

# INSPECTION REPORT

## **RAYSFIELD INFANT SCHOOL**

Chipping Sodbury

LEA area: South Gloucestershire

Unique reference number: 109053

Headteacher: Mrs J Baxendale

Reporting inspector: Jacqueline Ikin  
3349

Dates of inspection: 21 - 24 May 2001

Inspection number: 192257

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

© Crown copyright 2001

This report may be reproduced in whole or in part for non-commercial educational purposes, provided that all extracts quoted are reproduced verbatim without adaptation and on condition that the source and date thereof are stated.

Further copies of this report are obtainable from the school. Under the School Inspections Act 1996, the school must provide a copy of this report and/or its summary free of charge to certain categories of people. A charge not exceeding the full cost of reproduction may be made for any other copies supplied.

## INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Type of school:	Infant
School category:	Community
Age range of pupils:	4 to 7
Gender of pupils:	Mixed
School address:	Finch Road Chipping Sodbury South Gloucestershire
Postcode:	BS37 6JE
Telephone number:	01454 867140
Fax number:	01454 867141
Appropriate authority:	Governing body
Name of chair of governors:	Mr Andy Palmer
Date of previous inspection:	24/02/97

## INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Team members			Subject responsibilities	Aspect responsibilities
3349	J Ikin	Registered inspector	Mathematics Information and communication technology Physical education Religious education Foundation Stage	What sort of school is it? How high are standards? How well are pupils taught? How well is the school led and managed? What should the school do to improve further?
1333	E Foster	Lay inspector		How well does the school care for its pupils? How well does the school work in partnership with parents?
3856	S Wellsted	Team inspector	English Geography History Special educational needs English as an additional language	Attitudes, values and personal development
2414	D Westall	Team inspector	Science Art and design Design and technology Music	How good are curricular and other opportunities?

The inspection contractor was:

OASIS  
Waterstone Cottages  
Naunton  
Cheltenham  
Gloucestershire  
GL54 3AS

Any concerns or complaints about the inspection or the report should be raised with the inspection contractor. Complaints that are not satisfactorily resolved by the contractor should be raised with OFSTED by writing to:

The Complaints Manager  
Inspection Quality Division  
The Office for Standards in Education  
Alexandra House  
33 Kingsway  
London  
WC2B 6SE

## REPORT CONTENTS

	Page
<b>PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT</b>	<b>6</b>
Information about the school	
How good the school is	
What the school does well	
What could be improved	
How the school has improved since its last inspection	
Standards	
Pupils' attitudes and values	
Teaching and learning	
Other aspects of the school	
How well the school is led and managed	
Parents' and carers' views of the school	
<b>PART B: COMMENTARY</b>	
<b>HOW HIGH ARE STANDARDS?</b>	<b>11</b>
The school's results and pupils' achievements	
Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development	
<b>HOW WELL ARE PUPILS TAUGHT?</b>	<b>15</b>
<b>HOW GOOD ARE THE CURRICULAR AND OTHER OPPORTUNITIES OFFERED TO PUPILS?</b>	<b>17</b>
<b>HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL CARE FOR ITS PUPILS?</b>	<b>20</b>
<b>HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL WORK IN PARTNERSHIP WITH PARENTS?</b>	<b>21</b>
<b>HOW WELL IS THE SCHOOL LED AND MANAGED?</b>	<b>22</b>
<b>WHAT SHOULD THE SCHOOL DO TO IMPROVE FURTHER?</b>	<b>25</b>
<b>PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS</b>	<b>26</b>
<b>PART D: THE STANDARDS AND QUALITY OF TEACHING IN AREAS OF THE CURRICULUM, SUBJECTS AND COURSES</b>	<b>30</b>

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

### **INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL**

The school has 187 pupils on roll, aged between four and seven, and they are taught in six classes. The school serves an area of high employment and in many families both parents work. Consequently the percentage of pupils eligible for free school meals is below the national average. Pupils' attainment on entry to the school is generally below average. The percentage of pupils with special educational needs and with statements of special educational need is above the national average. There are just two pupils from ethnic minority backgrounds and there are no pupils for whom English is an additional language.

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

This is a good school with some very good features. Pupils make good progress in the basic skills of literacy and numeracy and most attain standards that are average or above by the time that they leave the school at the age of seven. They achieve well in relation to their prior attainment because of the good teaching that they receive and the commitment of the headteacher, staff and governors to raising standards. The school provides good value for money.

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

- Pupils make good progress in the basic skills of literacy and numeracy as a result of the good teaching they receive.
- The provision for pupils' moral and spiritual development is very good. Pupils respond well to this. They have good attitudes to learning, work hard and are very well behaved. Relationships are very good. Pupils respect each other and all adults who work in the school.
- The provision for special educational needs pupils is very good. The support and guidance that they receive ensure that they make good progress in their learning.
- The headteacher provides good leadership, governors give good support to the school and staff share a clear sense of purpose.
- The care for pupils' welfare and their general well-being is very good. All adults in the school know the pupils well and are well informed about pupils' individual needs. As a consequence, children feel safe and secure from an early stage.

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

- The role of the co-ordinators in monitoring and evaluation.
- Opportunities for pupils to make independent use of information books, to develop their speaking skills, and to develop the skills of independent enquiry.
- Attendance.
- The school's partnership with parents.

*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 in addressing most of the weaknesses found in the last OFSTED inspection in 1997. It has sustained its many strengths and has improved the overall quality of education that it offers to its pupils. The school has greatly improved its organisational strategies for teaching. All teaching is now highly focused, with good opportunities for the teachers to assess pupils' and help them make progress. The role of subject co-ordinator has been developed, particularly in literacy and numeracy. They have

successfully implemented national guidance and kept an overview of standards by analysing test results. They have started to monitor teaching and learning by observing lessons. In other subjects, co-ordinators have begun to collect work into subject portfolios and are developing schemes of work in response to national guidance. There is more work to be done on the development of the role, particularly through lesson observations and the analysis of pupils' work, and the school recognises this. The school has made good progress in developing spiritual awareness in the curriculum. As a result of this, pupils have a greater awareness of the wonder of the world about them and a greater understanding of their own feelings and beliefs. Pupils' attainment on entry to the school has declined since the last inspection. In spite of this, the standards that the school achieves in reading, writing and mathematics in Year 2 national tests, have improved.

## STANDARDS

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

Performance in:	compared with				Key
	all schools			similar schools	
	1998	1999	2000	2000	
Reading	C	B	A	A	well above average A above average B average C below average D well below average E
Writing	C	B	B	C	
Mathematics	D	B	C	C	

The table shows that the school's results are well above the national average for reading, and above average for writing. Its results for mathematics are in line with the national average. When compared to similar schools, results remain well above average for reading, and are in line with the average for writing and mathematics. Both boys and girls achieve equally well. The school has made marked improvements in reading. Whilst standards in writing and mathematics have fluctuated, mainly reflecting differences in the nature of cohorts of pupils, they have also shown an improvement overall. In line with trends nationally, standards in reading are higher than in writing and the school is making a sustained effort to improve standards in writing. The results for 2001 have exceeded the predictions made on the basis of tests taken when pupils started school in reading, writing and mathematics. They also show that the school is continuing to improve the standards attained in these subjects. The results show good achievement by the majority of pupils in relation to their starting point at the beginning of Year 1.

Inspection findings broadly reflect the pattern of attainment found in national tests for reading, writing and mathematics. Pupils' attainment on entry to the school is below average, they make good progress and attain standards that are a little above average by the time that they leave the school at age seven. In other subjects of the curriculum the majority of pupils make good progress and achieve standards that are average by the time they leave the school at age seven. Pupils who have special educational needs achieve well in relation to their prior attainment. Those who are more able make satisfactory progress.

## PUPILS' ATTITUDES AND VALUES



<b>Aspect</b>	<b>Comment</b>
Attitudes to the school	Very good. Pupils enjoy coming to school, are keen to learn and to do their best: they concentrate well in almost all lessons.

Behaviour, in and out of classrooms	Pupils' behaviour is very good. All pupils are very aware of the rules for 'a happy school' and do their very best to observe them. There have been no exclusions.
Personal development and relationships	Good. Pupils develop confidence as they move through the school. They relate well to one another and to adults and show respect for property. They are polite, courteous, helpful and well mannered.
Attendance	Attendance over the last two years has been below national average and is unsatisfactory. This is due in part to higher than average levels of sickness amongst pupils, particularly in their first year at school. However, levels of attendance have also been reduced because pupils are taken on holiday during term time.

## TEACHING AND LEARNING

Teaching of pupils:	aged up to 5 years in reception	aged 5-7 years in Years 1 and 2
Lessons seen overall	Satisfactory	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.*

Two thirds of the teaching in Years 1 and 2 is good or very good. In the reception classes teaching is sound overall, with teaching in about a third of lessons being good. No teaching was judged to be unsatisfactory, which is an improvement since the last inspection. The improvement in the quality of teaching is having a significant impact on the standards that are being achieved and the progress that pupils make. There are examples of very good teaching in literacy, numeracy and religious education. Where teaching is best, teachers have very good subject knowledge and use a range of lively teaching strategies. This makes learning interesting for pupils and successfully develops their skills, knowledge and understanding. Classroom assistants are appropriately deployed and give very good support to pupils.

## OTHER ASPECTS OF THE SCHOOL

Aspect	Comment
The quality and range of the curriculum	The curriculum is sound and meets statutory requirements. It is broad and is reasonably balanced. There are good opportunities for enrichment through visits and visitors. Pupils require more opportunities to make independent use of information books, to develop their speaking skills, and to develop their skills of independent enquiry. There is no extra-curricular provision.
Provision for pupils with special educational needs	Very good. Pupils with special educational needs are taught well. They also benefit from the very

educational needs	good support offered by classroom assistants.
-------------------	---

Provision for pupils' personal, including spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	The school makes very good provision for pupils' spiritual and moral development, and good provision for their social and cultural development.
How well the school cares for its pupils	The care that the school provides for its pupils is very good. All adults in the school know the pupils well and are well informed about pupils' individual needs. The effectiveness of this communication is a strength of the school.

### HOW WELL THE SCHOOL IS LED AND MANAGED

Aspect	Comment
Leadership and management by the headteacher and other key staff	The headteacher provides strong, caring and committed leadership, which gives a clear sense of purpose and direction to the school's work. She is given sound support by the deputy head with whom she works in close partnership.
How well the governors fulfil their responsibilities	The governing body, ably led by the chair of governors fulfils its statutory responsibilities well and gives good support to the school.
The school's evaluation of its performance	Satisfactory. Procedures for data analysis are good. The role of the co-ordinator in observing teaching and learning requires development.
The strategic use of resources	The quality of financial planning is good. It supports agreed educational priorities well. Good use is made of all the resources available to the school.

There are sufficient teachers and, collectively they have the expertise to cover the age and ability range of the pupils and the requirements of the National Curriculum. There are sufficient, good quality learning resources which are well organised. Overall the school makes good use of its accommodation and grounds. However, the space in most classrooms is barely adequate and the quality of the acoustics sometimes has a detrimental effect on lessons because some pupils cannot always hear. The outdoor space has been well developed and has some interesting features to enhance learning and promote play. The space is inadequate, however, for all but the most controlled activities.

### PARENTS' AND CARERS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

What pleases parents most	What parents would like to see improved
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The staff are easy to talk to.</li> <li>• There are high standards of teaching.</li> <li>• Children make good progress.</li> <li>• The school is well led and managed.</li> <li>• Teachers have high expectations.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The provision of extra-curricular activities.</li> <li>• Better information on their children's progress.</li> </ul>

Inspection findings fully support parents' positive views of the school. Unlike most infant schools, there are no extra-curricular activities and this somewhat limits pupils' opportunities to develop interests and skills. Evidence shows that formal opportunities to discuss children's progress with teachers are less frequent than in many infant schools and that information about standards of attainment could be improved. The school recognises the need to improve its partnership with parents.

