

INSPECTION REPORT

TIRLEBROOK PRIMARY SCHOOL

Tewkesbury

LEA area: Gloucestershire

Unique reference number: 115738

Headteacher: Mr P Goodger

Reporting inspector: David Westall
2414

Dates of inspection: 1 – 4 October 2001

Inspection number: 193828

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

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INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Type of school:	Infant and junior
School category:	Foundation
Age range of pupils:	4 to 11
Gender of pupils:	Mixed
School address:	Brensham Road Newtown Tewkesbury
Postcode:	GL20 8EW
Telephone number:	01684 293549
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Appropriate authority:	The governing body
Name of chair of governors:	Mr K Radbourne
Date of previous inspection:	April 1997

INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Team members			Subject responsibilities	Aspect responsibilities
2414	David Westall	Registered inspector	Science Design and technology Art and design Music Equal opportunities 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?
1333	Elizabeth Forster	Lay inspector		How well does the school care for its pupils? How well does the school work in partnership with parents?
3856	Sandy Wellsted	Team inspector	English Geography History Special educational needs English as an additional language	Attitudes, values and personal development
12870	Angela Jensen	Team inspector	Mathematics Information and communication technology Physical education Religious education	How good are curricular and other opportunities?

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PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

There are 187 pupils on roll, aged from four to 11 years. The percentage of pupils known to be eligible for free school meals is below the national average and there are no pupils who speak English as an additional language. The percentage of pupils on the school's register of special educational needs is above the national average, and includes one pupil who has a statement of special educational need. On entry to the school, there is a wide spread in children's standards but, overall, they are broadly average.

HOW GOOD THE SCHOOL IS

This is a sound school, with particular strengths in the teaching of the youngest children and in the promotion of pupils' attitudes, behaviour and relationships. Overall, pupils are making sound progress in their learning, as a result of satisfactory teaching. There are some weaknesses in the school, and these include a lack of emphasis on the evaluation of teaching and learning. Overall, however, the school's strengths clearly outweigh its weaknesses, and it provides sound value for money.

What the school does well

- Children in the reception class benefit from good teaching, and make good progress as a result.
- Pupils' attitudes to school are good, and the attendance rate is well above the national average.
- Pupils' behaviour is good, across the school.
- Good provision is made for pupils' moral and social development.
- The school is a caring community, where pupils' personal development is given strong emphasis and relationships are good.
- Most parents have a high regard for the school.

What could be improved

- The monitoring of the quality of teaching and learning by the headteacher and subject co-ordinators.
- The use made of information and communication technology (ICT) to support pupils' learning across the required range of subjects.
- The achievement of more able pupils in science, particularly in Years 1 and 2.

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 sound progress in addressing most of the weaknesses identified in the last inspection. The school improvement plan is now a more coherent document, and is fully costed. A careful analysis of the accommodation has taken place, improvements have been made to rectify some of the deficiencies identified in the last report, and sound use is made of the space available. In addition, teachers are using a wider range of teaching styles, including more whole-class teaching. Overall, the school is more successful in meeting the needs of more able pupils, and there is little evidence of underachievement by these pupils in most subjects, including in English and mathematics. However, more able pupils sometimes mark time in science when their work is too easy. The last inspection identified weaknesses in the monitoring of teaching and learning, and found that subject

co-ordinators needed to develop this aspect of their roles. Little has been done to address this deficiency, and it remains an important weakness in the school.

STANDARDS

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

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

The table shows the school's results in 2000 were in line with the national average in English and science, but were below the average results of similar schools. In mathematics, the results were above the national average and above the average results of similar schools. The results in all three subjects have improved since 1998, and the increase in the mathematics result is particularly marked.

Inspection findings broadly reflect the 2000 results in English and science but are a little less favourable than the 2000 results in mathematics. In each of these subjects, pupils generally achieve the standards expected in Years 2 and 6, and overall attainment is broadly average. In relation to pupils' starting points on entry to the school, current standards represent mainly sound achievement.

Insufficient evidence of pupils' work in ICT was available for examination during the inspection to make a secure judgement about their standards in the subject. However, in all other subjects of the National Curriculum, pupils in their final year at the school generally demonstrate standards which are in line with those expected nationally. In religious education, the standards of Year 6 pupils match those expected in the agreed syllabus for the subject.

PUPILS' ATTITUDES AND VALUES

Aspect	Comment
Attitudes to the school	Good. Pupils are enthusiastic, enjoy coming to school and are interested in their work.
Behaviour, in and out of classrooms	Behaviour is good, throughout the school day.

Personal development and relationships	Pupils form constructive relationships with teachers and with each other. They work together amicably on shared tasks and respect the ideas of others. Pupils respond well when given opportunities to take responsibility or to demonstrate initiative.
Attendance	Very good. The attendance level is well above the national average and there is minimal unauthorised absence.

TEACHING AND LEARNING

Teaching of pupils in:	Nursery and Reception	Years 1 – 2	Years 3 – 6
Quality of teaching	Good	Satisfactory	Satisfactory

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.

The teaching was at least satisfactory in all lessons observed, and was good in just over a third of all lessons. Children in the reception class benefit from consistently good teaching, and teaching is also good in English, mathematics and science in Year 3. In all other classes, the teaching is generally satisfactory. The teaching enables children to make good progress in the reception class and sound progress, overall, in Years 1 to 6.

In the reception class, the teaching is a strength of the school and ensures children make a good start. The teacher has a good understanding of children's learning needs, both for their personal and academic development, and the teaching is stimulating and captures their interest.

In English, in Years 1 to 6, the lessons observed demonstrated mainly good and otherwise satisfactory teaching. Teachers are generally secure in their knowledge of English and most lessons include good use of questioning to probe pupils' understanding. There are particular strengths in the teaching of writing in Years 5 and 6. A weaker element of the teaching in English is revealed through an examination of pupils' completed work, and this shows teachers are not always rigorous enough in ensuring that pupils apply the skills they have been taught. Overall, combined evidence from lesson observations and from pupils' completed work shows the teaching enables pupils to make sound progress in English.

