learning and the vast majority use the opportunities presented to them well. Parents support their own child(ren) well by encouraging reading at home and ensuring written homework is completed on time and done to the child's best ability. The school's attractive library and good book stock contribute significantly to the high standards attained by pupils.

MATHEMATICS

76. In 1999, at Key Stage 1, standards were well above average both nationally and in comparison with similar schools. At the end of Key Stage 2, results in 1999 were above the national average and were in line with those of similar schools. In 2000, the school maintained the standards of the previous year in Key Stage 1. Results were a little lower in Key Stage 2, being in line with national averages and a little below those of similar schools. They were just below the targets set by the school. However, higher attaining pupils in both key stages achieved well compared to those nationally and to similar schools.
77. Standards seen during inspection in mathematics are good overall in both key stages. There have been improvements in the data handling aspect of the curriculum. The successful implementation of the National Numeracy Strategy has also helped to address those areas for development highlighted in the last report. In Year 1, higher attaining pupils can describe the number of 'corners' of shapes and all pupils can discuss number values between 13 and 17. At the end of Key Stage 1, pupils can count in tens and 20s and confidently work with a 100 square to aid their calculations. They show good understanding of the value of coins and can describe the least number of coins required to make up a given amount of money. They are able to solve money problems to the value of 99p well.
78. At Key Stage 2, Year 3 pupils can describe the number of faces and corners on three-dimensional shapes and work out the co-ordinates on a treasure map. Year 4 pupils work successfully with decimal notation when solving money problems. Negative multiples of 25 are tackled well by Year 5 pupils. In Year 6, pupils understand proper and improper fractions. They can change a fraction into an equivalent fraction. They use correct terminology, for example, numerator and denominator, explaining the meanings. Pupils also apply their numeracy skills to support other subjects well.
79. Pupils enjoy mathematics. They co-operate well in their groups, listen and sustain their concentration. They use resources well and work independently while their teacher supports other pupils at work. The school enhances the mathematics curriculum through outside visits. For example, a recent visit to a local aerospace company by lower Key Stage 2 pupils, provided some stimulating work on estimation and measuring. Younger pupils are challenged well when they successfully learn about the value of coins in a role-play situation with the teacher acting as a shopkeeper.
80. Mathematics teaching in Key Stage 1 is at least satisfactory and mainly good. Introductions are conducted at a brisk pace with good mental mathematics exercises. For example, Year 1 and 2 pupils counted in tens before working on the number of different coins required for a given sum of money. Group activities are purposeful and well matched to pupils' abilities, including those with special educational needs. Plenary sessions are well conducted, bringing together all the pupils to review their learning and to prepare for the next steps. Teachers present interesting contexts for

lessons and manage pupils well so that they remain attentive, behave well and listen to each other's comments and explanations.

81. At Key Stage 2 teaching is at least satisfactory and occasionally very good. In the better lessons, teachers expect high standards and maintain a good pace for the work. In one very good Year 5 lesson, the teacher led the class through a series of quick number facts with the five times table. Number cards were very effectively used and a good pace maintained because the teacher set and expected high standards of work throughout. Pupils were keen, attentive and responded well to the teacher's praise as they worked in negative multiples of 25. Data-handling work in the main part of the lesson was demanding as all pupils completed a bar chart having worked out their own scales. The summary of the lesson challenged pupils even further as they considered different, larger sets of numbers for the axes.
82. Teachers plan very well for the different abilities in their classes and ensure lower achieving pupils and those with special educational needs are very well supported. Classroom assistants make a very significant contribution to the learning of these pupils although there are occasions when their time is not well used during introductions to lessons. Marking is regular with many comments of praise. There are some examples of good marking that also provide pupils with clear indications about what they need to do next to develop their learning, but this practice is not consistent across the school.
83. Information technology is used very well to support mathematics. Programmes are chosen carefully to support the topic being taught and helpers play a very important role in developing pupils' numeracy skills at the computer.
84. Mathematics is led well. The co-ordinator has good subject knowledge. She has observed colleagues teaching and used her findings to guide training and support. The co-ordinator analyses assessments to target those pupils who need more help. However, long-term curriculum plans provide insufficient guidance for teachers to ensure that pupils in mixed age and key stage classes have similar experiences as they progress through the school. Resources for mathematics have been reviewed with all staff and improved significantly to a good provision.