## **PART B: COMMENTARY**

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

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

1. On entry to the school children's attainment is below the average expected for their age. Pupils' communication and language skills are underdeveloped and children have limited understanding and experience of mathematics. They make good progress in the reception classes, and are given a secure foundation in early literacy and numeracy skills. Most achieve standards that are a little below average by the end of the reception year.
2. The results of statutory tests, taken at the end of Year 2 in 2000 show that the number of pupils reaching the expected levels for seven year olds, is well above the national average for reading, and above average for writing. Results for mathematics are in line with the national average. The number of pupils reaching above the expected levels for seven year olds is close to the national average for reading, writing and mathematics. When compared to similar schools, results remain well above average for reading, and are in line with the average for writing and mathematics. Both boys and girls achieve equally well. The school has made marked improvements in reading. Whilst standards in writing and mathematics have fluctuated, mainly reflecting differences between the different groups, they have shown an improvement overall. In line with trends nationally, standards in reading are higher than in writing and the school is making a sustained effort to improve standards in writing.
3. The results of tests for 2001 have exceeded predictions for reading, writing and mathematics, based on assessments of pupils on entry to school and show a further improvement on previous years. The school is being particularly successful in reducing the number of pupils attaining levels below those expected for their age, and gradually increasing the numbers of pupils achieving above the levels expected for their age. These results show good achievement by the majority of pupils in relation to their starting point at the beginning of Year 1.
4. Inspection findings broadly reflect the pattern of attainment found in national tests. Standards on entry to Year 1 are a little below average. The majority of pupils, including those with special educational needs, make good progress and achieve standards that are a little above average by the time they leave the school at age seven. Those who are more able make sound progress.
5. The National Literacy Strategy is well embedded and is having a significant impact on the standards that the school achieves in English. Most pupils achieve the standard expected for their age in reading, writing, speaking and listening, and a significant minority exceed that standard. There has been a significant improvement since the last inspection in reading, spelling and handwriting. Performance in reading remains ahead of that in writing, and, overall, pupils' skills in listening are better than their skills in speaking. Pupils' knowledge of phonics is well developed. This makes a significant contribution to their standards in reading because it helps them to decode new or difficult words. Standards of spelling are also good and written work is nearly always correctly punctuated and well presented. Where there are weaknesses in reading it is because pupils are unable to look deeper into the text to find meaning beyond the literal and they have limited

- opportunities to use books for research and information particularly in the context of other subjects of the curriculum. Pupils have a limited vocabulary for speaking and they find it difficult to sustain and develop their ideas in complex sentences. This results in pupils not always fully understanding the meaning of the words that they read and difficulties in structuring and developing their ideas in writing.
6. In mathematics, pupils' mathematical knowledge and understanding are a little below average at the beginning of Year 1. They make good progress to attain standards that are a little above those expected for their age by the end of Year 2 and this represent good achievement in relation to their starting points. Although attainment on entry to the school has fallen since the last inspection standards at age seven have been improved. The National Numeracy Strategy is firmly in place and is having a significant impact on the improvements that the school is making. Strengths in the subject are pupils' sound understanding of mathematical terminology and a secure factual knowledge of number, shape and measure. For example, they know the meaning of such terms as 'find the difference', 'multiple' and make use of these terms when describing their mental strategies for solving number problems. They have a sound knowledge of mathematical facts, such as addition and subtraction up to 100, odd and even numbers and place value. Their ability to count in a range of different ways contributes to the speed and accuracy of their calculations. For example, some older pupils can quickly work out the number of hours in a given numbers of days. Pupils' sound knowledge of the properties of shapes is evident in their accurate drawings of two and three-dimensional shapes and in their ability to distinguish the differences, for example in the number of sides and angles. Pupils' skills in using their knowledge of mathematics in other areas of the curriculum is sound as a result of their ability to apply their mathematical skills in different situations. For example, they accurately read simple scales for length, mass and capacity and know something about how to compile information in the form of graphs. Enrichment lessons have been introduced for some of the more mathematically gifted pupils and, during one of these sessions, pupils worked at the edge of their capabilities as they calculated the height of a giant, having been left only with a copy of his footprint. There are, however, few opportunities for mathematical investigations and, for some pupils, this limits the development of their powers of reasoning and their skills in mathematical thinking at higher levels. It is an area for further development.
7. Standards in science are broadly average at the age of seven, which represent good achievement in relation to their starting points at the beginning of Year 1. The small minority of pupils whose scientific knowledge and understanding are above average at the beginning of Year 1 make sound progress. In 2000, the results of statutory teacher assessment show that the percentage of pupils reaching the expected standard was above the national average. In this year's annual tests there are fewer pupils reaching the higher levels. The evidence suggests that this is due to the nature of the year group in 2001. Particular strengths are pupils' knowledge and understanding of life processes and living things. For example, they know something about the kinds of creatures they might find in the school pond and make accurate observations of cress seeds as they grow into plants. They made particularly good progress in a Year 2 lesson where they investigated some of the differences between themselves and others. For example, the differences in the amount of water they could displace with their hands. They have a basic understanding of some physical processes, for example, that some objects are attracted to magnets and some are not. Pupils carry out simple experiments and achieve well. However, more able pupils would benefit from being able to develop their scientific investigations further.

8. Standards in information and communication technology (ICT) are broadly in line with those expected for their age when pupils reach the end of Year 2. This is an improvement since the last inspection when attainment was found to be a little lower than it should be for pupils of similar age. Pupils' achievements in ICT are as a result of a satisfactory ability to enter, save and retrieve their work on the computer independently; and a sound knowledge of an appropriate range of software. Their skills in using a computer in other subjects of the curriculum, for example English, science and mathematics, are satisfactory. Their skills have not yet been sufficiently extended to the use of other information banks or the internet and work with email is in the early stages.
9. Standards in religious education are mainly average but are sometimes a little above those expected for pupils age seven and have been maintained since the last inspection. Work on Christianity, Islam, Hinduism and Judaism results in pupils acquiring a sound understanding that religious traditions in the United Kingdom are mainly Christian and that other principal religions are also represented in their community. As a result of their work on special books and special places, pupils begin to develop an understanding of the richness and diversity of religion and how believers express their faith in the way that they live their everyday lives.
10. Pupils' standards in art and design are not as high as in the previous inspection but, by the time they reach the end of Year 2, are, nevertheless, mainly in line with those expected for their age. Standards in singing are good and pupils achieve well when playing untuned percussion during lessons and during assemblies. Few lessons were seen in design and technology, history and geography but from the evidence of pupils' work, standards are judged to be about average for pupils by the time they leave school at the end of Year 2. In physical education pupils reach standards in line with those expected for their age in gymnastics. There is insufficient evidence to form a judgement about standards in dance and games.
11. Pupils with special educational needs make good progress in all year groups. When account is taken of their starting points and of their individual needs, they achieve good results. Indeed, many pupils on the school's register of pupils with special educational needs attain the expected standards for pupils aged seven in the national tests in English and mathematics. The most able pupils make sound progress overall. For the most part, they achieve standards which are above average for their age, and which appropriately reflect their capabilities, in English, mathematics and science.
12. Boys and girls have similar levels of attainment across the curriculum.

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

13. Children in the reception classes settle quickly into school routines, establish good relationships with their teachers, with the other adults who work with them, and with other children in their classes. They are secure and happy in themselves, behave politely, listen to others and take turns. The more confident children readily answer questions in class. Although some of their classmates are more reticent, seldom venturing an answer, they always follow the lesson with evident interest and enjoyment.
14. Pupils in Years 1 and 2 display very positive attitudes to learning and to school life in general. They relate well to one another and to all the adults who work with them,



and there is mutual trust between staff and pupils. As a result, the pupils are keen to learn and to do their best: they concentrate well in almost all lessons, support one another, and try very hard to practise, or to apply, what they have learned. Just occasionally, a few pupils show signs of tiredness during afternoon mathematics lessons, usually the result of having already concentrated very hard during the morning sessions. Within their capabilities, pupils take care to present their work neatly, and they have regard for their teachers' expectations and for established routines. They are happy in the classroom, where they can be trusted to work at their tasks without direct supervision when necessary, for example during parts of the literacy hour. They co-operate well with one another, for example when sharing a computer, and they collaborate very effectively when they are given the chance to do so, as they were in Year 2 history lessons which required them to reach group decisions. They are happy at lunch-time when they sit with their friends, quietly chatting; and they are happy when they can play out of doors during breaks and lunch-times. On a few occasions, there may be some over-exuberant behaviour by one or two pupils in the playground, but bullying is exceptionally rare. All pupils are very aware of the rules for 'a happy school' and do their very best to observe them. Overall, behaviour is very good indeed, and there have been no exclusions.

15. The school is fortunate in being able to build on the positive attitudes to life and the caring qualities most children bring with them from their homes. Pupils show respect for property, and they are polite, courteous, helpful and well mannered. They have a very good understanding of the difference between right and wrong, and the provision for their spiritual development in the school is such that they respond sensitively to the needs and feelings of others, whether it be a pupil who has been hurt, a character in a story, or a famous person they have learned about in history. They respond with wonder to the miracles and beauty of the natural world, whether (as in reception) watching newly hatched ducklings taking their first tentative steps, or whether (as in a religious education lesson in Year 2), looking at photographs showing the splendours of the natural landscape, the beauty of flowers and the infinite variety of the animal kingdom as they listened to the story of the Creation. In religious education lessons and in assemblies, pupils show genuine interest in spiritual and moral issues. They give themselves whole heartedly to the spiritual atmosphere created in assemblies, and even their singing has a spiritual quality which conveys a unity of purpose. There is also ample evidence to show that pupils respect religious beliefs and cultural traditions that differ from their own.
16. Pupils respond well to the opportunities they are given to take responsibility, for example to organise the hall before assemblies, to take registers to the office, or to sort and tidy various resources around the school. They are also learning to take responsibility, in a wider sense, for the world around them. For example, they talk enthusiastically about the Pondrush conservation project and about the school recycling project, and, young as they are, show as much concern for their role as 'stewards of the Earth' as they do for more tangible and obvious endeavours such as raising money to train guide-dogs for the blind. When given opportunities to do so, they are very capable of working independently and of directing their own learning. However, pupils are rarely given opportunities to use their own initiative, solve problems or undertake independent investigations and research, and the school has no regular procedures in place to consult pupils about school matters.
17. Pupils with special educational needs are fully integrated into all aspects of school life. They are valued members of the school community who work hard to achieve their targets, whether related to work or, as in a few cases, to behaviour. They

relate well to all the staff who work with them, and, as a result, they receive the support and encouragement they need to succeed and the genuine respect of adults and of other pupils, for example during 'effort services'.

18. Attendance over the last two years has been below national average and is unsatisfactory. This is attributable in part to higher than average levels of sickness amongst pupils, particularly in their first year at school. However, levels of attendance have also been reduced because pupils are taken on holiday during term time. Unauthorised absences are very low as the school always follows up every absence with the parents. Registration procedures fully meet statutory requirements. Pupils are punctual and sessions start very promptly throughout the school day.
19. Boys and girls mix well together at playtimes and take care to include those who have physical or other disabilities in their games. There is no racism.

## HOW WELL ARE PUPILS TAUGHT?

20. Two thirds of teaching in Years 1 and 2 is mainly good and sometimes very good, with particularly effective examples of very good teaching in mathematics, literacy and religious education. In the reception classes, teaching is sound overall, with teaching in about a third of lessons being good. No teaching was judged to be unsatisfactory, which is an improvement since the last inspection. The improvement in the quality of teaching is having a significant impact on the standards that are being achieved and the progress that pupils make.
21. Where teaching is best, teachers have very good subject knowledge and use a range of lively teaching strategies, which make learning interesting for pupils and successfully develop their understanding. For example, in a literacy lesson the teacher read carefully selected poems with wonderful expression to demonstrate how poets play with words to bring humour into their work; and in a numeracy lesson, the teacher introduced the pupils to some awe inspiring facts about the amount that tropical plants could grow in an hour, to deepen pupils' understanding of the passing of time. Clear explanations are used effectively to enhance pupils' understanding, knowledge and skills. For example, pupils were enabled to increase their understanding of how to construct more complex sentences by applying the rule 'capital letter, full stops, spaces, sense', to check their work and to suggest their own ideas for further improvements. Features of the best numeracy lessons were the teachers' own mental dexterity in mathematics together with an ability to ask skilful questions. These skills challenged pupils' thinking and helped them to develop their ideas and overcome misconceptions.
22. High expectations of what pupils are capable of achieving are evident in good and very good teaching. In these lessons, teachers rarely accept the first answer that pupils give but encourage them to develop their ideas further. In the best lessons there is uncompromising use of a subject specific technical vocabulary, and pupils are expected to think for themselves. For example, in a literacy lesson pupils were effectively engaged in the process of drafting a story, with the teacher occasionally making deliberate errors which the pupils enjoyed spotting. As part of the same lesson, pupils were given power over their own learning when they were asked to set their own questions for other pupils and define their own rules. More able pupils were skilfully led to understand the more subtle features of figurative language, and, as a result worked at the edge of their capabilities. Pupils rise to the challenges when they are set, work hard to overcome difficulties and are proud of their resulting achievements. High quality work, on display in all classrooms and central areas, makes an additional contribution to the clear messages that the school gives about the standards of work that are expected and that can be achieved.
23. Planning for all lessons includes clear learning objectives, and these are shared with the pupils. In the best lessons, particularly in mathematics, learning objectives are very precise and informed by thorough marking and ongoing assessment. This gives teachers a clear understanding of where pupils are in their learning and where they need to go next. In one lesson, for example, the teacher had identified that many of the pupils did not fully understand the terminology 'width and length', and so she adjusted her questioning to put this right prior to continuing with work on estimating, and then measuring, using non-standard measures.
24. In good and very good lessons teachers use a range of methods to ensure that work is well matched to the differing needs of pupils and this ensures that all pupils,

including those who learn in different ways, have access to the curriculum. For example, some lessons observed in both English and mathematics included whole-class teaching, collaborative group work and paired discussions. There were also opportunities for pupils to talk their ideas through with a classroom assistant, to demonstrate answers in practical ways, and to represent their ideas in picture form. In physical education and music there were also some good opportunities for pupils to develop their ideas by working with others, and to then demonstrate or perform their compositions. There were few opportunities to learn through role play and drama, however.