In mathematics and science, the teaching is satisfactory, overall, and enables most pupils to make sound progress in their learning. However, more able pupils sometimes underachieve in science, particularly in Years 1 and 2.

In ICT, there was insufficient evidence to judge the quality of teaching or the progress pupils make in developing their skills in the subject. In all other subjects, evidence shows the teaching enables pupils to make sound progress, overall, in their learning.

The teaching of pupils with special educational needs is mainly sound in class lessons and is good when pupils are withdrawn from class to work with the special educational needs co-ordinator or the learning support assistants.

Across the school, teaching is characterised by sound planning, clear explanation by teachers, good relationships between pupils and an orderly atmosphere in the school.

OTHER ASPECTS OF THE SCHOOL

Aspect	Comment
The quality and range of the curriculum	Good for children in the reception class and satisfactory for pupils in Years 1 to 6. However, pupils need more opportunities to use ICT.
Provision for pupils with special educational needs	Sound, overall.
Provision for pupils' personal, including spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	Good provision is made for pupils' moral and social development, and sound provision is made for their spiritual and cultural development.
How well the school cares for its pupils	The school is a caring community, where every child is valued as an individual and their welfare is a high priority.

HOW WELL THE SCHOOL IS LED AND MANAGED

Aspect	Comment
Leadership and management by the headteacher and other key staff	The headteacher has sound leadership and management skills. He promotes a calm and positive atmosphere in the school, provides a good role model for staff through his effective teaching skills and analyses the results of statutory and non-statutory testing carefully. However, both he and the subject co-ordinators have limited strategies for judging the quality of teaching and learning in the school. As a consequence, they are unable to identify strengths and weaknesses with sufficient rigour and to target areas for improvement.
How well the governors fulfil their responsibilities	The school benefits from a committed governing body which makes a positive contribution to the leadership and management of the school. A range of appropriate committees is established and function efficiently. Governors have a secure understanding of the results of statutory testing but more focused visits to observe the school in operation would help to inform them further about its performance.
The school's evaluation of its performance	Overall, this is a weakness in the school. Although test results are studied carefully, strategies for evaluating the quality of teaching and learning in the school are underdeveloped.

The strategic use of resources	The budget is analysed by the headteacher and the particularly rigorous finance committee of the governors. Financial planning is appropriately linked to the school improvement plan. Governors debate expenditure carefully and seek to obtain value for money from their purchases. However, weaknesses in the school's provision for monitoring and evaluating the quality of education it provides means governors sometimes have limited information to judge the success of their spending decisions.
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PARENTS' AND CARERS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

What pleases parents most	What parents would like to see improved
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Most believe teachers expect children to work hard to do their best. • Most believe the school is well led and managed. • Most believe children make good progress. • Most believe the staff are easy to talk to. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A minority would like better information on their children's progress. • A minority would like more homework for their children. • A minority would like the school to forge closer links with parents.

Inspection findings generally support parents' positive views about the ease of communication with the staff, and confirm that teachers expect pupils to work hard and to do their best. They show that leadership and management are satisfactory, overall, but there is scope for improvement. Children generally make satisfactory progress in their learning, and receive sufficient homework. The school provides parents with a sound range of information about children's progress, and has established good links with parents.

PART B: COMMENTARY

HOW HIGH ARE STANDARDS?

The school's results and pupils' achievements

1. On entry to the school, there is a wide spread in children's standards but, overall, they are broadly average. In the reception class, children generally achieve well, as a result of good teaching. They make good progress in their personal, social and emotional development and, in this early part of their first term at the school, are already becoming confident learners, working and playing amicably with their classmates and taking responsibility for simple tasks, such as clearing away some of the equipment after lessons. They achieve well in communication, language and literacy, and also make good progress in their mathematical development. As a consequence of the effective teaching and the well balanced curriculum they receive, most are on course to achieve the Early Learning Goals expected for children at the end of the reception year in the key aspects of their development.
2. On entry to Year 1, pupils' overall knowledge and skills are generally at the higher end of the average range, although there remains a broad spectrum of attainment. In Years 1 to 6, pupils build securely on their good start in reception by making sound overall progress in their learning. In the core subjects of English, mathematics and science, pupils generally achieve the standards expected in Years 2 and 6, and overall attainment in these subjects is broadly average. There is no significant difference between the attainment of boys and girls, across the school.
3. The results of the statutory assessment tests (SATs) in English and science for pupils in their final year at the school, in 2000, were in line with the national average but were below the results of similar schools. In mathematics, the Year 6 results in 2000 were above the national average and the results of similar schools. These results broadly reflect inspection findings in English and science, but are a little more favourable than current findings in mathematics. Overall, the SATs results have shown an upward trend in English, mathematics and science since 1998, and the school has set suitably challenging targets in order to maintain this trend.
4. In English, there are some variations in pupils' performance in the different elements of the subject, although their overall achievements are sound. For example, Year 2 pupils have relative strengths in speaking and listening, reading comprehension, handwriting and spelling. By comparison, their skills in decoding unfamiliar words in their reading, in punctuating their writing and using grammatical conventions accurately are a little weaker. In Year 6, relative strengths in most pupils' English work include their oral communication skills, their knowledge about language and their ability to match the style of their writing to its purpose. However, pupils' handwriting and presentation of their work are not always as good as they might be, while grammatical mistakes and weaknesses in sentence structure are also found quite frequently in their writing.
5. In mathematics, pupils' achievements are sound in relation to their starting points at the beginning of Year 1, reflecting the mainly satisfactory, and sometimes good, teaching they receive. Most pupils reach the standards expected in Years 2 and 6, and overall attainment in mathematics is broadly average. In their final year at the school, pupils can apply a range of appropriate strategies to solve number problems, and have a sound understanding of space, shape and measure.