SCIENCE

85. By the end of Key Stage 2 in 1999, pupils achieved above the national averages and their standards were in line with those of similar schools. The 2000 results showed a significant improvement, with standards well above national averages by the end of Key Stage 2. Higher attaining pupils achieved particularly well. Pupils' standards seen during the inspection were above the national expectation by the end of Key Stage 1 and well above by the end of Key Stage 2.
86. Pupils achieve well in all aspects of the subject. Those with special educational needs and higher attaining pupils achieve very well. Pupils in Key Stage 1 are interested and curious to find out more, to compare and to try and explain their observations. They can, with help plan a fair test for their ideas, for example, when Year 1 pupils investigated sound from a variety of sources. By measuring the distance before they could not be heard in a fair way, pupils compared sounds such as those from shakers, bells and tambourines. They represented their results in block graphs, both on paper and by building three-dimensional blocks. The teacher's very good use of questions to guide pupils' plans and predictions for the experiments enabled them to

progress very well. By Year 2, pupils have developed a good knowledge of science, for example, to name different types of food and to fill a lunch box with foods that are healthy.

87. At Key Stage 2, pupils progress well in their knowledge, understanding and skills in science. By Year 6, they are skilled in predicting and planning investigations and many are able to evaluate their procedures and suggest improvements. When a Year 6 class investigated what affects the brightness of bulbs in electrical circuits, they identified a number of variables to investigate. Following pupils' initial experiments, their teacher led an excellent discussion about the limitations of their measurements about light intensity. Pupils repeated their experiments to obtain more accurate measures with a simply constructed instrument using layers of thin paper. Higher attaining pupils speculated about why different sizes of bulb affect brightness for the same size of battery used.
88. Pupils enjoy science because their teachers present them with stimulating contexts for lessons and expect high standards of behaviour and work. Pupils are keen to learn and they work productively in shared tasks, discussing what they observe and speculating about why it happens. Behaviour throughout is very good.
89. Teaching is good in both Key Stages 1 and 2 and the best is very good. Teachers plan carefully with clear objectives for knowledge and skills. Teachers' subject knowledge is good. In one Year 4 lesson, the teacher's good knowledge of anatomy and excellent use of models and a human skeleton, enabled pupils to progress very well in their understanding of the role of paired muscles and joints in movement. Class discussions are usually very productive because teachers use open and challenging questions to elicit pupils' understanding, challenging them to think and to explain. Planning frameworks are used well to help pupils identify variables and to plan fair tests. Teachers use information technology well to support their teaching, for example, through the use of CD-ROM to research more information or a database to display results. Occasionally, class discussions become laboured and progress is slower where teachers do not make use of analogies and trial runs of experiments to help pupils visualise difficult ideas and techniques. Homework for older pupils is appropriate and effectively extends learning in lessons, for example, when Year 5 pupils researched information about gases around us. Marking is regular but comments tend to be mainly of praise with little guidance provided on how to improve.
90. The co-ordinator monitors pupils' standards and teaching and action is taken to improve as when she recently provided training on teaching investigative skills. This has helped to raise standards throughout the school. Good progress has been made since the last inspection, especially in planning for the subject where a new and more detailed scheme of work is currently being implemented. However, these long-term plans do not yet provide sufficient guidance on the curriculum in mixed age classes to ensure pupils have similar experiences as they move through the school. Although information technology is used to support the subject, it does not yet extend to the use of data-loggers to gather, process and present data from experiments.

ART AND DESIGN

91. Only two art lessons in Key Stage 2 were observed during the inspection. Scrutiny of teachers' planning, pupils' work and discussion with pupils and staff indicate that standards are in line with expectations for pupils at the end of both key stages. All

pupils' work is valued and it is well displayed around the school. These displays help to create a positive learning environment.