25. Classroom organisation is very good, pupils are well managed and there are high standards of discipline. This ensures prompt starts to lessons and efficient use of the time available for learning. Routines and procedures are well established; rules and boundaries to guide pupils' behaviour are consistently applied. Good behaviour is praised and rewarded and so pupils have a clear understanding of exactly what is expected of them. There is good attention to health and safety in physical education. In these, and other lessons, appropriate resources are well prepared and lessons are well paced. Classroom assistants are well deployed and they give very good support to pupils to help them make progress. There are clear procedures for ensuring that pupils' response to the work that they do with pupils is reported back to the teachers.
26. There are few weaknesses in teaching and where they occur the school is, in the main, taking appropriate action to overcome them. For example, many teachers lack confidence in ICT, and their subject knowledge is insecure because the computers and software now being used are relatively new to the school. The coordinator, who has good subject knowledge, has a significant influence on planning to ensure that pupils' learning is not affected. She has arranged a rigorous programme of training to increase teachers' skills, knowledge and understanding. The school has recently adopted the Qualifications and Curriculum Authority (QCA) national schemes of work for some subjects. Whilst this ensures a clear progression, in subjects such as art, teachers do not always fully understand the purpose of some of the activities suggested, and then opportunities to develop learning are missed. There are also insufficient opportunities for pupils to develop the skills of independent learning, for example reading independently to find things out, and mathematical investigations in which pupils have to apply their skills in new and different ways and to find patterns and relationships in the mathematical world about them. This is often because of pressures on time. Particular problems occur in mathematics when lessons follow on from other subjects prior to afternoon play. Pupils then sit in whole-class situations for overlong periods of time and learning slows down because they find it difficult to concentrate. In the reception class, weaknesses occur when the children whose speaking skills are poor are the least involved, and the teacher intervenes too little to help them to say things more precisely and to develop their ideas in greater detail and at greater length.
27. Homework, usually involving reading or playing mathematical games, links appropriately to ongoing work, is set on a regular basis, and is effectively planned and followed up. Pupils receive varying levels of encouragement with the work that they do at home. Where support from parents is good, homework makes a significant impact on the progress that pupils make. A significant minority of pupils receive little encouragement with their work at home, however.

28. Pupils with special educational needs are taught well. Teachers and support assistants work together, often with advice from the school's special educational needs co-ordinator, to plan suitably matched work which directly addresses pupils' individual needs and stages of development. Where necessary or appropriate, the advice and support of outside specialists are sought, and various therapists also visit the school to work with those children who need specific help, for example with aspects of their speech or mobility. In many lessons, particularly in the core subjects of English, mathematics and science, pupils with special educational needs benefit from the very good support offered by classroom assistants. These valuable members of staff are well briefed about what the pupils might be expected to achieve, well trained in the various subject disciplines and content, and are therefore able to interact very constructively with groups of pupils and with individuals, helping them to make good progress. They also play a valuable role in assessing pupils' responses and progress in relation to tasks, and class teachers are able to benefit from the information gathered when they plan new activities for these pupils. Class teachers take care to include pupils with special educational needs very positively in most activities, although there are some occasions when some pupils need more encouragement to take part in class discussions

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

29. The curriculum for children in the reception classes is sound. It is carefully planned to cover the six areas of learning and provides children with appropriate opportunities to learn through practical activities. The curriculum for pupils aged five to seven meets statutory requirement. It has sufficient breadth and is reasonably balanced. Sufficient time is allocated for literacy and numeracy, and good use is usually made of this time. In other subjects, the curriculum enables pupils to make sound, and sometimes better, progress in their learning. However, pupils require more opportunities to develop their decision-making skills in some lessons, including their investigational skills in mathematics and independent use of information books. In addition, opportunities are missed to promote pupils' speaking skills in some lessons across the curriculum.
30. The school makes good provision for pupils' personal and social education. The policy for sex education is implemented well, and pupils are made aware of the dangers of drug misuse. The curriculum is enriched by a good range of educational visits and by many visitors to the school. However, there are no extra-curricular activities, and some parents would like these to be provided.
31. The school makes good use of the community as a learning resource. Pupils visit the local area when studying history and geography and a wide range of visitors are invited into school to share their knowledge and expertise with pupils. The Baptist minister takes assemblies each month and the school also benefits from visits from the local ecumenical assembly team. The police and fire service visit occasionally to raise pupils' awareness of personal safety.
32. Pupils make their own contribution to the local community by participating in the festivals and competitions organised in Chipping Sodbury. They also undertake a variety of activities to raise funds for a number of national and international charities. The school has arranged displays of its work at the local supermarket in conjunction with the project on healthy eating.

33. Pupils benefit from being able to join with pupils from other local schools in musical, sporting and other enrichment activities. The school has established sound links with the junior school on the adjoining site. There is a well-planned induction programme to help pupils with the transition to the school and close liaison by teachers to ensure continuity of provision for those pupils with special educational needs. The regular opportunities for pupils in reception class to work with a Year 5 pupil is mutually beneficial for pupils' personal development. The school is beginning to develop links with the playgroup held in the adjacent village hall but accepts that there is scope to increase the contacts made to ensure a common approach in providing the curriculum for the youngest children.
34. Provision for pupils who have special educational needs is very good to ensure that they have full access to the curriculum. Individual education plans are both precise and rigorous, with suitably challenging, but achievable targets.
35. Overall, there are sound arrangements to ensure equality of access and opportunity to the whole curriculum. Occasionally, pupils who have special educational needs work outside class, receiving very good one-to-one support, or support in very small groups, from the school's full-time special educational needs support assistant. This arrangement works well and careful time-tabling arrangements ensure that the pupils' entitlement to the full curriculum is not compromised. Pupils who are more able have satisfactory access to the curriculum. Teachers usually use questioning well to ensure an appropriate level of challenge; and tasks are set to ensure that they develop an appropriate level of knowledge and understanding in the basic skills of literacy and numeracy. Gifted and talented pupils have occasional opportunities to participate in activity sessions with pupils from other local schools. Enrichment classes have also been arranged for higher attainers in mathematics. More able pupils would benefit, however, from more opportunities: to initiate and follow their own lines of enquiry in science; to undertake more investigations and problem-solving activities in mathematics; and to pursue independent research involving reading for information, for example in history. Teachers are particularly careful to give equal attention to boys and girls in those classes where one sex significantly predominates. Procedures to support those pupils whose parents may not hear them read regularly at home needs to be agreed.
36. The school makes very good provision for pupils' spiritual and moral development, and good provision for their social and cultural development.
37. Acts of collective worship comply fully with statutory requirements and very successfully promote pupils' spiritual and moral development. Assembly themes have spiritual, moral, social and cultural dimensions. The theme titles, planned to cover a three-year period, testify to the school's intentions to promote these important aspects of pupils' personal development. They include, for example, 'rites of passage'; 'coping with feelings'; 'a personal moral code: dealing with prejudice, cruelty, alienation and racism'; and, in a more direct way, 'the celebration of major Christian festivals and those of other world faiths'. During the inspection week, the major focus in assemblies was the theme of friendship. Stories told strongly promote Christian values as represented in the teachings of Jesus, but modern examples of people's actions which illustrate the theme are also given, so that the pupils can draw on their own experiences of life in trying to understand the real meanings behind the stories. By the end of the week, they have a very good

understanding of why friendship 'is the best present we can give anyone'. The spiritual atmosphere generated in assemblies is almost tangible. From the moment the candle is lit to mark the beginning of an assembly, to the point when pupils leave the hall singing a simple prayer, staff and pupils alike are united in their attention to the proceedings, and they also unite, in a silence which is never oppressive, to reflect on what they have heard and to consider their own response. Further opportunities for reflection and prayer are also planned throughout the day, for example when children join hands to say grace after lunch, and, occasionally, in religious education lessons. A teacher has recently been responsible for identifying those aspects of the National Curriculum subjects which lend themselves particularly well to the promotion of spirituality. Her work is already having a marked impact in lessons, for example when teachers explore ideas with their pupils in ways which focus on their feelings, their response to the feelings of others, and their respect and awe for the wonders of the natural world.

38. The school has a very strong moral ethos. In part this emerges from some of the themes dealt with in assemblies and reinforced in some lessons, and in part from the attention focused on behaviour. The school's behaviour policy promotes appropriate, orderly behaviour, respect for others and respect for the environment. Pupils are taught right from wrong, are encouraged to be honest, fair and polite, and a system of praise and rewards reminds them that their actions and choices have consequences for which they are responsible. A 'Happy School Plan' sets out simple rules in 'child-friendly' language and is well known by all pupils. A recent booklet which emphasises 'working together' and 'playing together' is designed specifically for parents and aims to familiarise them with the main principles in the behaviour policy. In a wider perspective, the school is very effective in fostering pupils' understanding of mankind's moral responsibility for the stewardship of the Earth. Pupils are taught to show tenderness and protection towards animals, for example by caring for newly hatched ducklings in the reception class, and to nurture plant life, for example when planting seedlings. A conservation project and a recycling project actively involve pupils in caring for the environment, while fund-raising activities, for example to train guide-dogs for the blind, remind them that we should also care for others less fortunate than ourselves.
39. Good provision is made for pupils' social development. The school actively promotes sensitive and thoughtful relationships with others, and all staff provide good role models in their relationships with pupils and with one another. The strong sense of 'family' community created within the school reflects the very good teamwork of a unified staff working to achieve common purposes. This solidarity has a direct impact on pupils, who, in their turn, support one another and enjoy working together. Teachers emphasise the importance of individual and collective responsibility, and co-operation and good behaviour are promoted in positive ways, whether in assemblies or in lessons. Pupils are given frequent opportunities to work together in pairs and small groups, for example when using computers and when working on similar tasks during literacy and numeracy lessons. The school also organises many educational visits and school-based events where pupils learn to co-operate and socialise in different settings and for very different purposes. For example, every child in the school takes part in the annual Christmas production. The school supports an appropriate range of charities and makes pupils aware of their social responsibility for others. For example, children fill shoe boxes with appropriate Christmas gifts for children in Rumania. However, one significant aspect of pupils' social development is underdeveloped : pupils are not given

enough opportunities to use their initiative, and there is no established procedure or forum for taking their views into account.

40. Pupils' cultural development is fostered well. Although, at the time of the inspection, no extra-curricular activities are provided, the school works hard to ensure that pupils benefit from a very wide range of activities which enrich the curriculum.
41. In geography, history and religious education lessons and in assemblies, pupils learn about their own cultural heritage and about the beliefs and traditions of many other cultures, both past and present. They are taught to appreciate the art and music of significant artists and composers, and they benefit from a wide variety of workshops run by visiting theatre groups, authors and poets. Many other visitors come into school to talk to the pupils about their work. For example, recent visitors include a florist who demonstrated the art of flower arrangement, a paramedic who talked to pupils in reception, a Hindu parent who, with her daughter, showed pupils how Hindus celebrate Diwali, and a Japanese visitor who talked to pupils in assembly. A number of grandparents visited school to talk to pupils about their own childhood in connection with a history topic, and a mother brought in her new baby to show reception children 'how to bath a baby'. Events such as the school pet show, annual book week events and a 'bad-hair day' further enrich pupils' experiences and contribute to their social, moral and cultural development. Educational visits to places of cultural, geographical and historical interest are used to good effect to deepen pupils' knowledge and understanding. For example, pupils in Years 1 and 2 visit St Fagan's in Wales to look at traditional cottages from different periods of history, children in reception visit a farm, and pupils in Year 2 visit Weston-Super-Mare to study a seaside locality which contrasts with that of Chipping Sodbury. Resources for geography and religious education, in particular, reflect the multi-cultural dimension of society satisfactorily, and pupils have good opportunities to learn about major world faiths and cultural traditions.

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

42. Raysfield is a caring community which always acts in the best interests of its pupils. All adults in the school know the pupils well because they work as a team and are well informed about pupils' individual needs. The effectiveness of this communication is a strength of the school and results in a consistent and sensitive approach to all situations.
43. The school's ethos of care, encouragement and high expectations of behaviour are consistently promoted by all the adults in the school and, as a consequence, relationships are very good. Assemblies are particularly effective in engendering a sense of pride in the school and in others' achievements and this fosters pupils' high self-esteem and a very positive attitude to learning.
44. The school is very successful in promoting high standards of behaviour. All pupils are familiar with the 'Happy School Plan' and follow its rules equally well in lessons and at play. Records are maintained of the very rare incidents of poor behaviour or bullying. Pupils are confident that their concerns will be listened to sympathetically and this leads to such incidents being dealt with quickly and effectively, often by facilitating an amicable resolution between those who have fallen out.