6. In science, the achievements of the vast majority of pupils are sound in Years 1 and 2, and their standards are in line with those expected. However, relatively few demonstrate above average standards, and evidence suggests that more able pupils should do better. In Years 3 to 6, all pupils make mainly sound progress in science, and overall standards are broadly average in the subject in Year 6. The achievements of the more able pupils in science are rather more secure in these classes than in Years 1 and 2 but these pupils still occasionally mark time in lessons when their tasks are too easy. In Year 2, pupils have a sound understanding of the importance of healthy eating and the need for exercise. Most make sound progress when learning that exercise makes the heart beat faster but the achievements of the more able pupils are restricted by the limited demands of the worksheets which are used after the practical activity. In Year 6, most pupils demonstrate satisfactory achievement when conducting systematic investigations devised by their teacher but more able pupils, in particular, require more opportunities to plan and undertake their own enquiries, to test their ideas, and to decide their own methods for recording results.
7. Pupils generally achieve the standards expected for pupils of similar ages in Years 2 and 6 in art and design, design and technology, geography, history and religious education. In all these subjects, the standards reached reflect pupils' sound achievement from their starting points on entry to Year 1. In music, there was insufficient evidence available to judge pupils' standards in most classes. However, standards were broadly average in the lesson observed in Year 6 and when pupils in Years 1 to 6 sang in the school assembly. In physical education, it was not possible to judge pupils' standards in Year 2. However, the lessons observed in Year 6 show these pupils demonstrate standards which are in line with those expected. Limited use of ICT was seen during the inspection, so it is not possible to judge pupils' standards in the subject. However, a scrutiny of pupils' work in all subjects clearly shows that pupils make unsatisfactory progress in using ICT to support their learning across the curriculum.
8. Pupils with special educational needs achieve well when withdrawn from their classes for additional support, for example by the special educational needs co-ordinator (SENCO) or to work on the additional literacy support programme. In lessons where they work without additional support, they generally make sound progress, building steadily on their prior attainment. The last OFSTED inspection, in 1997, found that more able pupils should be making better progress and achieving higher standards. In most respects, the school has addressed this criticism successfully and these pupils make sound progress in nearly all subjects, including in English and mathematics. However, as noted above, more able pupils should achieve more highly in science, particularly in Years 1 and 2.

Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development

9. With very rare exceptions, pupils of all ages come willingly to school and enjoy the time they spend there. When asked their views, they appear to enjoy their lessons as well as the clubs, sports and play-times when they can mix socially with their friends. It is clear from their positive comments that they feel valued by staff and that they feel secure within the school environment. These caring qualities are mirrored in their own relationships with others and in their positive attitudes to work.

10. In all lessons, the vast majority of pupils concentrate well, take turns politely during discussions and are keen to have their say. For the most part, they persevere with their work, try hard to apply what they have been taught to their immediate task, and make best use of any resources prepared by their teachers to help them. They can be trusted to work without direct supervision when this is necessary, for example during parts of literacy and numeracy lessons. They share resources fairly with their peers, generally work very sensibly together in pairs or small groups when asked to do so, and support one another. For example, in literacy lessons, older pupils work well together when they share their writing with 'response partners'. Regardless of ability, background, ethnicity or special educational needs, pupils mix well together in the classroom and the playground.
11. Pupils' behaviour is good. They show respect for their own and others' property, and they are polite and courteous. They greet one another, staff and visitors in a friendly, open way, and they are always keen to offer help, for example by opening doors, fetching a chair, or simply by engaging in conversation. They fully understand, and abide by, the school rules. There have been no recent exclusions, and bullying incidents are very rare. Very occasionally, teachers fail to engage fully the attention of a minority of pupils in their teaching groups, usually, though not exclusively, boys. When this happens, a few pupils occasionally display some signs of immature behaviour: they do not concentrate as well as they might, and they do not always give tasks their very best effort.
12. Relationships are constructive, supportive and friendly. Pupils care about one another, care about others' feelings, and respond with empathy to the selfless behaviour of others. For example, pupils in Year 5 write with great respect about the villagers of Eyam, a 'plague village' in Derbyshire. In a class assembly, pupils in Year 3 read prayers they have written following the recent attack on the World Trade Centre in New York, again revealing their sensitivity to others' feelings. Not content with merely feeling empathy for others, pupils are also determined to help in practical ways whenever they can. They regularly stage events to support various local, national and international charities, and they often find their own 'causes' and initiate fund-raising activities to support them. For example, at the time of the inspection, older pupils were enthusiastically engaged in organising sponsored activities to raise funds for an animal welfare society.
13. Pupils of all ages respond well to the opportunities they are given to take responsibility and to use their own initiative. In all classes, they enjoy taking messages, returning registers to the office, and undertaking a variety of classroom duties. Older pupils take particular pride in carrying out their various jobs efficiently, whether preparing the hall for assembly, helping in the dining-area, or generally 'looking after' visitors.
14. Pupils with special educational needs are fully integrated into all aspects of school life and are valued members of the school community. They receive the warmth and encouragement they need to succeed not only from the staff but also from their peers. They try hard to do their best in lessons and, in short sessions when they are withdrawn from class to work with the SENCO, they take great pride in their achievements.
15. The level of attendance at the school is well above the national average and there is minimal unauthorised absence. Registration procedures fully meet statutory

requirements. Pupils arrive in good time for school and lessons always start promptly.

HOW WELL ARE PUPILS TAUGHT?