92. Insufficient lessons were observed to enable a judgement to be made on the quality of teaching overall. However, in the lessons seen, teaching was good or very good. Teachers' planning has clear objectives and builds on previous work. Very effective use is made of stimulating resources. For example, upper Key Stage 2 pupils watched video clips from two contrasting cartoons, then brainstormed the main features of the way the leading characters were drawn. Using this information, they designed their own character and made a flip-book animated sequence.
93. Pupils experience all aspects of the art curriculum. At both key stages pupils respond to the work of artists. For example, after looking at the work of Van Gogh, Key Stage 1 pupils produced pictures of sunflowers. Art is also used to support other areas of the curriculum. Fabric pastel drawings of the Hindu god Ganesha make an effective contribution to pupils' cultural awareness. Pupils in Years 1 and 2 made pictures with real fruit and vegetables in the style of Archibaldo to support their science work on healthy eating.
94. Pupils work with a range of media and tools, in two and three dimensions. All pupils enjoy art and they work conscientiously. From the time they enter the school, they are encouraged to colour mix and become proficient in this skill. Computers and digital cameras are used effectively to enhance art. Pupils produce pictures and posters using multimedia programs, and add special effects to images generated using a digital camera. Resources for art are satisfactory, and easily accessible. The after-school art club allows pupils to develop their skills in art further, both as individuals and as a group working on a collaborative project.
95. Pupils' knowledge and understanding of art are satisfactory. The school makes good use of visits and visitors as a stimulus for art. The school's Millennium project enabled pupils from Years 4, 5 and 6 to work with an expert. Pupils were fully involved at all stages and they are justifiably proud of the resulting sculpture "Over the water".
96. The co-ordinator has been in post for a year. She is knowledgeable, and has a clear vision for the development of the subject. The school is currently reviewing its scheme of work and the way teachers assess the progress pupils make. The time given to art varies from class to class and between year groups. Insufficient guidance is provided in long-term curriculum plans to ensure all pupils have equality of provision. This has been identified as an area for development. The production of a school portfolio to help assess standards was identified as an area for development in the last inspection that remains to be addressed.

DESIGN AND TECHNOLOGY

97. During the inspection insufficient lessons were observed to enable a judgement to be made on the quality of teaching in this subject. On the basis of work seen, displays, photographs and samples of work kept by the school, standards are broadly in line with national expectations at the end of both key stages. These findings are similar to those of the last inspection.
98. Teachers' yearly planning is satisfactory. Projects are varied and include using resistant materials and textiles. A recent whole-school project to celebrate the Millennium involved pupils in creating a three-dimensional mural. A local sculptor

visited the school and worked with pupils to design 'Crossing the Water' depicting the Severn Bridge and the river flowing underneath it. This encouraged pupils to fulfil the complete design process in all its stages by using wood, investigating appropriate shapes and exploring methods of fixing different types of materials together. The impressive mural is now on display at the front of the school.

99. Pupils learn about food technology in a very well resourced area dedicated to this aspect of the subject. It provides a fridge, microwave and cooker plus a considerable stock of utensils as well as its own washing up area to ensure healthy working conditions. Pupils in Key Stage 1, guided by helpers and parents, successfully produced 'gingerbread men'. Year 4 pupils are encouraged to bake different types of bread rolls, changing one ingredient at a time before they evaluate the flavours and textures they have produced.
100. The co-ordinator for the subject has only very recently been appointed. She has set out an appropriate plan for the development of the subject. The school has recently adapted a national exemplar scheme of work and early indications show it is improving the teaching of the subject. A standard design and evaluation sheet is provided within the scheme of work although it is not yet used consistently throughout the school. Long-term topic plans require adapting to take account of those pupils in mixed age classes and mixed key stages to ensure they have similar experiences.

GEOGRAPHY

101. During the inspection, insufficient lessons were observed to enable a judgement to be made on the quality of teaching. On the basis of samples of work, photographs and display around the school, standards at the end of both key stages are broadly in line with national expectations. These findings are similar to those of the last inspection. The use of information and communication technology to support learning in geography has improved significantly since that time.
102. The school's links with the community are excellent and make a very significant contribution to pupils' learning in geography. Visits to various localities such as the local shopping mall, Weston-Super-Mare and a local aerospace company support pupils' developing understanding of places and settlements. Pupils in Key Stage 1 go on farm visits, discuss the jobs people do and they study the area around the school. Many visitors come in to the school, including representatives from the local zoo, who describe the wildlife and climate conditions in 'rain forests'. Visits to the Waterways museum to study canal boat life also successfully contribute to the coverage of the geography curriculum.
103. The co-ordinator has been in post for a very short time. She has very good subject knowledge and has an appropriate plan for the subject's development. The school is implementing and adapting a national exemplar scheme of work for geography. The school's new scheme is a very significant improvement since the previous inspection. However, as yet, insufficient attention has been paid to guiding progress through classes with mixed ages and key stages to ensure that pupils have similar experiences in all elements of the geography curriculum. Monitoring of standards of pupils' work is also underdeveloped in this subject.