45. The school has satisfactory procedures to encourage regular attendance. Registers are monitored and parents are contacted where there is cause for concern. Parents are reminded not to keep children away from school unnecessarily and are appropriately required to seek prior permission before taking their children on holiday in term time. However, as the levels of attendance are below national levels, there is scope for introducing more strategies to ensure that all parents realise the importance of regular attendance as a foundation for learning.
46. Children have several opportunities to visit the school before starting in the reception class and this helps them to settle quickly into school routines. The ability of younger children to cope with school is discussed with parents before expecting them to increase their attendance to full time. Child protection issues are well handled in the school and all staff have helpful guidelines on awareness and the correct procedures to follow.
47. The school covers many aspects of personal and social education in assemblies with visitors such as the police, school nurse and the pharmacist being invited to talk about road safety or drugs education. When necessary, pupils have the opportunity to talk about their feelings and listen to others' points of view; this helps pupils to develop a sensitivity to others' needs and creates a harmonious community.
48. The school has well-established procedures for medicines, accidents and emergencies and maintains appropriate supporting documentation. The need to move around the school in an orderly way, because of the narrow passages and limited space is firmly embedded in practice. The health and safety policy is implemented through regular site inspections and pupils are reminded of the importance of safe practice in lessons such as physical education. The school buildings are clean, tidy and well maintained and the limited grounds have been well developed to provide a stimulating environment for the pupils.
49. When the school was last inspected, assessment procedures were at least satisfactory. However, teachers were sometimes unable to use these effectively because they had insufficient time in lessons which included too many different activities. The school has rectified this weakness and most lessons for five to seven year olds are organised with a single subject focus. As a consequence, teachers usually have a very clear awareness of pupils' progress and standards in most lessons and are able to tailor their teaching to meet pupils' needs.
50. Sound use is made of assessments of children's standards on entry to reception in order to inform early planning, to identify those with special educational needs and to form a baseline for future assessments. Targets are set for pupils' standards in English, mathematics and science at the age of seven, based on their entry assessments, and are modified, when necessary, as a result of sound arrangements for tracking pupils' progress as they move through the school. Sensible use is made of commercially produced tests to inform teachers' assessments of pupils' progress in reading, as recommended in the last inspection. All teachers know their pupils well and ensure that the learning intentions of their lessons are clear. As a consequence, they are well placed to judge pupils' achievements. Teachers keep useful records of the pertinent achievements and learning needs of their pupils and these help to inform their future planning. In the best lessons, teachers make very effective use of questions to probe pupils' understanding.

51. Every half term, teachers collect examples of pupils' work in English, mathematics and science to discuss, together, the standards which have been achieved. This helps teachers to develop their awareness of pupils' standards in these subjects, and to ensure that all have common interpretations of National Curriculum levels.
52. The school's consistent promotion of its behaviour policy ensures that pupils quickly learn to value every member of the school community and to respect others' feelings. Consequently there is no racism and incidents of poor behaviour or bullying are very rare. Pupils with medical, emotional or learning difficulties are sensitively supported so that they can play their full part in school life and they are valued members of the community. The school tracks the attainment of pupils so that it can assess how groups, such as the summer born or boys, are making progress in relation to their cohort.

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

53. Parents rightly hold Raysfield School in high regard. They find the staff easy to talk to, open and caring, and are happy with the standards of education their children receive. Parents are encouraged to share any pastoral concerns with teachers before or after school and many are happy to do so. This forms the basis for a satisfactory partnership, but the school accepts that there is scope to improve it further.
54. Parents new to the school receive adequate information about the school, its routines and a limited amount of guidance on how they can support their children's learning at home. The booklet they receive about the school's behaviour policy gives clear indications of the school's expectations; there are now plans to update the starter pack in a similar format. Parents are pleased with the school's positive response to their request for more information about the curriculum and find being provided with a copy of the timetable helpful. The school provides regular newsletters to keep parents informed about school activities.
55. Last year governors initiated a questionnaire seeking parents' views of the school. This highlighted that, although parents could talk to staff at any time, a significant minority of parents would like more formal opportunities to discuss their children's progress with teachers; this view still prevails. Targets for improvement are shared with parents at the spring term consultation but there is no other formal occasion during the year when these targets are reviewed with them. Annual written reports generally provide adequate indications of children's attainment in English and mathematics but are less informative in their assessment of performance in other subjects.
56. The home/school agreement, which appropriately sets out the expectations for parents as well as the school, has been well received and the vast majority of parents are fulfilling their obligations by taking an interest in their children's education, progress and homework. However a small minority of parents find it hard to spare sufficient time to hear their children read regularly at home and others are not ensuring that attendance at school is given enough priority. This has discouraged the school from maintaining home/school diaries and, consequently, reduces the expectation of all parents to be actively involved in their children's learning.

57. Parents are encouraged to help in school and some are able to assist in classes or accompany visits. They have also been active in helping with the development of the grounds at weekends. Parents are invited to attend Harvest and Christmas productions and many take the opportunity to do so. However, there are limited opportunities for parents to share in the celebration of work or festivals in assemblies. The fund-raising group works hard to support school initiatives to improve resources or facilities.
58. The school has established positive links with the parents of children with special educational needs. Parents are informed of their child's needs when these are first identified, and are subsequently involved when their child's progress is reviewed and when new targets are set. Parents value the efforts made by all staff in the school on their children's behalf, and all attend the review meetings to which they are invited. Where appropriate, all those staff involved in teaching or supporting a particular child also attend the review meetings, thereby ensuring that communication between parents and school is direct and effective.
59. The school encourages the few parents from ethnic minorities to share their culture and celebrations, such as Diwali, with the pupils. The school makes provision to look after pupils and all siblings during parent consultation evenings.

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

60. The headteacher's strong and committed leadership of the school has been maintained since the last inspection. She is rightly proud of the school and gives a clear sense of purpose and direction to its work. This is evident in the steady improvements in the standards that the school achieves. She is highly committed and has successfully created an atmosphere of mutual trust in which all are valued and respected. The high expectations that she sets are evident in the well organised environment that has been created for learning and the care that staff and pupils show in the school. The deputy headteacher is highly conscientious and gives sound support to the headteacher and other members of staff, who work as a strong and committed team for the benefit of the pupils.
61. The governing body, ably led by the chair of governors, is very involved in school life and gives good support to the school. There is an appropriate range of committees who meet regularly to keep abreast of the school's work and guide its development. Monitoring arrangements are satisfactory overall. Test results are analysed to identify areas for improvement. Governors are linked both to classes and subjects of the curriculum. They visit the school regularly and meet with the headteacher and curriculum co-ordinators to discuss and agree policies and changes in the curriculum. Some have observed lessons informally and others help in the classroom, often working alongside pupils on practical aspects of their learning. This results in governors having a good insight into the work of the school with which to inform their ongoing work. There is, however, scope to develop monitoring and evaluating through lesson observations more formally. The willingness of governors to attend training courses and meetings is beneficial to the school since because it results in their having up-to-date knowledge and understanding about current requirements and their statutory responsibilities. For example, the governors for literacy and numeracy have attended appropriate training, take a keen interest in the school's response to national initiatives and give good support to its work. The governor with responsibility for religious education has

worked closely with the headteacher in the development of the subject, and been particularly helpful in developing the multi-faith dimension.

62. The headteacher has a clear view of the school's strengths and weaknesses. She is well aware of what goes on in every classroom and undertakes regular, formal monitoring of teaching. Procedures allow opportunities for strengths and weaknesses to be shared with individual teachers and there are systems to ensure follow-up support and training. Responsibility for subjects and aspects of the school has been appropriately delegated and co-ordinators are beginning to make an effective contribution to school improvement. They work hard to promote and develop their subjects. Schemes of work and policies are being reviewed and re-written and there has been some good work on developing assessment systems, particularly in English, mathematics and science. Co-ordinators monitor standards by looking at and moderating pupils' work, and make a useful input into planning. Where co-ordinators have analysed test results, for example in mathematics, the information has been well used to inform highly focused actions for improvement. A start has been made on developing the co-ordinators' role in lesson observation but observations and feedback are not formalised or written down and so have a limited impact on school improvement.
63. The school's involvement with the Investors in People award programme has resulted in the school having a clear set of long-term strategic goals to which everyone aspires and which inform its ongoing work. The school development plan is a useful tool for improvement and identifies clear priorities, actions and success criteria. The targets that have been set are appropriately informed by the school's monitoring and evaluation procedures and resources and training implications have been appropriately identified and costed. Sound procedures for formulating the plan involve the headteacher and deputy headteacher working in close partnership with the governing body and staff.
64. The quality of financial planning is good and supports agreed educational priorities well. The chair of finance works closely with the headteacher and gives the school a very clear steer in setting, managing and monitoring the school's budget. He is an accountant by profession and uses this expertise to present clear and easily understood reports to the governing body. The school administration officer provides strong and effective support, which ensures the smooth day-to-day financial administration. Specific grants and additional funding are used appropriately and the school is addressing the best value principles in the management of the school's resources.
65. The special educational needs co-ordinator, though relatively new to her post, provides effective leadership of special educational needs provision. She has been particularly successful in uniting all staff involved in special educational needs work into a strong team of mutually supportive individuals, all of whom work hard and very professionally to serve the best interests of the pupils. She has been quick to get to grips with the administrative aspects of her role, and she has read widely and attended relevant training courses and conferences in order to familiarise herself with specialist knowledge and information about pupils' differing special educational needs and learning difficulties. Support staff are well trained for their roles and play an important and much-valued role in helping pupils to make good progress. The headteacher fulfils a valuable role as 'mentor and adviser' in regard to special educational needs provision and, with governors, ensures that the funds available are used wisely to support those pupils for whom they are intended. The special

educational needs governor works in the school as a support assistant. Although this is a rather unusual arrangement, she performs her dual roles effectively and is valued just as much as a sensitive and perceptive 'critical friend' who monitors special educational needs provision as she is in her classroom role. Appropriate policies and procedures are in place, and professional contacts with external agencies are constructive and helpful.

66. Staffing is good overall with appropriately qualified teachers. Four new teachers have been appointed since the last inspection and there is a good balance of age and experience. Appropriate performance management procedures are in place and provision for the induction of new staff and newly qualified teachers is good.
67. The school is a very attractive, well organised environment for learning. There is a good size hall, which is used well for assemblies and physical education. The library is housed in the entrance area. It is well stocked, but was underused by pupils during the inspection. Apart from one reception class, which is a recent addition to the school, all classes are housed in open plan areas that are barely adequate. There are particular problems for the teaching of literacy and numeracy when many whole-class teaching sessions take place in areas designed for small group work. Even the most acceptable amount of noise created by talk and discussion in adjacent classrooms makes it difficult for some pupils to hear what their teacher or other pupils are saying. The school makes good use of every available space on its very restricted site, which has been carefully developed to support learning. This includes a well-planned wild area and pond, an area of large climbing apparatus and a hard play area. The school also uses the approach space at the front of the school as a playground. Both hard play areas are long and narrow and this limits all but the most controlled of activities. The school does not have a field of its own and, coupled with the limited hard play areas, this has a detrimental effect on the quality of pupils' own play and on the physical education curriculum. Learning resources are good overall and, in the main, they are well used. There are sufficient computers and the school has recently set up a small computer suite. The quality of items such as furniture and furnishings is good. The caretaker and cleaning staff keep the school in immaculate order.
68. The school has a sound policy for equal opportunities which is implemented appropriately in school practice. Additional handrails have been installed on the stairs to assist those with limited mobility. All areas of the school are accessible by wheelchair from the outside; the small classroom areas, narrow passages and internal steps would limit the ease of accommodating non-mobile pupils.
69. The school has a sound range of resources and books to reflect the diverse nature of society.

## WHAT SHOULD THE SCHOOL DO TO IMPROVE FURTHER?

70. To improve the quality of learning and the standards that the school achieves, the headteacher and governors should include the following issues in the school's post-inspection plan:
- (1) Improve the role of subject co-ordinators in monitoring and evaluating teaching and learning by:
    - a) improving their classroom observations skills;
    - b) establishing procedures to guide their work;
    - c) developing a clear programme for lesson observation and other forms of monitoring and evaluation.  
(see paragraphs 62, 94, 101, 107, 112, 116, 121, 124, 128 and 136)
  
  - (2) Improve pupils' skills of independent learning by:
    - a) ensuring that there are well planned opportunities for pupils to apply their mathematical skills in mathematical investigations;
    - b) ensuring that they make more independent use of the library and ICT to find information;
    - c) providing more opportunities for pupils to follow their own scientific enquiries.  
(see paragraphs 93, 97, 105, 121, 124 and 126)
  
  - (3) Improve rates of attendance at the school.  
(see paragraph 18)

In addition the school should also consider the following less important weaknesses for inclusion in the school's action plan:

- (1) Strengthen the partnership with parents by: reviewing the frequency of parents' evenings; inviting parents to become involved in extra-curricular activities and developing pre-school links.  
(see paragraphs 55, 56 and 57)
  
- (2) Improve pupils' speaking skills by developing a clear scheme of work to inform planning and making more use of the text in good quality literature to enrich pupils' spoken vocabulary.  
(see paragraphs 75 and 88)

## PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS

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

Number of lessons observed	48
Number of discussions with staff, governors, other adults and pupils	19

### Summary of teaching observed during the inspection

Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
0	19	43	38	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	Nursery	YR – Y2
Number of pupils on the school's roll (FTE for part-time pupils)	n/a	181
Number of full-time pupils known to be eligible for free school meals	n/a	6

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Special educational needs	Nursery	YR – Y2
Number of pupils with statements of special educational needs	n/a	6
Number of pupils on the school's special educational needs register	n/a	77

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	7
Pupils who left the school other than at the usual time of leaving	4

### Attendance

#### Authorised absence

	%
School data	6.2
National comparative data	5.2

#### 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
	2000	34	29	63

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		Reading	Writing	Mathematics
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	33	29	34
	Girls	29	28	26
	Total	62	57	60
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	98 (97)	90 (96)	95 (90)
	National	83 (82)	84 (83)	90 (87)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	30	31	33
	Girls	28	26	27
	Total	58	57	60
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	92 (97)	90 (90)	95 (100)
	National	84 (82)	88 (86)	88 (87)

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



### **Ethnic background of pupils**

	No of pupils
Black – Caribbean heritage	1
Black – African heritage	0
Black – other	0
Indian	1
Pakistani	0
Bangladeshi	0
Chinese	0
White	122
Any other minority ethnic group	0