16. The quality of teaching was at least satisfactory in all lessons observed during the inspection, and was good in just over one third of all lessons. This represents a slight improvement since the last inspection, both in the proportions of satisfactory and good lessons seen. Children in the reception class benefit from consistently good teaching, while teaching is also good in English, mathematics and science in Year 3. In all other classes, the teaching is generally satisfactory. Overall, the teaching enables children to make good progress in their learning in the reception class and sound progress in Years 1 to 6.
17. In the reception class, the teaching is a strength of the school and means children make a good start. Relationships between the teacher and the children are particularly good, and children strive hard to respond to her teaching, thriving on the positive feedback they receive. Children are encouraged to develop independence, and good use is made of questions like "How do you know that?" or "What do you think will happen if ...?", to develop their thinking skills. The teacher, who is supported by an effective nursery nurse, has a good understanding of children's learning needs, both for their personal and their academic development, and the teaching is stimulating and captures their interest. As a consequence, children in the reception class make good progress in their learning.
18. In English, in Years 1 to 6, the lessons observed demonstrated mainly good and otherwise satisfactory teaching. Most teachers are secure in their knowledge of English as a subject and, with only very occasional exceptions, lessons are delivered clearly and confidently. They are able to use questions skilfully, analyse pupils' responses and immediately correct misunderstandings or give supplementary explanations to make sure that key points have been learned. In Years 5 and 6, there are particular strengths in elements of the teaching of writing. A weaker element of the teaching is revealed through an examination of pupils' completed work, and this shows that teachers are sometimes not rigorous enough in ensuring that pupils apply the skills they have been taught. For example, marking sometimes overlooks errors in grammar or sentence structure which need to be addressed, and many teachers do not routinely insist on appropriate standards in pupils' handwriting and work presentation. Overall, combined evidence from lesson observations and from scrutiny of pupils' completed work shows the teaching enables pupils to make sound progress in English.
19. In mathematics, the teaching is generally satisfactory but is good in Year 3. In addition, when grouped twice weekly into three sets according to their current abilities in mathematics, the most able group benefits from effective teaching by the headteacher. Overall, the teaching enables pupils to make sound progress in their mathematical learning. Teachers are making sound use of the National Numeracy Strategy, and their planning is satisfactory. In the best lessons, the pace of learning is brisk and pupils are given tasks which they find challenging but achievable.
20. In science, the teaching is also satisfactory overall, and it enables most pupils to make sound progress in the subject. Teachers have secure subject knowledge, introduce appropriate scientific terminology and reinforce this during lessons. They plan their lessons carefully and the overall quality of their planning is sound. However, all pupils are usually set the same tasks in science lessons, and more able pupils sometimes require more challenging work especially, but not exclusively, in Years 1 and 2.

21. In art and design, geography and physical education, the overall quality of teaching is satisfactory and enables pupils to make sound progress. Insufficient lessons were observed in design and technology, history and religious education to make overall judgements about the quality of teaching. However, an analysis of pupils' completed work shows the teaching enables pupils to make sound progress in these subjects. In ICT, there was also insufficient teaching to judge its overall quality in the school. Indeed, during the inspection, computers in classrooms were usually switched off, and the teachers have yet to use the very recently installed computer suite. An analysis of pupils' work in all subjects does provide secure evidence, however, that teachers should enable pupils to make more use of ICT to support their learning in the required range of subjects across the curriculum. The school accepts that there is a need for teachers to improve this element of their practice.
22. The teaching of pupils with special educational needs is mainly sound and sometimes good. The special educational needs teacher and two special educational needs learning support assistants provide good support for those pupils who are occasionally withdrawn from classes to work on tasks related to their individual targets (usually associated with literacy or numeracy), or who are taking part in special programmes such as the additional literacy support programme. Support for the pupil with a statement of special educational need is also effective. Individual education plans for pupils with special educational needs are both precise and rigorous, with challenging but achievable targets. In mainstream lessons, pupils with special educational needs, like their peers in Years 1 to 6, benefit from teaching which is consistently sound and sometimes good. In most lessons, teachers plan suitably matched work for these pupils. Classroom assistants are appropriately briefed about the lesson content and what the pupils might reasonably be expected to achieve, and they give pupils sound support. The last OFSTED inspection found that more able pupils were underachieving, since their tasks were too easy in some lessons. The school has been mainly successful in ensuring that tasks are appropriate for these pupils, and they now make sound progress in most subjects, including in English and mathematics. However, there remains a weakness in the science teaching, particularly in Years 1 and 2 but also sometimes in the older classes, when the more able pupils mark time because they are not sufficiently challenged by their tasks.
23. Across the school, the teaching is characterised by good relationships between teachers and pupils, an orderly atmosphere in lessons, clear explanations of tasks and sound, or better, use of questions to probe pupils' understanding. As a consequence, pupils generally respond well, listen attentively to their teachers, and concentrate and persevere with their tasks. Sound use is made of homework to extend what is learned in school. Teachers plan their lessons carefully and clearly identify the learning intentions of their lessons. However, while they often explain these intentions to pupils at the beginning of lessons, and sometimes tell pupils what they have learned at the end of sessions, too rarely do they ask pupils to evaluate their own learning.
24. The last OFSTED inspection found that, partly due to limitations in the organisation of the building which had few dividing walls between teaching areas, teachers were mainly teaching through working with groups and there was too little whole-class teaching. Improvements in the school building, and the requirements of the national strategies for literacy and numeracy, have promoted more class teaching. As a

consequence, there is now an appropriately broad range of teaching approaches to benefit pupils' learning.