HISTORY

104. At the end of both key stages, standards in history are good and they have improved significantly since the last inspection. Displays around the school, such as the one depicting the visit to a local castle, show how very good use is made of the locality to support learning in this subject. The pupils use many sources of information including that handed down through generations and other local knowledge. Pupils use their literacy skills well to support this curriculum area as they pose and answer questions and demonstrate good note-taking ability.
105. Information technology is used very well to support this subject. Pupils access their own information, use word-processing skills to present their work and also research additional information. Adult helpers from the wider school community make a very significant contribution to this element of the pupils' learning.
106. The quality of teaching has also improved since the previous inspection. It is now good throughout the school and pupils learn well. Teachers share their clear learning objectives with the pupils and are very well prepared. They examine real and relevant objects such as old black and white photographs with younger pupils. In one very good sequence with Year 1 pupils, the teacher used photographs of key events in her life with pupils to construct a sequence of events in a time line. Pupils commented on features of the time and compared her experience with those of one pupil in the class.
107. Teachers plan appropriate activities that are very well matched to pupils' needs and abilities. Teachers have good subject knowledge and no longer rely heavily on published worksheets as was found in the previous inspection. Pupils with special educational needs are well supported and make good progress during lessons. Teachers use resources and artefacts imaginatively to present stimulating lessons, as when older pupils acted as archaeologists to find out about the past. They uncovered hidden pieces of pottery buried in sand and put these together to discover what the object was originally. Video sequences of the Sutton Hoo discoveries are used effectively to show ways in which life in the past is interpreted. Homework very successfully helps to develop pupils' research skills as, for example, Year 5 pupils discovered as much as they could about the 1870 Education Act and its impact on children and their schooling in Victorian times.
108. The history co-ordinator has only been in post for a short time. She has very good subject knowledge and has an appropriate plan for the subject's development. The school is implementing a national exemplar scheme of work, adapting it for the school. As yet insufficient guidance is provided within these plans to ensure pupils' experiences as they progress through mixed age and key stage classes are similar. Pupils' standards in the subject are not yet monitored to help guide improvements.

INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY

109. Standards in information technology are satisfactory by the end of Key Stage 1 and good at the end of Key Stage 2. Pupils routinely use computers across the subjects of the curriculum from reception year. Older pupils have lessons dedicated to developing their skills as a result of the recent installation of a new suite in the school's library area.
110. Pupils have good access to computers, both in their classrooms and around the school, including the suite. They use a variety of applications as part of their learning in a range of subjects. Reception year pupils use a drawing application to create

regular patterns and shapes, showing developing control of the mouse and confidently using a range of icons to create different effects. They sort and group words with similar sounds such as 'cr' and 'br' in support of their literacy. By the end of Key Stage 1, pupils have used databases to sort and display information, for example, about their pets, displaying the frequency of different pets in the class. In their history, Year 2 pupils use CD-ROM to research information about ancient lands to find out more about life around the Nile river. Pupils work productively on shared tasks, discussing their ideas and co-operating well.

111. In Key Stage 2, pupils develop their skills further in a range of applications and contexts. Year 3 and 4 pupils programme a roaming vehicle to follow a prescribed route and they can describe a sequence of movements and directions from a simple programme. Computer applications are used by teachers to improve pupils' basic skills in literacy and numeracy, as when Year 6 pupils classify different types of connectives and write examples of their use. Others have presented their poems for display, drafting, saving and printing their work. Year 5 pupils consider their audience in presenting their work for ease of understanding, for example, when using bullets to set out instructions for a game that they invented. They use graphics and import text from newspaper articles to create post cards from a character in a book they have read. Overall, pupils are developing their skills in presenting information with due consideration of intended audience well. They are encouraged to reflect and evaluate their drafts against some criteria to help improve their final versions.
112. Pupils in Key Stage 2 are using the Internet and world wide web, for example, to exchange information between schools using e-mail. They have also created their own web site and regularly access information on the Web in support of their learning. By Year 6, pupils are confident in using basic commands and merging text and graphics to create presentations, for example, for a newsletter about different aspects of school life.
113. In the week of the inspection, insufficient teaching of information technology was seen to make a rounded judgement of the quality of teaching. However, in the Key Stage 2 lesson that was observed, teaching was very good. When planning lessons, teachers make regular use of information technology to help develop pupils' knowledge and skills. Learning support assistants also help pupils develop their skills, both in class and through a newly formed club.
114. Very good progress has been made since the last inspection. Pupils use databases and spreadsheets, word-processing and presentation applications. Teachers include information technology in their planning across the curriculum. The curriculum, though much improved, is currently under further review. The co-ordinator leads the development of this subject very well. She has a clear vision for the development of information technology in the school, and is guiding her colleagues well. The recent acquisition of a new computer suite, and the purchase of further computers for classrooms by the Parents Association, has ensured the school is well placed to make further improvements in standards and provision. However, there are gaps in the current planned curriculum, notably in science where pupils do not yet use data-loggers to measure and present data from experiments. Whilst teachers monitor pupils' use of the computer to ensure all have appropriate access, they are not yet assessing their skills and building on them systematically as they move through the school.