*This table refers to pupils of compulsory school age only.*

### **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.*

### **Teachers and classes**

#### **Qualified teachers and classes: YR – Y2**

Total number of qualified teachers (FTE)	8
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	23
Average class size	30

#### **Education support staff: YR – Y2**

Total number of education support staff	9
Total aggregate hours worked per week	192

#### **Qualified teachers and support staff: nursery**

Total number of qualified teachers (FTE)	n/a
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	n/a

Total number of education support staff	n/a
Total aggregate hours worked per week	n/a

Number of pupils per FTE adult	n/a
--------------------------------	-----

*FTE means full-time equivalent.*

### **Financial information**

Financial year	2000/2001
----------------	-----------

	£
Total income	441,521
Total expenditure	441,416
Expenditure per pupil	2,439
Balance brought forward from previous year	32,890
Balance carried forward to next year	32,995

## Results of the survey of parents and carers

### Questionnaire return rate

Number of questionnaires sent out	187
Number of questionnaires returned	57

### Percentage of responses in each category

	Strongly agree	Tend to agree	Tend to disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know
My child likes school.	61	35	2	2	0
My child is making good progress in school.	54	42	0	2	2
Behaviour in the school is good.	54	40	4	0	2
My child gets the right amount of work to do at home.	32	61	5	2	0
The teaching is good.	56	40	2	0	2
I am kept well informed about how my child is getting on.	33	47	14	4	2
I would feel comfortable about approaching the school with questions or a problem.	58	39	2	0	2
The school expects my child to work hard and achieve his or her best.	63	32	2	0	4
The school works closely with parents.	35	54	5	4	2
The school is well led and managed.	65	30	0	4	1
The school is helping my child become mature and responsible.	53	42	2	2	2
The school provides an interesting range of activities outside lessons.	9	40	21	9	21

Inspection findings fully support parents' positive views of the school. Unlike most infant schools, there are no extra-curricular activities and this somewhat limits pupils' opportunities to develop interests and skills. Evidence shows that formal opportunities to discuss children's progress with teachers are less frequent than in many infant schools and that information about standards of attainment could be improved. The school recognises the need to improve its partnership with parents.

## **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**

71. Children are admitted to the reception class in the September of the school year in which they become five. Induction arrangements include opportunities for parents and children to visit the school in the term prior to starting. Most children have attended some form of pre-school provision, and many attend the nearby pre-school playgroup. Although the headteacher visits the group to observe the children and talk with the staff, there is scope to develop these links further, particularly as the reception classes and the pre-school now work from the same curriculum for young children.
72. On entry to the reception class attainment is generally below the average expected for their age. Many have poorly developed language skills and find it difficult to articulate their feelings, needs and ideas because of a limited vocabulary. Children make good progress in relation to their starting points to reach standards that are a little below those expected for their age by the end of the reception year; and are appropriately prepared for the curriculum for five to seven year olds. This is because of the sound, and often good teaching they receive. The school provides a well planned curriculum which is soundly based on the national guidance for young children. There are good arrangements to ensure an appropriate balance between teacher directed and child initiated tasks.

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

73. Pupils make good progress in their personal development in the reception classes. The supportive and caring ethos helps children to settle quickly into well-established procedures and routines which promote independence and result in them being eager to learn from an early stage. They make good relationships with other children in the class and have positive relationships with staff. When working together they share materials, tools and equipment, negotiate roles and responsibilities and help each other. Their awareness of the needs of others is good and they are quick to recognise when their classmates are in need of help or when they are unhappy. They are able to make informed decisions and choices about the activities that they will take part in during the course of the day and to report back on what they have done. Behaviour and self-control are very good. They understand something of the differences between right and wrong, and a developing understanding of the consequences of their actions on others. Their self-care skills are good. Children dress themselves independently and tidy and put away equipment with great efficiency.

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

74. Assessments of children's early literacy skills, made during their first term in the reception classes, show that their performance is below average in comparison with other schools in the South Gloucestershire area. Inspection findings confirm these assessments. Overall, children's speech, vocabulary and other language skills are below average when they first join the reception classes and, although they make generally sound, and often good progress, attainment remains a little below average at the time when they move on into the Year 1 classes.

75. Children in the reception class learn to listen attentively, to take their turn when answering questions, and to support one another. Most children follow discussions well and show good concentration. Higher attaining and more confident children are keen to answer questions and also ask questions of their own, or pass comments, for example when discussing the story of 'Daisy the Duck' with their teachers. They are articulate, and they express their ideas clearly and well. However, a significant number of children in both classes are reticent and not readily drawn into discussions. When they do, they often experience problems as they search for suitably precise words to communicate their thoughts, and they find it difficult to express their ideas clearly and logically. Although teachers plan opportunities for pupils to speak and to develop confidence, there are some lessons when those children most in need of practice are the least involved, and when the teacher intervenes too little to help them to say things more precisely and to develop their ideas in greater detail and at greater length.
76. All children enjoy sharing stories, poems and rhymes with their teachers. They happily sing the 'alphabet song' they have been taught, and they follow the events in stories closely as the plot unfolds when they listen to stories being read aloud. They have learned special words such as 'author' and 'illustrator', and they are accustomed to discussing the feelings of characters in the stories they hear. The more able children already read simple texts aloud accurately and independently, while most other children recognise some key words on sight and are developing a very sound awareness of phonics which enables them to read most words aloud accurately in very simple texts, even though they may not yet read fluently. Few children, apart from the most able, understand meanings beyond the literal in the stories they read or hear, and some lower attaining children, including those with special educational needs, have not yet learned to make links between the illustrations and the text, or to use clues from the context in stories in order to establish or confirm meaning.
77. When account is taken of their starting points, all the children are making sound or better progress in letter formation and handwriting. Most children can form their letters accurately and write their own name neatly; higher attaining children are able to compose, and write down, short simple statements and sequences of ideas, although not yet using punctuation consistently to show where one 'sentence' might end and another begin. All children can use their knowledge of letter sounds to build simple three letter words, while the more able children already make very plausible attempts at spelling the words they need to convey their own ideas. The 'emergent' writing of lower attaining children shows that they understand the need for spaces between words and that writing moves from left to right across the page. They are beginning to produce some recognisable words, and they can usually 'read' their own writing to tell someone else what it is they have wanted to say. Most importantly, all children, whatever their ability or stage of development, are developing very positive attitudes to writing, as, indeed, they are to all aspects of their language work.

### **Mathematical development**

78. When children enter the school at the age of four, their mathematical development of many pupils is below the average expected for their age. They make good progress so that by the end of the reception year the majority attain levels a little below those expected for their age. They confidently count to at least ten and count

in tens up to 50. Many can recognise numerals from one to nine. With support, they can use simple number games involving number recognition and counting on. Children solve practical problems, for example, when playing in the role-play area which has been set up as a supermarket they count out the correct number of coins when buying groceries for given amounts. Many children have a limited mathematical vocabulary when they start school, and although they still find it difficult to articulate their mathematical ideas by the age of five, they do begin to use words such as 'more' and 'less' to compare numbers of objects, and some relate 'addition' to combining two or more groups of objects. They begin to understand the idea of 'subtraction' as they sing songs about removing an object from a set, for example, 'Currant Buns in a Baker's Shop', and also when physically removing objects from a set with the help of the teacher or classroom assistant. By the end of the reception year children can select from number cards up to ten to show their answers to 'one less' than a given number. Many children can identify simple two-dimensional shapes such as a square, circle and triangle and recognise the language of position such as 'behind', 'in front' and 'inside', as a result of their work using construction toys and in the course of following directions in physical education. When making models out of cartons and boxes they begin to develop their understanding of three-dimensional shapes, how they fit together and the language by which to describe them. They create simple patterns, for example, putting monsters and teddy bears in size order and, as a result begin to develop an understanding of size and of the language used to compare size. They develop a basic understanding of time, distance and speed through opportunities to work and play with wheeled toys in the outdoor area.

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

79. Evidence from teachers' planning and from discussions with staff shows that children in the reception classes develop a satisfactory understanding of past and present in relation to their own lives and to the wider world. For example, they visit a 'Teddy Bear Museum' in Chipping Sodbury to see, and to compare, toy bears from different times. In a topic on 'Myself', they chart significant steps in their own development. They become aware that their interests, activities and accomplishments have changed since they were born, just as surely as they have changed in size and physical appearance. They also consider the changes in their own families since they were born, for example when they recall the arrival of younger brothers and sisters, the wedding of an aunt or uncle, the death of a much-loved grandparent. Children also develop a satisfactory understanding of the wider world in which they live. For example, they are taken on a local 'journey', on foot, to Kingsgate Park, where they talk about significant geographical features, both natural and man-made, deciding which features they like or dislike and giving their reasons. For example, they decide that they do not like the rubbish thrown in the pond, or the broken paving slabs around it, but they do like the fact that the park is accessible to old people and to the disabled, and the fact that the trees provide shade on hot days. Within the immediate school environment, they consider how the playground and the conservation areas might be improved, for example by the addition of a 'pirate ship' or a play-house. They also learn to use simple geographical terms to describe what they see and to define locations and movement.
80. Children make mainly good progress when examining a range of bedding plants, noticing their leaves, stems and roots. They take great care when planting these, and are beginning to understand that plants need water to survive. Children also

benefit from planting cress seeds and talking about their growth. They notice the frog spawn in the school pond when on a spring walk around the school grounds and, during the inspection, were able to look closely at ducklings which were hatched in the classroom. The children were encouraged to look at the ducklings very closely and were able to find cracks in the eggs which showed that more ducklings would be hatching. Overall, children are making good progress in developing their scientific knowledge and understanding, and are beginning to recognise the wonder of the world. However, their skills in describing what they observe or feel are a little below average, and sometimes teachers miss opportunities to encourage pupils to develop their speech. Children achieve well when making vehicles from card and paper, and make sound progress when using construction kits to make simple models.

### **Physical development**

81. Children in the reception classes benefit from suitable opportunities to develop their manipulative skills when using construction toys, and when painting, drawing and cutting. They make sound progress and develop an appropriate degree of dexterity for their age. Small groups of children have regular access to an outdoor play area, which is appropriately supervised by an adult. This gives them appropriate opportunities to develop the co-ordination of their arms and legs as they control wheeled toys such as tricycles and scooters around a marked route. They also have access to large climbing equipment in the outdoor area, and this helps them to develop confidence and control over their bodies as they climb and balance in various ways.
82. Appropriate use is made of the hall for physical education and involves the children in more formal activities in preparation for the curriculum in Year 1. Children listen carefully and respond to instructions to move around the hall in various ways and balance on different parts of their body. They show a good awareness of their own space in relation to others, and are able to control the speed of their movements. In dance, they respond well to music and sounds in a recorded lesson about a 'Blue Balloon', stretching as high as they can as they move around the hall as if being carried away by the balloon.

### **Creative development**

83. Children have learned a good range of songs by heart. They sing songs enthusiastically and can dance or clap hands to them. There were no opportunities to observe children using musical instruments during the inspection, but their singing skills are satisfactory for their ages. Children also achieve satisfactory standards when painting animals after their visit to a farm, and when painting the ducklings in their classroom. They enjoy 'small world' play with toys, and are able to role play when using the classroom shop. Their self-portraits, in pastels, demonstrate satisfactory skills, and they make sound progress when creating cottage pictures. Insufficient direct teaching through creative activities was observed during the inspection to make a secure judgement about the overall quality of teaching in this key area of children's learning. However, evidence suggests their music teaching is effective, and the lesson during in which children drew the ducklings was satisfactorily taught.

## **ENGLISH**

84. Although children in the reception classes make sound, and sometimes good progress, building securely on their pre-school experience of language, their attainment remains a little below average overall when they join Year 1 at the age of five.
85. In the national Standard Assessment Tests (SATs) in 2000, the percentage of pupils who reached the expected standard for seven year olds in reading was well above the national average, and well above average in comparison with the results of similar schools. In writing, the percentage of seven year olds who achieved the expected standard was above the national average, and broadly in line with the results of similar schools. In both reading and writing, the percentages of pupils whose performance exceeded the expected standard for their age were broadly average by national standards. These results represent good achievement by all pupils, including those with special educational needs, given their starting points at the beginning of Year 1. The school carefully tracks pupils' progress in reading and writing, and there is evidence to suggest that, overall, the test results for seven year olds in 2001 will exceed those that were predicted based on assessments made shortly after those pupils first started school.
86. There has been a marked improvement in the test results for reading since 1998, and, overall, also a rising trend in the results for writing. However, in line with trends nationally, pupils tend to do better in reading than in writing. The school is making a sustained effort to address this imbalance.
87. Inspection findings broadly mirror the pattern of attainment demonstrated in the national tests. Most pupils in Year 2 achieve the expected standard for their age in reading and writing and in speaking and listening, and a significant minority does even better. However, performance in reading remains higher than in writing, and many pupils' skills as listeners are better developed than their skills as speakers.
88. In Years 1 and 2, pupils of all abilities make consistently good progress in listening. They listen politely and with genuine interest to their teachers, to other adults who work with them, and to one another. They are able to follow and respond to instructions without having to be told things more than once, and, because they are keen to learn and to do their best, they concentrate well and absorb information. For example, in a teacher-led discussion and in group work in a Year 2 history lesson, pupils reveal their quite extensive knowledge of the Great Fire of London. In their groups, they listen carefully to one another before reaching a decision as to which statements about the event are true, and which false. They have mature negotiating skills for their age, and they make sure that all views are considered. The higher attaining pupils in Year 2 are confident and articulate, speak standard English correctly, and can adapt their speech to suit various audiences and purposes. However, whilst most pupils in Years 1 and 2 acquire the specialist vocabulary they need to discuss their work, pupils' general vocabulary is rather limited, and many pupils experience difficulties expressing their thoughts and ideas clearly. In reading, pupils' developing awareness of phonics is particularly helpful to them when attempting to decode unfamiliar words, and the more able pupils read very fluently, with expression and understanding. By the end of Year 2, almost all pupils can read texts appropriate for their age and can talk with understanding about the events and about the characters in stories. They display particularly good understanding of characters' feelings, and they can usually predict what is going to happen next. However, many pupils of all abilities are puzzled by the meanings of

uncommon words, by idioms and by figurative language, and some lower attaining pupils find it difficult to use inference to work out hidden meanings. Although teachers in both years introduce their pupils to non-fiction texts in literacy lessons and in other subjects, few pupils are experienced enough to use information books independently to find things out, and their library skills are not as well developed as they might be. In Years 1 and 2, pupils develop particular strengths in the 'secretarial' aspects of writing. They form their letters accurately and they learn to produce neat, legible writing which is consistent in size. By the end of Year 2, most pupils have already developed, or are developing, a controlled, cursive style of handwriting, and almost every pupil takes great care to present his or her work neatly.