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

25. The curriculum is generally broad, balanced and relevant. In the reception class, the children are given a good range of opportunities to develop their learning, including their personal, social and emotional development. The curriculum for pupils in Years 1 to 6 complies with the Curriculum 2000 requirements. Sufficient time is allocated for developing the key skills of literacy and numeracy, and sound use is made of the national strategies in both these areas. Insufficient use is made of ICT to support pupils' work across the curriculum and the school recognises this as an area for development.
26. The school generally provides well for pupils' personal and social education with regular opportunities for them to discuss thoughts, ideas and concerns. Health education is promoted in science lessons and healthy eating and exercise are encouraged. The school has a sound sex education policy. There is no policy for drugs misuse although pupils are made aware of the hazards of smoking. All pupils have equal access to the curriculum.
27. There is very good provision for extra-curricular activities for pupils in Years 3 to 6, including a wide range of sporting and musical activities and occasional opportunities for art, technology and computing. There are currently no after school opportunities for pupils in Years 1 and 2 although this is a feature of many schools. The curriculum is enriched by visits, including annual residential visits for pupils in Years 3 to 6. There are also visitors to the school who support pupils' learning, for example in music and religious education.
28. The school makes sound use of the local area as a resource in geography and history. There are close links with a local home for the elderly with pupils giving harvest gifts and performing for them at Christmas. This makes a positive contribution to pupils' awareness of the wider community. Business links are satisfactory. The school has forged strong links with other schools and the playgroup on the same site, and this works for the mutual benefit of all pupils. Most children joining the school have attended the playgroup and their familiarity with the school grounds and buildings, through use of the playground and attending school productions, helps them to settle with confidence into school life. The dance project, organised jointly with the special school, allows pupils to mix with others and encourages a shared sense of achievement in performance. In addition, pupils have a wealth of opportunities to participate in sporting activities with pupils from other local schools. Older pupils have a number of opportunities to use the computer and technology facilities of the senior school, and are asked to perform in plays or take part in surveys devised by senior pupils. More able pupils can participate in master classes for English and mathematics at the senior school. These opportunities engender a sense of enthusiasm for school life, and the chance to get to know senior pupils ensures that children at Tirlbrook are confident and keen to transfer to the next school.
29. Provision for pupils with special educational needs is generally sound. Work planned for the pupils draws variously on the skills and expertise of class teachers, the SENCO and, where relevant, outside specialists. Support for pupils with

learning difficulties associated with literacy is effective. There is a limited amount of support for pupils experiencing difficulties with mathematics, an aspect of special educational needs provision which the SENCO is now keen to develop.

30. More able pupils benefit from appropriately planned work to meet their needs in most lessons in the core subjects of English and mathematics, and the setting arrangement for mathematics in Years 5 and 6 is particularly effective in ensuring that they are suitably challenged. However, in science, evidence suggests that more able pupils sometimes mark time because their work is too easy.
31. The school makes good provision for pupils' moral and social development, and sound provision for their spiritual and cultural development.
32. Spiritual development is fostered appropriately through assemblies, religious education and to a lesser extent, through other curriculum subjects such as history and English, where pupils are taught to empathise with the feelings of others. Acts of collective worship comply fully with legal requirements. Themes with spiritual, moral and social dimensions prompt pupils to reflect on their own experiences of life and to identify with the feelings and beliefs of others in ways which develop their spiritual awareness and self-knowledge. The central role of Jesus in helping Christians to cope with the vicissitudes of life and to deal with emotions is given due emphasis. In class assemblies, pupils are encouraged to share prayers they have written in response to world events and causes that have moved them. For instance, pupils in Year 3 reflect on the destruction and loss of life at the World Trade Centre in New York and on the many people afflicted by blindness in Malawi. In a religious education lesson in Year 6, pupils were asked to engage with challenging ideas about the nature of God and about Jesus as the Son of God. In some classes, teachers regularly lead prayers of thanks before lunch and at home-time. The school has well established links with local churches, and ministers make frequent visits to the school to lead assemblies.
33. The school has a strong social and moral ethos. All staff provide good role models in their relationships with one another and with their pupils. Pupils are taught the few rules that are designed to ensure the safety and happiness of all in the school, and pupils are also encouraged to draw up classroom rules of their own. The school's system of rewards and sanctions promotes good attitudes and good behaviour. Pupils are as likely to receive recognition for effort, enthusiasm, helpful and caring attitudes just as much as for academic, sporting or musical achievements. All such qualities and achievements are recorded with equal pride in the school's 'Golden Book'. The house-point system promotes in many pupils a feeling of 'belonging to a team', and several pupils were heard to comment on how much they wanted to do well for their house. In a similar way, the after-school clubs and team games, the choir, the orchestra and drama productions also serve to promote individual and collective responsibility as well as encouraging co-operation and collaboration. In lessons, too, teachers regularly provide opportunities for pupils to co-operate in pairs or to engage on tasks in small groups.
34. The strong promotion of work for various charities and the good links with the elderly in the local community show pupils the importance of social and moral responsibility for others, and the importance of good relationships between people of different ages. Respect for the views of others and for religious beliefs other than their own are taught, routinely, within the religious education programme and are intrinsic to the ethos of the school.

35. Sound provision is made for pupils' cultural development. In geography and history, in English, art and music, in religious education and during assemblies, pupils are taught about their own cultural heritage and about the traditions of other cultures. They are taught to appreciate the art and music of significant artists and composers, and to respond sensitively to the books they read. In history, they compare past and present societies. Through clubs, the orchestra, the choir and drama productions, and through visits to places of geographical and historical interest, pupils are given frequent opportunities to develop and pursue their own cultural interests. Overall, however, too little is done to raise pupils' awareness of the richness and diversity of other cultures; and too little is done to familiarise pupils with the work of well-known authors and poets from their own literary heritage and from other cultures.

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL CARE FOR ITS PUPILS?