MUSIC

115. Due to timetable restrictions it was not possible to observe lessons at Key Stage 1. Consequently, no judgements have been made in relation to standards of attainment, teaching and learning at this key stage.
116. Standards at Key Stage 2 are high. Music has a firm place in the school's curriculum and there has been a long tradition of musical excellence at the school. Music was recognised as a strong subject in the last inspection and standards in the subject have improved since then.
117. The success of the school in music is underpinned by three significant factors. Firstly, the scheme of work is sufficiently detailed to enable non-specialists to teach music to a high standard. Secondly, the co-ordinator is a skilled musician who offers strong leadership, effectively supporting her colleagues and enthusing pupils. Thirdly, the school, in partnership with parents, enables a large number of pupils to learn to play a musical instrument and participate in a wide range of extra-curricular activities.
118. At the end of Key Stage 2, pupils in Year 5 are achieving levels expected at the end of the key stage and those in Year 6 are working towards standards expected at Key Stage 3. Pupils confidently and accurately sing in two-part songs and rounds, relating their contribution to that of other performers. Simple tasks, such as singing a well-known hymn in assembly, are performed to a very high musical standard. Pupils' performances of songs from other cultures such as the South African song 'Tingu singu leluvataeo watsha watsha' are very expressive, accurate and connect with their audiences very effectively. Pupils' singing is very sensitive to the sounds and structures of all pieces being performed as a direct result of the music co-ordinator's own skills and ability to lead by example. Pupils carefully listen to detail and, using correct terminology discuss music from different traditions. When composing pieces they use symbols with increasing accuracy.
119. Attitudes to learning in music are particularly good. Pupils demonstrate real pride in their compositions and performances. Due to the supportive nature of feedback given by teachers, pupils are ready and eager to improve their performances. In a Year 6, lesson pupils confidently took the lead and supported their peers when singing. Pupils' sense of purpose when exploring music and musical instruments is clearly evident in all lessons seen. This is because pupils are given time to reflect on their performances and percussion instruments are used for their sound quality rather than as items to be hit at particular times.
120. In Year 3, all pupils are taught to play the recorder by the music co-ordinator. The number on role for this particular year group is large and pupils are not normally taught together. The strategy of bringing these pupils together for recorder lessons ensures that all pupils have the same experience and the expertise of the co-ordinator is used to best advantage. Furthermore, it provides pupils with the opportunity to learn to play musical pieces and to perform musical patterns by ear and notation. In one lesson, pupils carefully listened to the teacher playing different combinations of the notes B,A and G and accurately echoed them in unison. It is evident that this firm base of knowledge and understanding is built on effectively as pupils progress up through the school.
121. Pupils are encouraged to practise playing the recorder and their other musical instruments at home. It is clear that many do so given the number of pupils who willingly volunteer to give solo performances of the tunes and pieces rehearsed out of

lessons. Pupils' interest and enthusiasm for music are further reflected in the number of pupils who take part in school productions such as 'Joseph'. Parents and the local community generously support the school in such ventures because they recognise the importance of music and appreciate the high standards achieved by the school. The school's choir is regularly invited to sing at many of the county's prestigious events. This motivates them to do well and provides good opportunities for them to perform to a wide range of audiences.

122. The quality of teaching is of a high standard, particularly that of the music co-ordinator. Lessons are clearly planned with the needs of pupils in mind and build on their prior learning very effectively. Activities such as singing, which require frequent development, take place regularly. Time in whole-school assemblies is used particularly effectively in this respect as all pupils are given the opportunity to practise their skills and older pupils demonstrate their high standards of achievement to younger pupils, thus setting expectations for future years. The scheme of work is used well and teachers are able to select tasks and activities that are appropriate for the age and abilities of their pupils. The resources are in very good condition and recorded music is played on equipment that has good sound quality. Teachers use the dedicated music classroom to good effect. Pupils have plenty of space to feel comfortable when singing or playing instruments. Pupils and staff benefit greatly from this facility as neither are inhibited by the need to be quiet and avoid disrupting others' lessons.