89. Most pupils at this stage use full stops and capital letters accurately to demarcate sentences, while higher attaining pupils use speech marks, question marks, exclamation marks and commas, for the most part accurately. Most pupils spell well: they draw competently on their knowledge of phonics and on spelling patterns they have committed to memory. All pupils write for a suitable range of purposes in literacy and other lessons. Most pupils write interesting simple stories with a clearly defined structure, while the work of the more able pupils readily engages the reader and is made richer by the use of dialogue and descriptive detail. The written work of lower attaining pupils generally lacks the fluency and coherence of work by more able pupils, and is sometimes rather stilted. This is often because they do not perceive a piece of writing as a coherent whole, and do not combine ideas effectively within complex sentences. In a few cases, too, pupils find it difficult to apply, simultaneously, the many skills needed to produce well written pieces of work.
90. The results of the national tests show that standards have continued to rise in reading and writing over the last few years since the school's last OFSTED inspection. The National Literacy Strategy has been introduced successfully, and there has been increased support to help pupils of differing abilities, including those with special educational needs, and the more able pupils. The percentages of pupils achieving standards above those expected nationally for their age are increasing gradually, any variations, year-on-year, reflecting the particular attainment levels of particular year groups. There have been marked improvements in handwriting, while the introduction of a structured phonics programme has had a significant impact on both reading and spelling.
91. The quality of teaching is good overall. A significant number of lessons are taught very well indeed, and the teaching of literacy hours is never less than sound. All teachers and support staff have a good level of knowledge and understanding of the literacy strategy. They work very hard to help pupils to do their best, and they are committed both to raising standards and to providing pupils with experiences they will enjoy.
92. All staff have established very good relationships with their pupils. There is mutual respect between teacher and taught and, as a result, pupils enjoy their lessons, have very positive attitudes to reading and writing, whatever their ability, and are keen to do their best. Teachers always plan their lessons well and make sure that pupils are aware what they are expected to learn. They organise lessons effectively, and they manage pupils, tasks and resources to good effect. All staff provide good role models for pupils in their own use of language and as readers.



Support staff are well informed and well deployed, and they play a very constructive role, giving effective, focused attention to those pupils who need it.

93. No unsatisfactory lessons were seen during the inspection, and weaknesses associated with the teaching are generic rather than related to specific lessons or individuals. For example, teachers plan opportunities for pupils to talk, both in literacy lessons and in other subjects. They also respond sensitively to what their pupils have to say. However, they too rarely expect or encourage pupils to develop their speech at greater length, to rephrase what they have to say in a more logical and articulate way, or to use more specific vocabulary. In a very similar way, teachers pay very good attention to the secretarial aspects of writing and to basic sentence structure. However, even though occasional examples of very good practice are to be found, there is insufficient intervention, through shared writing, guided writing, or marking, to show pupils how to combine ideas in a logical sequence, how to achieve overall coherence in extended pieces of writing, and how to improve the organisation and structure of their work. The texts chosen for shared and guided reading lend themselves admirably to the main purposes of helping pupils to learn, and to apply, a range of reading strategies, and teachers also use them to good effect to develop pupils' understanding of plot, character, feelings and social and moral issues. However, there is scope to develop stronger links between reading and writing. For example, the use of literary models of very high quality could very profitably be used to demonstrate, explicitly as well as implicitly, the effective use of language by real writers and to influence what pupils themselves are then asked to write. Pupils regularly use computers for a variety of reading and spelling activities, but little use is made of word processing to encourage pupils to draft and edit their work, an activity which would be of particular benefit to the more able and older pupils. Such pupils would also benefit from opportunities to undertake independent research using the library and information books.
94. The literacy co-ordinator is dedicated, energetic and hard working. With the headteacher's support, she has been instrumental in ensuring that the National Literacy Strategy has been implemented successfully and that staff are united in their endeavours to raise standards. She is a good role model as a teacher, and she gives effective support to her colleagues. She has monitored literacy lessons throughout the school and has given staff helpful, positive feedback on their lessons, but this has not been formally written down with points for development. Resources for English are good and are well organised. The design of classrooms results in many pupils being taught in group rooms which are really too small for whole-class sessions. Poor acoustics result in sometimes making it difficult for pupils to hear what is being said. Useful assessment procedures, including the tracking of pupils' progress over time, are in place. There remains scope for a more rigorous and analytical approach to monitoring in order to identify and disseminate the very best practice that exists at all levels. Parents show interest in their children's work and clearly value the teachers' efforts on their children's behalf. However, they are not always as directly involved in supporting their children's efforts as they could be, for example through a structured home-school reading partnership.

## **MATHEMATICS**

95. In the national tests in 2000, the percentage of pupils reaching the expected standard (Level 2) was about average when compared with schools nationally and

similar schools. In the most recent national tests (2001), more pupils achieved at the upper end of the expected levels (Levels 2b and 2a), and at the higher level (Level 3), than in previous years. Results also show that many pupils have exceeded the standards predicted by assessments carried out when they first started school. This indicates that the school is steadily improving the standards it achieves in mathematics and that pupils make good progress.

96. On entry to Year 1 at the age of five, the mathematical knowledge and understanding of most pupils are a little below average. Inspection findings show that their achievement is good in relation to their prior attainment. By the time they leave the school, at age seven, the attainment of the majority of pupils is a little above the standard expected for their age. Although attainment on entry to the school has fallen since the last inspection standards at age seven have been improved. The good progress that they make is evident not only in their test results, but also in their work, and is a result of a sound understanding of mathematical terminology and a secure factual knowledge of number, shape and measure. For example, they know the meaning of such terms as 'find the difference', 'multiple', and know the language of shape and measure. This helps them to understand the meaning of questions that they are being asked, to communicate their mathematical ideas to others and, through talking about their work in appropriate terms, consolidate their understanding. Their sound knowledge of mathematical facts, such as addition and subtraction up to 100, odd and even numbers and place value, and their ability to count in a range of different ways, contributes to the speed and accuracy of their calculations. For example, written work was seen where children had accurately calculated the number of lollipops that could be bought with a given amount of money, and in lessons pupils quickly worked out the number of hours that there were in a given numbers of days. In the course of whole-class practice on counting in fives, some pupils demonstrated their ability to make connections between this and other areas of their work in mathematics by volunteering, without being asked, that the information would help them to tell the time. Pupils' sound knowledge of the properties of shapes is evident in their accurate drawings of two and three-dimensional shapes and in their ability to distinguish the differences, for example in the number of sides and angles. Pupils' skills in using their knowledge of mathematics in other areas of the curriculum is sound as a result of their ability to apply their mathematical skills in different situations. For example, they accurately read simple scales for length, mass and capacity and know something about how to compile information in the form of graphs. Pupils in Year 2 used this knowledge and understanding in the course of their science work when they measured the length of their hand-spans and the amount of water displaced by their hands. They collected the information, entered it into a computer database, and presented their findings in the form of block and bar graphs. They were then able to see the patterns and relationships in visual form and to discuss what the information told them.
97. The achievement of pupils who have special educational needs is good in relation to their prior attainment as a result of work which is matched well to their needs, and the good support that they receive from classroom assistants. More able pupils make satisfactory progress as a result of work, which, in the main, is set at an appropriate level. Enrichment lessons have been introduced for some of the most mathematically gifted of these pupils, and, during one of these sessions pupils worked at the edge of their capabilities as they calculated the height of a giant, having been left only with a copy of his footprint. There are, however, a limited number of these opportunities for mathematical investigations, and for some pupils

this limits the development of their powers of reasoning and their skills in mathematical thinking at higher levels. This is an area for further development.

98. The quality of teaching in mathematics is good and is a major factor in the good progress that pupils make and the standards that they achieve. The teachers' secure knowledge and understanding of the subject results in clear planning and well-structured lessons, which help pupils to build upon what they already know, acquire new knowledge and skills, and consolidate their understanding. For example, in a Year 1 lesson on measure the teacher began by asking the question, 'What can I find out when I measure something?' This was very effective in establishing pupils' level of understanding about measure and in informing the questions and explanations and work that followed. In another mathematics lesson, the teachers' own mental dexterity in mathematics enabled her to challenge pupils' thinking and to help pupils develop their own ideas through skilfully sequenced follow up questions in the course of group work.
99. Teachers effectively use a range of methods to ensure that all pupils are fully involved in lessons. For example in whole-class work they target questions to different groups of pupils, they also ask pupils to write their answers on individual whiteboards or hold up number cards to show their answers. The work that is given to groups of pupils is matched well to pupils' differing needs, capabilities and learning styles. For example, in lessons that were focused on learning about time, whilst one group worked with a support assistant using a small train and track and to record the times when it arrived at various destinations, another group read the time and recorded it on analogue clocks, and a third group calculated the number of minutes and hours there were in given periods of time. These different activities ensure that all pupils work at a level that is in line with their level of mathematical understanding. They then concentrate well because they are interested in what they are learning and believe that they can succeed in it. This promotes positive attitudes towards mathematics as pupils develop their confidence in themselves as learners. Teachers are also good at helping pupils to see the purpose of their learning in mathematics and this encourages them to persevere when they meet difficulties because they know that one day the information will be useful to them. For example, in Year 2, pupils are read a story about a train driver who needs to get to various destinations at a particular time, and a teacher recounts her own real story about needing to know the times of the trains on a day when she was nearly late. In Year 1, a poem about 'The Old Man of Hampstead' who had no room for his head in a bed, helped pupils to understand the importance of being able to measure accurately. Teachers have high expectations of behaviour and manage lessons very well. As a result of this, pupils' behaviour throughout lessons is very good. Firmly established routines and procedures ensure that the maximum use is made of the time that is available for learning. The ongoing assessment of pupils through focused teaching, which was unsatisfactory in the last inspection, is now good. Teachers use questions effectively to help pupils develop their ideas in the course of work and to help them overcome misconceptions. There is also an effective system to ensure that the teacher is kept informed of pupils' progress in work done with classroom assistants.
100. When weaknesses occur in lessons it is mainly because of the constraints of the accommodation and of the limitations of the time available. Limited storage facilities in classrooms results in pupils being over dependent on teachers or classroom assistants for the provision of materials and resources. There is also insufficient time for pupils to develop and record their ideas in greater depth through mathematical investigations. As a result, the skills that pupils need for independent

working and mathematical enquiry are not sufficiently developed. When mathematics lessons follow on from other lessons prior to afternoon playtime, pupils often have to sit listening for overlong periods of time. As a result their attention wanes and teaching is then not sufficiently effective. The homework that is set makes a satisfactory contribution to learning when parents show interest and give appropriate encouragement. The school has not yet been fully successful in engaging the involvement of a significant number of parents in supporting their children with homework, however.

101. Mathematics is well managed and the improvements that have been made in standards owe much to the hard work and commitment of the curriculum co-ordinator. Her knowledge and understanding of the subject are very good and contribute to the successful use of the National Numeracy Strategy throughout the school. She gives ongoing support to teachers' planning, leads training days and analyses test information. As a result she has a good overview of the strengths and weaknesses of subject and uses this information effectively to inform future improvements. She has usefully observed lessons in all classes but there is scope to develop this aspect of her monitoring and evaluation role even further by ensuring that there is written feedback. The co-ordinator has introduced good assessment and record-keeping procedures, which inform planning and are beginning to be used to inform precise target setting for individual pupils.
102. Resources for mathematics are of good quality and are meticulously organised, mainly in central storage areas. The accommodation for teaching mathematics, however, is barely adequate. Although the school works extremely hard to overcome this difficulty through timetabling and organisational arrangements, it has a detrimental effect on the quality of learning for some pupils. For example, some whole-class sessions take place in areas originally designed for work with small groups and pupils have to sit and listen in cramped conditions. Poor acoustics often result in even the most acceptable amount of talk and discussion in one class, making it difficult for some children to hear their teacher in the adjoining classroom.