36. The school is a caring community where each child is valued. All adults in the school know the pupils well and act consistently to promote pupils' feelings of security and high self-esteem. Relationships in the school are based on mutual respect and encouragement and this creates a positive climate for learning. Parents are encouraged to share their concerns and are kept informed of any actions taken. This good communication between school and home ensures the medical, pastoral and educational needs of pupils are known to staff and that effective support can be provided.
37. The school successfully promotes good standards of behaviour. As soon as pupils enter the school, staff ensure that children have a clear understanding of what is expected and how they should conduct themselves. Staff who supervise pupils at lunchtime have the opportunity to attend training courses to help them promote positive behaviour and to encourage playground games. Behaviour in lessons is good and incidents of bullying are rare and are dealt with effectively. There have been no racist incidents or recent exclusions. The school takes care to monitor attendance carefully and includes a print-out of the attendance record of each pupil, together with a comment on it, in their annual report for the pupil. This helps parents see the value the school places on regular attendance and contributes to the very good attendance rate.
38. Children have several opportunities to visit the school before starting in the reception class and are then admitted in small groups so that the staff can get to know each child individually; this helps children feel secure and settle quickly into school routines. The staff have a sound awareness of child protection issues and work closely with foster parents.
39. Although there is no planned programme, the school gives satisfactory coverage to many aspects of personal, social and health education, such as healthy eating and sex education, through the science curriculum. Particularly good attention is paid to regular road safety awareness and pupils are encouraged to cycle to school after completing cycling proficiency training. When necessary, pupils have appropriate opportunities to talk about their feelings and listen to others' points of view, and this helps them to develop a sensitivity to others' needs and fosters good relationships.

40. The school has well-established procedures for medicines, accidents and emergencies with appropriate supporting documentation. All staff have had first aid training. Pupils are regularly reminded of the importance of remaining within agreed boundaries on the school site as the playground and fields are unfenced. Recent extensions to the school have resulted in pupils' access from two classrooms being onto a path next to the school car park, and the school recognises that this potential safety hazard needs to be addressed. Health and safety matters are regularly reviewed and appropriate risk assessments are carried out. The buildings and grounds are well maintained and the limited classroom space is organised to allow free passage and clear access.
41. The school has established positive links with the parents of children on its special educational needs register. The parents are very supportive of their children and of the school's efforts on their behalf, and several parents willingly work with their children at home in order to reinforce what is being learned in school. Parents are also keen to work in partnership with the school by attending reviews of their children's progress, and they make valuable contributions to discussions about new targets when these are drawn up.
42. Overall, the school has sound procedures for monitoring academic performance and personal development. Assessments carried out soon after pupils start school are analysed, used to inform planning and identify pupils who need additional support. Assessments are carried out again at the end of the reception year to judge progress. The headteacher thoroughly analyses the standardised and optional national test results each year in English and mathematics to identify groups of pupils or individuals who need extra help. Challenging targets are agreed with the local education authority for attainment, in English and mathematics, in Year 6. Individual targets for pupils in English and mathematics are included for the following year in the annual reports to parents. On occasions, however, the targets lack sufficient precision. Overall, teachers' day-to-day assessments of pupils' needs are sound, and work is consequently matched to their learning requirements. In science, however, the requirements of the more able pupils are not assessed with enough rigour, and their tasks are sometimes too easy. The school has appropriately recognised the need to improve its previous system of assessing pupils' progress in ICT, design and technology, art and design, music, history, geography and physical education. A sensible plan has been implemented to assess in these subjects from the objectives at the end of each unit of work in the schemes of work provided by the Qualifications and Curriculum Authority. These assessments will then inform the annual reports to parents. A portfolio of assessed work is kept for each child and provides a useful record of progress.
43. Pupils' own knowledge of how they could improve their learning is often rather limited. For example, although teachers usually tell pupils about the purpose of lessons at the beginning of sessions they rarely ask pupils what they have learnt at the end. When asked, pupils often do not know the particular skills and understanding they need to improve, for example, the use of full stops or times tables. Opportunities are missed in physical education lessons for pupils to evaluate the work of others to help improve their own performance. The quality of marking is sound overall, and the best marking provides informative feedback. However, marking should sometimes provide more information to pupils about strengths and areas for development.

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL WORK IN PARTNERSHIP WITH PARENTS?

44. The school and parents share common expectations about the education of its pupils and the good relations with parents are a strength of the partnership. Parents value the openness of the staff and find them easy to talk to. This ensures there is good communication between home and school on matters of concern. Parents feel that their contributions to school life are well received and this encourages them to offer help.
45. Parents receive a sound range of information about the school and what is taught. The prospectus and annual report to parents are clearly written, and informative newsletters keep them in touch with school events. The school provides broad outlines of the work to be covered each year and this is generally supplemented by information on topics from the class teachers. The school has occasional curriculum evenings to keep parents up to date with new developments, provides useful guidelines on homework, and booklets on how to help support children's learning at home.
46. Parents enjoy attending weekly assemblies and value the opportunity to see the work their children have undertaken at the open day held towards the end of the academic year. They have the usual opportunities to discuss their children's progress with teachers throughout the year and find that these consultations are informative. Annual written reports provide satisfactory information on work in each subject.
47. The vast majority of parents are very supportive of the school and hold it in high regard. Many help regularly in classes or with other jobs around the school. Their skills are well used when helping with school clubs or with particular projects. Parents believe that any suggestions they may have are listened to carefully. The Parents' Association organises a variety of fund-raising and social activities which produce additional funds to improve the resources and the environment of the school. The parents' commitment to the school sets a good role model for the children.

HOW WELL IS THE SCHOOL LED AND MANAGED?

48. The school benefits from a committed governing body which makes a positive contribution to the life of the school. A range of appropriate committees is established and function efficiently. The finance committee is particularly effective and meets very frequently. The governors with responsibility for literacy and numeracy have attended training, are well informed about the national strategies for these key areas and have useful discussions with the co-ordinators for English and mathematics. However, they recognise that their awareness would be further developed by observations of numeracy and literacy lessons at the school. The governor with responsibility for special educational needs visits the school regularly and works well with the SENCO. She is well informed and provides useful reports to the full governing body. Governors have a secure understanding of the results of statutory testing in Years 2 and 6, and are appropriately involved in the creation and implementation of the school improvement plan. More focused visits to the school to observe it at work would help to inform governors further about its performance. Overall, however, the governing body provides sound support for the leadership and management of the school, and ensures that statutory requirements are met.