PHYSICAL EDUCATION

123. Overall standards at the end of both key stages have been maintained since the last inspection and are in line with national expectations. There are some features of the provision that result in good standards, for example, pupils achieve well in swimming.
124. A well-structured timetable allows pupils to experience a comprehensive programme of activities. Recent in-service training in some aspects of physical education has improved teachers' knowledge and confidence. In lessons observed, teaching was consistently good or very good. Lessons proceed at a good pace, are well planned and have a clear structure. They build on previous lessons, allowing pupils to develop and practise skills and techniques. This contributes significantly to pupil achievement and their overall level of attainment. Teachers use a range of strategies to improve pupil performance. Their explanations are clear and they make good use of pupil demonstration to enhance pupils' learning.
125. Teachers are aware of health and safety issues and communicate these clearly to pupils who respond positively. Pupils are aware of the effect of exercise on their bodies and how it contributes to their general health and well being.
126. In gymnastics lessons pupils use space effectively and safely. In Key Stage 1 they are inventive, and find many ways to stretch and curl over benches and mats. They are able to link their movements and add a travelling element to their sequence. In Key Stage 2, pupils combine travelling, leaping and rolling. Pupils move confidently with appropriate control.
127. In games lessons pupils practise throwing and catching skills, and learn to control and pass a ball with a hockey stick. Pupils move rapidly from individual work, to working in groups of two, four and eight. At all times teachers promote good sporting behaviour and teamwork. Pupils are keen to demonstrate their skills to each other and literally applaud each other's effort.

128. Pupils behave well in lessons. They are enthusiastic, work hard to improve their personal performance and contribute fully when working co-operatively in a team. All pupils have equal access to the subject. Teachers assess pupils during lessons giving them clear guidance on how to improve their performance. Within lessons pupils make good progress.
129. The subject co-ordinator has been in post for less than a year. She has good subject knowledge and a clear vision to raise standards. Resources and facilities are satisfactory and are used effectively. Extra-curricular activities provided by the school include football, netball and gymnastics clubs. The school takes part successfully in local competitions and festivals. School based inter-house competitions are also organised and enjoyed by pupils.

RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

130. Standards achieved at both key stages are in line with the expectations expressed in the locally agreed syllabus. This was the position at the last inspection. Consequently, standards have been maintained at a satisfactory level. Religious education at Almondsbury is mainly Christian in content but pupils demonstrate an appropriate understanding of other world faiths. When studying the parable of the loaves and fishes Year 1 and 2 pupils understood the story at a literal level but also the meaning of sharing and caring. They related the principles well to their own lives and gave good examples of people in their own families sharing and supporting one another.
131. As pupils move up through the school they show increasing ability to recognise the similarities and differences between major world faiths and respond sensitively to religious issues. When studying Buddhism, pupils in Year 6 explored ideas relating to greed, selfishness and giving. They offered good ideas and were very astute when considering the methods used by advertisers to encourage people to buy more goods. They used correct terminology to describe the beliefs and practices of Buddhists and showed reasonable ability to reflect on the purposes and meaning of life.
132. The quality of learning and teaching is sound throughout the school. Teachers use the school's very detailed and helpful scheme of work to teach all aspects of the work covered in the agreed syllabus. Lessons are planned so that pupils consolidate and build on prior learning and gain new knowledge at a systematic and realistic rate. All pupils are encouraged to participate in lessons and their views and ideas are valued. Pupils with special educational needs are well supported and make good progress in relation to their prior learning.
133. Teachers use a wide range of strategies to promote understanding and help pupils learn about and learn from religious education. The programme of study relies on the use of artefacts, videos, books and posters. These have been collected and are stored in well-marked containers in the school's resource room. They are in good condition, easily accessible and appropriate for primary aged pupils.
134. Pupils take pride in their written work. Pictures are neatly drawn and coloured. Writing is neat and legible. Teachers conscientiously mark work and frequently offer praise and encouragement to their pupils. However, comments that help pupils to understand their learning, in terms of the religious education objectives of lessons, are less noticeable. The subject co-ordinator has rightly identified the need to compile

a portfolio of pupils' moderated work so that teachers are better placed to assess pupils' learning and offer more specific feedback in the context of religious education.