## **SCIENCE**

103. On entry to Year 1, at the age of five, pupils' scientific knowledge and understanding of the world are generally a little below average. In 2000, the percentage of pupils reaching the expected standard (Level 2) in the statutory teacher assessments in Year 2 was above both the national average and the average results of similar schools. The percentage reaching a higher level was broadly in line with the results of all schools and of similar schools.
104. Inspection findings show that pupils' standards are broadly average at the age of seven. A very high percentage of pupils reach the expected level in the current the Year 2, and reflect the 2000 results. However, the percentage reaching a higher level in 2001 is relatively small, and is lower than in the 2000 assessments. Evidence suggests that the reduction is due to attainment level of the current Year 2 rather than less effective teaching. Nevertheless, there is scope for the more able pupils to achieve more in some lessons. Overall, current standards in Year 2 represent good achievement for the vast majority of pupils, including for those with special educational needs, in view of their starting points at the beginning of Year 1. The small minority of pupils whose scientific knowledge and understanding are above average at the beginning of Year 1 make sound progress overall, but

occasionally mark time in lessons. When the school was last inspected, a similarly high proportion of pupils reached the expected level, but none did better.

105. In Year 1, pupils are able to recognise and name the external parts of the human body and make good progress when learning to identify the main parts of flowering plants. They can identify a range of light sources; and achieve well when conducting simple investigations to discover materials which are magnetic. Pupils make good progress when carefully recording the development of cress seeds into plants, and understand that these need water and light to remain healthy. Most pupils make good progress when describing common materials in relation to their appearance and texture, using simple language. However, the most able pupils would benefit from opportunities to sort materials into groups according to their characteristics and to begin to identify similarities and differences between materials. In Year 2, pupils progress well when predicting the creatures they might find in different parts of the school grounds, and carrying out careful searches to test these predictions. They can describe how some materials are changed by heating, but more able pupils are capable of extending their learning by investigating whether these changes are sometimes reversible. Pupils make good progress when learning to recognise similarities and differences between themselves and others. For example, during the inspection, pupils conducted simple investigations to discover which pupil's hand displaced the most water and who could hold the largest number of plastic cubes. They made sound use of ICT when entering their data, and demonstrated sound standards when interpreting the resulting block graph.
106. Overall, the quality of teaching is good in science, and this results in the mainly good progress pupils make in the subject. Teachers' planning is effective, and they clearly identify the learning intentions of their lessons. The school is making good use of the recently introduced national scheme of work for science (QCA); and individual lessons form part of a coherent series to develop specific elements of pupils' scientific learning. Teachers have secure subject knowledge and they generally make good use of questions to probe pupils' understanding. Tasks are generally well matched to pupils' needs, but sometimes the most able pupils require more challenging work. On occasions, there is scope for these pupils to be given more responsibility for conducting their own simple investigations, and opportunities are missed to develop their decision making skills. The development of pupils' speaking skills also needs to be given more attention in some science lessons. Good use is made of the time available in most lessons. Teachers explain tasks clearly and classroom assistants provide good support, particularly for pupils with special educational needs, as a result of effective briefing by teachers. In the best lessons, teachers make good use of sessions at the end of lessons to help pupils to review their learning. There are good procedures to assess pupils' standards and progress; and these include half-termly meetings between teachers to discuss examples of pupils' science work and to agree the standards which have been reached.
107. The science co-ordinator is highly conscientious, and has a sound overview of teachers' planning in the subject. She has observed science teaching in most classes, and provided verbal feedback to staff. However, she very rarely retains a written account of the lessons seen, and appropriately recognises that a record of strengths and areas for development should be kept. Through her lesson observations and the regular analysis of work samples to judge standards against National Curriculum levels, the science co-ordinator has a range of pertinent

information about the subject. This now needs to be brought together to inform a well focused analysis of provision in the subject, and to lead to an action plan to address areas for improvement.

108. Resources for science are good, and have been very well organised by the co-ordinator.

## **ART AND DESIGN**

109. Pupils' achievements are satisfactory overall in art and design and their standards are mainly in line with those expected for pupils of similar ages. There are some examples of above average work in Year 2, but overall standards in the school are not as high as when the school was last inspected, when they were good.
110. In Year 1, pupils achieve satisfactory standards when creating paper collage pictures of imaginary gardens, and making bold interpretations of flowers and butterflies using pastels and felt-tipped pens. They draw vegetables from direct observation, as part of their work in design and technology, and these also demonstrate satisfactory skills. In Year 2, pupils make sound progress when drawing natural materials and plants; and some achieve well when creating collage pictures, using paper, which are abstract interpretations of parts of their drawings. They benefit from looking at the work of Matisse, and some are able to make connections between their own collage pictures and those made by the artist. Their sketch books demonstrate satisfactory standards; and most pupils make adequate progress in lessons when they learn to use different papers to represent leaves and petals.
111. No art and design lessons were taught in Year 1 during the inspection, so it is not possible to make an overall judgement about the quality of teaching in the subject. However, evidence from an analysis of pupils' completed work in Years 1 and 2, and from lessons seen in Year 2, suggests that the teaching enables pupils to make broadly satisfactory progress in the subject. Teachers' subject knowledge is generally satisfactory, but not all are able to identify and pursue the key purposes of some activities recommended in the new scheme of work for the subject. As a consequence, pupils' scientific or design and technology skills are advanced in these lessons, but there are limited gains in pupils' artistic skills or understanding. It is likely that the reduction in the proportion of good art work since the last inspection is related to the fact that this new scheme is proving only partially successful.
112. The art and design co-ordinator is conscientious, checks teachers' planning and organises the resources for the subject efficiently. However, she appropriately recognises the need to develop strategies for monitoring pupils' standards and progress in the school. The current lack of rigorous work-sampling, in order to identify strengths and weaknesses in the subject, means she is in a relatively weak position to target areas for improvement. The subject is well resourced.

## **DESIGN AND TECHNOLOGY**

113. Pupils' standards in design and technology are mainly in line with those expected nationally, as they were when the school was last inspected. Overall, pupils' achievements are sound in relation to their starting points at the beginning of Year 1, and they make good progress in some lessons.
114. In Year 1, pupils make sound progress when learning about the properties of a range of fruits and vegetables, including their taste, texture and appearance. They achieve well when planning the ingredients for a fruit salad, and deciding the methods they will use to prepare the fruits for eating. As a result of their work on fruit and vegetables, pupils have a secure understanding that these food are healthy to eat. Year 1 pupils also demonstrate satisfactory standards when creating

moving pictures that incorporate a lever, facilitated by a paper fastener, or a simple sliding mechanism. Their class book, illustrating the story of Cinderella with moving pictures, is particularly effective. Year 2 pupils demonstrate satisfactory standards when creating model vehicles with axles and wheels, using construction kits and recycled materials. Year 2 pupils also demonstrate sound making skills when creating model wishing wells and clocks which incorporate basic winding mechanisms.

115. No design and technology lessons were taught in Year 2 during the inspection, so it is not possible to make a secure judgement about the overall quality of teaching in the subject. However, the three lessons observed in Year 1 were well taught, and enabled pupils to make good progress in learning about food technology and healthy eating. The lessons were well organised and motivated pupils very effectively. The teachers have secure subject knowledge and provide pupils with good opportunities to develop their understanding and skills. Evidence from teachers' planning shows that sound use is made of the recently introduced scheme of work for design and technology provided by the QCA.
116. The design and technology co-ordinator has a sound overview of teachers' planning in the subject and is aware of the work produced by pupils across the school. However, she has yet to analyse pupils' work with sufficient rigour to identify strengths and weaknesses in the development of pupils' key skills in the subject. She appropriately recognises that there is scope to improve this element of her co-ordination role. Resources for the subject are good, and have been very well organised by the co-ordinator.

## **GEOGRAPHY**

117. As a result of time-tabling arrangements, no geography lessons could be seen during the inspection, and too little other evidence is available to allow secure judgements to be made about the standards achieved by pupils or about the quality of teaching as a whole.
118. Evidence from teachers' plans, from discussions with staff, from displays and from the limited range of recorded work available do show, however, that pupils are given suitable opportunities to explore the school and its immediate locality. For example, pupils in Year 1 have identified various natural and man-made geographical features during a walk in the locality and have recorded their findings in the form of drawings. They have looked at a map of the local area and have identified and labelled places of particular significance to them, for example, their own houses and the school.
119. Pupils in Year 2 develop their own mapping skills by devising simple symbols to represent the features of the locality passed on a journey from the school to Chipping Sodbury. They also use simple geographical vocabulary in the written directions they give for someone following in their footsteps on the same journey. Using an Ordnance Survey map of the Bristol area, they pin-point interesting places they have visited further afield, and they have also examined photographs of famous London landmarks such as Trafalgar Square and Buckingham Palace. Postcards from holiday-makers abroad help them to develop their knowledge of the wider world in which they live, presenting them, for example, with images of such diverse places as Paris, the Costa Blanca, and New York, and providing a wealth of



opportunities for discussion about the geographical features and ways of life in other countries.

120. Work planned for a visit to Weston-Super-Mare during the second half of the summer term will involve pupils in Year 2 appropriately in the study of a locality which, with its coastal features, presents a contrast to that of Chipping Sodbury.
121. The school is currently trialling and evaluating the scheme of work for geography produced by the QCA. Where relevant and appropriate, topics are being adapted to match pupils' needs and interests more closely. As part of this ongoing evaluation, the co-ordinator is also seeking to identify opportunities to make useful curriculum links between geography and other subjects. There is a good range of maps, artefacts, photographs, globes and other resources to support the teaching of geography, and these are well organised and accessible. The co-ordinator is currently providing written guidance for teachers which links resources to appropriate topics. She has made a good start to developing the geography curriculum, and is also developing suitable assessment procedures. She takes her role seriously and follows up regular opportunities to attend meetings and courses which will help her to develop her expertise. She has been instrumental in involving the school in two significant schemes: the 'Reduce, re-use, recycle' project, and the 'Pondrush' conservation project, both of which are helping pupils to develop responsibility for their environment and an awareness of mankind's stewardship for the care of the Earth. As yet, she has had no opportunity to monitor the teaching of geography, although plans are in place for this to take place during the next academic year. The use of computers to support work in geography is underdeveloped.

## **HISTORY**

122. As a result of time-tabling arrangements, only two history lessons were seen during the inspection, one in each of the Year 2 classes. Further evidence was gathered from the scrutiny of work, school displays and discussions with the co-ordinator. In the lessons observed, pupils achieved standards which were clearly above average for their age in terms of their knowledge and understanding of the Great Fire of London. They are aware of a range of sources of evidence such as paintings, stories and documents which can be used to find out about what happened in the past. They show good recall of the account of the Great Fire described by Samuel Pepys in his famous diary, and they can explain, in simple terms, the causes and consequences of the fire, as well as the main events. They demonstrate their understanding particularly well when they co-operate in groups to decide which of a number of statements about the event are true, and which false, and they communicate their decisions clearly through their appointed 'chairperson'. They use appropriate terms to talk about the event, and the higher attaining pupils give clear accounts and explanations in response to the teacher's questions, for example as to how and when the fire started, and why the people fled to the river. The limited amount of other work available for scrutiny provides insufficient evidence for secure judgements to be made about standards overall, particularly in Year 1. Nevertheless, it is clear that pupils in both year groups are developing an understanding of the passage of time and are learning to distinguish between aspects of their own lives and the lives of people in the past. For example, pupils in Year 1 have compared their own toys with the toys used by their parents and grandparents, and they have had an opportunity to pose questions about childhood

to a number of grandparents who visited the school. Pupils in both year groups have compared old houses with new houses, identifying significant similarities and differences, for example in relation to plumbing, sanitation and lighting, and they have benefited from a visit to St Fagan's in Wales, where they were able to see, at first hand, cottages from different periods. Pupils in Year 2 have learned about the life of Helen Keller and have compared her life with their own. They have used time lines to good effect to record significant times in Helen's life, and have then sequenced events from their own lives in a similar way, recording, for example, their own birth, the death of a great-grandparent or grand-parent, the birth of a brother or sister, and particularly memorable achievements and events.

123. Teaching was good in one lesson observed, and very good in the other, with particularly effective use of questioning to assess pupils' understanding and to encourage them to reflect on the evidence available and give reasons for their answers: 'How do you know.....?' The use of group work made a good contribution to pupils' social development and provided a useful opportunity for the more reticent, less confident pupils to practise their oral skills as well as to share what they had learned.
124. The history co-ordinator also has responsibility for geography. She is currently overseeing the introduction and evaluation of the schemes of work produced for both subjects by the QCA. In so doing, she is seeking to establish meaningful cross-curricular links, for example in relation to a 'seaside' topic in Year 2, whilst retaining the integrity of each subject. She has begun to develop suitable assessment procedures for history, has organised the resources well, and keeps abreast of developments in her subject areas by attending relevant courses and meetings. History is well resourced, with a suitable range of information books, tapes, posters, videos and artefacts, and visits and visitors are used to good effect to enrich and inform pupils' experience of history. The co-ordinator has plans to develop the use of ICT in history, including data handling, in the near future. A further strand of her work has been the development of spirituality throughout the school curriculum. The influence of this work is clearly to be seen in history, for example in the way pupils are encouraged to empathise with the feelings of people caught up in past events. An area for development remains the creation of opportunities for pupils to initiate and follow their own lines of enquiry, for example by pursuing independent research, raising and finding answers to their own historical questions by using information books and other sources of evidence.