49. The headteacher has sound leadership and management skills. He is conscientious, develops good relationships with staff and parents, and promotes a calm and positive ethos in the school. He also provides a good role model for staff through his effective teaching skills. The headteacher is rigorous in his analysis of the results of statutory and non-statutory testing and checks teachers' planning, particularly in English and mathematics. However, there are also some weaknesses in his procedures for monitoring and evaluating the quality of teaching and learning in the school. He has made relatively few observations of teachers' lessons and appropriately recognises he makes insufficient use of work sampling as a monitoring strategy.
50. Overall, the monitoring roles of subject co-ordinators need improvement. All co-ordinators willingly provide advice when it is requested by their colleagues, and audit and organise resources for their subjects efficiently. However, none, including those for literacy and numeracy, have had the opportunity to observe teaching in their subjects; and only the co-ordinators for English and mathematics have analysed samples of pupils' work from across the school. As a consequence, most are in a relatively weak position to identify strengths and weaknesses in their subjects, and to target areas for improvement. While there are plans to allocate time for co-ordinators to be released from their class teaching commitments to develop their roles, the use of this time is not sufficiently defined. Evidence suggests that subject co-ordinators would benefit from well focused in-service training to promote their awareness of strategies to monitor and develop their subjects. Some useful monitoring of teaching and learning has been provided by visiting specialist advisers from the local education authority, but the school has yet to take on appropriate responsibility for conducting its own monitoring and self-evaluation procedures in these key areas. The last OFSTED inspection, in 1997, identified the need to develop the role of subject co-ordinators and weaknesses in the school's approach to monitoring teaching and learning. The school has made insufficient progress in rectifying these deficiencies. The deputy headteacher is conscientious and provides satisfactory support, overall. However, there is scope for her to play a more prominent role in the strategic development of the school.
51. The school improvement plan has been formulated through sound leadership by the headteacher. The plan is well organised, providing detailed planning for initiatives in the current year and outline planning until 2004. The last OFSTED inspection found the 1997 school development plan required improvement, including a clearer structure, more details about priorities and costs, and explicit success criteria. All these weaknesses have been soundly addressed.
52. The SENCO is effective in her role, both as special educational needs teacher and as co-ordinator of special educational needs provision. Although employed on a part-time basis, she often gives generously of her own time in order to ensure that administrative and organisational matters are dealt with appropriately. She has established a constructive working relationship with the special educational needs governor, with the team of learning support assistants, with parents, with the secondary school to which most pupils transfer, and with outside specialists. There are effective arrangements in place to make sure that pupils transferring to secondary school are well prepared for the change and that continuity and progression in their learning are secured. A recent review of the deployment of support staff has led to more focused support for those pupils who need it, particularly in literacy. Appropriate procedures and policies are in place, and are consistent with Code of Practice recommendations. The SENCO monitors the

progress of all pupils with special educational needs, and pupils are moved to different stages on the special educational needs register in the light of the progress they make. At present, the SENCO is not directly involved in working with teaching staff on the planning of work for pupils with special educational needs or for the more able pupils within mainstream lessons. This is an aspect of special educational needs provision that might now usefully be developed.

53. The school has no separate equal opportunities policy for pupils but generally includes appropriate references to equal opportunities in other policies. Overall, the leadership and management of the school ensure that the principle of inclusion is soundly promoted. There are satisfactory systems for tracking the progress of groups of pupils including those with special educational needs and those born late in the academic year.
54. The day-to-day management of the school is sound. Routines are well organised and help to promote an orderly atmosphere in the school. The administration of the budget is carried out efficiently by the headteacher and the school secretary. The last auditor's report commented favourably on the school's procedures for financial administration, and specifically praised the efficient work of the school secretary. Spending is also carefully monitored by the finance committee of the governors. The committee, which is well led by its chair, provides good support for the management of the school. The budget is analysed with great care, and financial planning is appropriately linked to priorities in the school improvement plan. The school carried forward an unusually high figure into the current financial year, but this was justified due to carefully planned imminent expenditure on buildings and learning resources. Governors debate estimates for building improvement very carefully to ensure the school receives value for money. However, weaknesses in the school's procedures for monitoring and evaluating the quality of education it provides means governors sometimes have rather limited information to form judgements about the effectiveness of some of their spending decisions. The inspection shows the school provides sound value for money. This judgement is informed by the quality of teaching in the school, which is mainly satisfactory and sometimes good, and pupils' sound achievements in nearly all subjects of the National Curriculum.
55. The last OFSTED inspection found the school accommodation had a negative effect on teaching and learning. The lack of dividers between class bases meant it was difficult for teachers to teach whole-class lessons without disturbing other classes, and there was a general lack of space, particularly for pupils in Years 3 to 6. Following the inspection, the headteacher and governors have worked very hard to improve the accommodation and have made good use of funding to improve conditions for teaching and learning. Overall, the accommodation is now broadly satisfactory for most classes. However, the headteacher and governors appropriately recognise there are still some deficiencies. Two classrooms are particularly small and others are disrupted when pupils are obliged to walk through them to access their own rooms. The problem of acoustics has been reduced, but occasionally pupils' concentration is still disturbed by the activities in adjacent classes. The building would present difficulties for pupils with hearing impairment. A small room has been well equipped as a computer suite but the library is now situated in a Year 5 class, which means it is not always readily accessible to pupils from across the school. Children in the reception class are able to use an outside play area and are carefully supervised when they use this space. However, the school should consider enclosing this area. The governors have plans for further

improvements to address some of these shortcomings when funding is available. Toilet facilities for the disabled are available. However, while the school is on one level, the limited size of some classes would make it difficult to accommodate pupils in wheelchairs. The building is kept in clean condition by the conscientious caretaking staff, and teachers enhance the environment with attractive displays of pupils' work. Overall, the school makes sound use of the available space. There are ample school grounds, with sufficient hard surfaced areas.