## **INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY**

125. Pupils' achievements are satisfactory overall and their standards are mainly in line with those expected for pupils by the time they leave the school at age seven. This is an improvement since the last inspection when attainment was found to be a little lower than it should be for pupils of similar age. Pupils with special educational needs make good progress because of the good support they receive from classroom assistants.
126. Pupils' achievements are a result of a satisfactory ability to enter, save and retrieve their work on the computer independently; a sound knowledge of an appropriate range of software; and a growing understanding of the ways in which computers can contribute to their work in other subjects. When using computers to draft and develop their own ideas in writing, for example, their knowledge of the keyboard and

its functions enables them to record their ideas accurately and punctuate their work correctly. Their understanding of a word-processing program helps them to amend and improve their writing by selecting the size of font, and changing the position of text. Pupils' early understanding that many day-to-day devices respond to commands and signals helps them in their later work when they discuss, plan and control their work on computers. For example, they control the movements of a programmable floor robot (Roamer), by entering the distance it has to move and the turns it must make to arrive at specific destination. As a result, they gain in confidence and develop some of the understanding required to enter more complex instructions into computers, for example, they control images on screen to support their work in art, such as their work on 'sound pictures' in which they have composed patterns and selectively flooded them with colours of their own choosing. Pupils' ability to enter information accurately on a simple database and to then use the computer to interrogate the information enables them to share and discuss the information that they have collected in the form of graphs and bar charts. For example, in mathematics, pupils have collected information about themselves, entered it on the computer, and then compiled graphs to show the distribution of eye and hair colour. Their growing ability to use computers to find things out is evident in their use of word-bank programmes to search for new and unfamiliar words, and this makes an effective contribution to their work in English. These skills have not yet been sufficiently extended to the use of other information banks or the Internet, however, and work with email is in the early stages of development.

127. The quality of teaching is satisfactory overall. In the one lesson of direct teaching seen, teaching was good and in those lessons where computers were being used to support work in other subjects, it was satisfactory. Apart from the subject co-ordinator, teachers' knowledge of the subject is not yet fully secure, because the computers and software programmes are relatively new to the school. Teachers make good use of national guidance on the subject, however, and are supported well by the subject co-ordinator. As a result they are able to identify clear learning objectives in planning and to prepare appropriate activities, which they link well with other subjects of the curriculum. Teaching is particularly effective when pupils are given direct instruction on how to use the computer and clear explanations about how some of the programmes work. This is then followed by an opportunity to practise their skills and knowledge in the course of their work in other subjects of the curriculum. A good example was in the one ICT lesson seen when the teacher showed pupils how a database worked and then supported the pupils as they interrogated the information that they had previously entered into the computer about characteristics of pupils in their class. This resulted in the development of pupils' skills and confidence as they moved from finding the answers to questions that the teacher had set, to finding the answers to their own questions. Teachers and classroom assistants give good support to pupils in the form of ongoing advice and explanations that encourage pupils to try things out for themselves and put right their own mistakes. As they persevere to overcome difficulties pupils' confidence improves so that they acquire positive attitudes to ICT and are keen to use computers in the course of their work.
128. Some aspects of the management and leadership of the subject are good. The work of the co-ordinator has made a significant impact on the improvements that have been made in the subject. New equipment and software has been purchased and installed, and a small computer suite set up. National guidance (the QCA scheme of work) has been adopted and this contributes to the consistency that is now evident between classes and year groups. The co-ordinator gives very good

support to other members of staff and this has been effective in ensuring that pupils have effective teaching in the subject and appropriate access to computers in the course of their work. The co-ordinator ensures that she is up to date with developments and is a qualified trainer for other members of staff. She has undertaken an audit of training needs and implemented a rigorous training programme to improve teachers' skills and knowledge. Her role in monitoring and developing the subject through lesson observations has not yet been developed.

129. Resources for the subject have been improved since the last inspection and provision is now satisfactory. The school has worked hard to overcome the limitations of its accommodation and set up a small computer suite as well as providing computers in each classroom. Very good organisational arrangements together with good use of highly skilled classroom assistants ensure that these facilities are used effectively and so make a substantial contribution to the improving standards that are being achieved in ICT.

## **MUSIC**

130. No music lessons were taught in Year 2 during the inspection, so it is not possible to make an overall judgement about pupils' standards or the quality of teaching. However, singing was heard in assemblies and music lessons were observed in both Year 1 classes. As a consequence, there is secure evidence to show that standards in singing are good in Years 1 and 2, and that pupils in Year 1 achieve well when playing untuned percussion instruments. The last OFSTED inspection found that standards were at least in line with those expected nationally, with good work often being demonstrated. The more limited range of evidence available during the current inspection suggests that the school has maintained these standards.
131. Pupils sing with clear diction and good control of pitch. They know when to sing loudly or more quietly; and have highly positive attitudes towards music. In assemblies and in the lessons observed, pupils' behaviour was very good and they concentrated well. In the lessons seen in Year 1, pupils were able to interpret simple symbols to know when to play their percussion instruments and when to play loudly or quietly. They are able to name a good range of percussion instruments and can describe how they are played. Year 1 pupils are successfully encouraged to reflect on the quality of their performances; and pupils from across the school listen attentively to recorded music at the beginning of assemblies. They move their hands to reflect the pitch or tempo of music played in assemblies, following the clear example provided by the headteacher.
132. In the lessons observed in Year 1, the quality of teaching was good. Teachers motivated the pupils very effectively, and enabled them to make good progress in their learning. The lessons were well planned, with clear learning objectives. The planning for music is a strength, since the conscientious and well-informed music co-ordinator has formulated detailed plans for all lessons in Years 1 and 2 for the summer term. Her lessons are based on a sound structure to ensure the coverage of the National Curriculum for music, over time, and she intends to produce similarly detailed lesson plans for the autumn and spring terms to establish a comprehensive programme for the pupils. It is clear that this planning provides teachers with very valuable support and guidance, and this was very evident in the Year 1 lesson

which was well taught by a teacher whose own subject knowledge and confidence are not fully secure.

133. Pupils are able to listen to visiting performers, and have benefited from working with a professional composer to create their own music. They also enjoy performing in school concerts and in the Chipping Sodbury Festival. Resources for music have been carefully audited by the co-ordinator. They include a good range of instruments, and most are in excellent condition.

## **PHYSICAL EDUCATION**

134. Evidence from the lessons observed shows that, in gymnastics pupils achieve average standards for their age by the time that they are seven and standards have been maintained since the last inspection. No lessons were observed in games and dance for Year 1 and Year 2 pupils and so it is not possible to form a judgement about these aspects of the curriculum. Pupils' ability to remember, reproduce and explore a range of simple actions, such as balancing on different parts of their bodies, and travelling in a range of ways, results in their developing controlled and co-ordinated movements during floor work and when using larger apparatus. In the course of selecting and linking their movements into a sequence they begin to understand basic compositions of movement, for example, the ways in which changes in direction and speed of travel can add interest and variety to their movements. They also begin to notice the effects that physical exercise has on their bodies, for example, that it causes them to feel warm and make their hearts beat faster. They have a good awareness of how to exercise safely and this results in an enhanced awareness of their responsibilities towards themselves and the effects that their own actions might have on others. For example, they put out and use simple apparatus safely and sensibly, and when using the apparatus get on and off sensibly and ensure that they do not get in the way of others. Pupils who have special educational needs receive good support from classroom assistants who work alongside them during lessons. This ensures that they are able to take part fully in lessons and achieve well in relation to their prior attainment.
135. The quality of teaching is good. Lessons are well planned with a clear focus for learning and this results in pupils having a clear understanding about the purpose of the lesson. Activities build on previous learning and are appropriately sequenced to enable pupils to develop and explore their movements and improve their skills. For example, wide and narrow balances are introduced with pupils developing their own ideas in response to the teacher's instructions, their skills are then extended through 'follow my leader' activities, when pupils are asked to demonstrate their ideas to others. Opportunities to perform similar movements on larger apparatus, give pupils opportunities to broaden their balancing skills. There is skilful use of open-ended tasks, which allows all pupils to perform at their own ability level. Pupils who demonstrate higher levels of performance are encouraged to show their ideas to others and this inspires others to higher achievement. As pupils practise their movements, teachers give individual advice and coaching. Pupils are encouraged to evaluate their own performance and the performance of others and, as a result, they work hard to refine and improve their movements. Good use of praise and encouragement gives added incentive for pupils to persevere and do their best. There is good attention to health and safety, pupils are well managed and there are high standards of discipline. Consequently lessons proceed smoothly, behaviour is very good throughout lessons, and the maximum use is made of the time available

for learning. Pupils have always done physical education in their pants and vest, and whilst this does not appear to worry them in the course of lessons, pupils do not develop an understanding about the need for appropriate dress for sports and gymnastic activities. This is particularly important for outdoor activities including games and athletics.

136. The role of the subject co-ordinator is in the early stages of development. She keeps an overview of the subject by looking at planning and giving informal support, but has not yet monitored and evaluated the subject through lesson observations. The school has adopted a scheme of work, written by the headteacher and a colleague, to support gymnastics and this is effective in ensuring consistency and progress throughout the school. The school recently took part in a national training scheme for games (the TOPS scheme), and there are plans to use this information to develop an up-to-date scheme of work for games. The school makes use of taped programmes for dance. Whilst this ensures that lessons are well structured, it allows limited opportunities for pupils' own creative ideas, and there is insufficient time for them to evaluate their performance. Whilst ongoing feedback in the course of lessons notes achievement and helps pupils to improve their performance, there is scope to develop assessment procedures in physical education to ensure that significant achievements are more formally recorded.
137. The school has sufficient good quality resources for physical education and they are well organised to ensure easy access in the course of lessons. There is a spacious hall, which is well used for all aspects of physical education. The provision of large climbing apparatus in the outdoor area makes an effective additional contribution to pupils' developing skills in physical education. The school does not have a field of its own and the hard play area is too small for all but the most controlled activities. This has a detrimental effect on the quality of the physical education curriculum, particularly the development of games skills.

## **RELIGIOUS EDUCATION**

138. Pupils' achievements are good in religious education. By the time they reach the age of seven pupils attain standards that are a little above those expected for their age. This is because of a well thought out curriculum, which is embedded in the values of respect and thoughtfulness for others, which permeate the school. Work on Christianity, Islam, Hinduism and Judaism results in pupils' acquiring a sound understanding that religious traditions in the United Kingdom are mainly Christian and that other principal religions are also represented in their community. They celebrate the major festivals of the Christian year, such as Christmas and Easter, and know something of the stories behind them. They are also aware of festivals in other religions, for example, Diwali and the story of Rama and Sita. As a result of their work on special books and special places, pupils begin to develop an understanding of the richness and diversity of religion and how believers express their faith in the way that they live their everyday lives. For example, in their work on friendship they learn that Christians try their best to be kind to others because Jesus told his followers to live their lives that way. Visits to the local church have helped pupils to understand ideas such as the symbolism of light, in the form of a candle, and its association with Jesus being the light of the world. In hearing about the story of Diwali, they learn that light is also used as a symbol of how good overcomes evil. In the course of lessons, pupils begin to develop their understanding of the magnificence of the world about them as they listen to stories

about how different religions try to describe the Creation. Pupils are able to form thoughtful views on a range of religious issues. For example, when listening to the story of the Creation they talk about the importance of taking care of the world about them. When listening to the story of the Ascension they reflect on the way that you still remember your friends and the things that you have learned from them, because they stay in your heart. Opportunities to handle and look at a range of religious resources result in pupils acquiring a satisfactory understanding of religious terminology, such as the names of holy books, particular traditions, and areas and artefacts within a church. Pupils with special educational needs achieve well in religious education because they are well supported by classroom assistants, and teachers are skilled at asking questions and designing activities which ensure that they can take part,

139. Teaching in religious education is good. Lessons are well planned and carefully structured with good preparation of books, materials and resources to illustrate, often complex, ideas. This is effective in helping pupils to understand the purpose of the lesson and in helping them to develop an appropriate vocabulary to describe events and experiences. Teachers are skilled story-tellers and, as a result, engage pupils' interest when telling traditional religious stories. They make good use of open questions to check pupils' understanding, to help pupils reflect on what they have heard and to encourage them to contribute their own ideas. Teachers have trusting relationships with pupils and this gives pupils the confidence to suggest ideas and raise questions of their own. Teachers show that they value these ideas and suggestions by listening carefully. They then carefully build on them to extend pupils' understanding further.
140. The subject is well managed and led by the headteacher. She oversees planning to ensure that there is consistency of practice throughout the school. She sets very high standards for the teaching of the subject through her own example when taking assemblies, and is currently developing a scheme of work by taking the very best practice from the locally agreed syllabus and national guidance (QCA scheme) to further support teachers' planning. She has appropriately built observations of religious education into her whole-school monitoring arrangements. Assessment procedures are manageable and record pupils' significant ideas.
141. There are sufficient good quality resources for the subject. They are stored and used efficiently, and good use is made of them in lessons to support pupils' understanding. Good links with the local community, for example local churches and a Hindu family, make a significant contribution to the religious education curriculum. Much of the work that is done in the subject is oral, and poor acoustics in classrooms sometimes make it difficult for all pupils to hear what is being said.