56. Resources for learning are at least adequate for the key areas of learning for reception children, for all subjects of the National Curriculum and for religious education.

WHAT SHOULD THE SCHOOL DO TO IMPROVE FURTHER?

57. To improve the quality of teaching and learning in the school, the governors, headteacher and staff should:
- devise and implement rigorous and systematic procedures for monitoring the quality of teaching and learning by the headteacher and subject co-ordinators; (paragraphs 49, 50, 54, 81, 87, 95, 101, 107, 112, 119, 124 and 135)
 - provide more opportunities for pupils to use ICT to support their learning in the required range of subjects; (paragraphs 7, 21, 25 and 121)
 - ensure that more able pupils are provided with sufficiently challenging work in science, particularly in Years 1 and 2. (paragraphs 6, 20, 89 and 94)
58. In addition to the above key issues, the governors should consider the following less important issues for inclusion in the action plan.
- provide an enclosed outside play area for reception children; (paragraphs 55 and 72)
 - develop pupils' knowledge of their own learning by:
 - (a) ensuring that pupils are clear about their targets for improvement in their learning;
 - (b) asking pupils to comment on their achievements at the end of lessons; and
 - (c) requiring pupils to evaluate their performance in physical education. (paragraphs 43, 84 and 130)

PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS

Summary of the sources of evidence for the inspection

Number of lessons observed	45
Number of discussions with staff, governors, other adults and pupils	25

Summary of teaching observed during the inspection

	Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
Number	0	0	16	29	0	0	0
Percentage	0	0	36	64	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 – Y6
Number of pupils on the school's roll (FTE for part-time pupils)	n/a	187
Number of full-time pupils known to be eligible for free school meals	n/a	5

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Special educational needs

	Nursery	YR – Y6
Number of pupils with statements of special educational needs	n/a	1
Number of pupils on the school's special educational needs register	n/a	56

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	4
Pupils who left the school other than at the usual time of leaving	9

Attendance

Authorised absence

	%
School data	2.9
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	17	16	33

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		Reading	Writing	Mathematics
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	17	17	17
	Girls	16	16	16
	Total	33	33	33
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	100 (77)	100 (80)	100 (87)
	National	83 (82)	84 (83)	90 (87)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	17	17	17
	Girls	16	16	16
	Total	33	33	33
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	100 (80)	100 (93)	100 (97)
	National	84 (82)	88 (86)	88 (87)

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

Attainment at the end of Key Stage 2

Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 2 for the latest reporting year	Year	Boys	Girls	Total
	2000	17	16	33

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys	11	14	16
	Girls	13	12	15
	Total	24	26	31
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	73 (67)	79 (70)	94 (76)
	National	75 (70)	72 (68)	85 (78)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys	10	13	12
	Girls	12	12	12
	Total	22	25	24
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	67 (64)	76 (76)	73 (70)
	National	70 (68)	72 (69)	79 (75)

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

Ethnic background of pupils

	No of pupils
Black – Caribbean heritage	0
Black – African heritage	0
Black – other	0
Indian	0
Pakistani	0
Bangladeshi	0
Chinese	0
White	159
Any other minority ethnic group	3

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 – Y6

Total number of qualified teachers (FTE)	8.4
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	25.9
Average class size	26.3

Education support staff: YR – Y6

Total number of education support staff	5
Total aggregate hours worked per week	83

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	422,726
Total expenditure	399,332
Expenditure per pupil	2,136
Balance brought forward from previous year	24,011
Balance carried forward to next year	47,405

Recruitment of teachers

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

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Results of the survey of parents and carers

Questionnaire return rate

Number of questionnaires sent out	101
Number of questionnaires returned	54

Percentage of responses in each category

	Strongly agree	Tend to agree	Tend to disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know
My child likes school.	47	46	6	1	0
My child is making good progress in school.	46	47	7	1	0
Behaviour in the school is good.	23	70	4	3	0
My child gets the right amount of work to do at home.	26	54	15	3	2
The teaching is good.	38	53	3	2	4
I am kept well informed about how my child is getting on.	35	47	18	1	0
I would feel comfortable about approaching the school with questions or a problem.	64	29	4	2	1
The school expects my child to work hard and achieve his or her best.	54	42	1	1	2
The school works closely with parents.	35	48	14	2	1
The school is well led and managed.	53	42	2	2	1
The school is helping my child become mature and responsible.	45	45	7	1	2
The school provides an interesting range of activities outside lessons.	39	44	10	4	2

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

59. Children in the reception class only started at the school a few weeks before the inspection but had already settled well within the good learning environment created by the teacher. The provision for reception children is a strength of the school. This is reflected in the good teaching observed in the class throughout the inspection, and the effective progress children are making in the key areas of learning.

Personal, social and emotional development

60. Good provision is made for children's personal, social and emotional development, and they make good progress in this aspect of their learning, as a result. The teacher and support staff quickly get to know the needs of the children and help them to feel secure and confident in the school environment. The wide range of interesting, purposeful and practical activities provided in the class is particularly effective in engaging children's interest. As a result, children are very responsive to the activities on offer and are eager to explore new learning. They play co-operatively with each other, take turns and share, for example, in the role-play corner, the water and the sand. Children are sensitive to the needs of others, and are beginning to develop their understanding of the difference between right and wrong. Most already have a clear understanding of what constitutes acceptable behaviour, and their behaviour is good. They are developing their independence and skills in making choices; and take responsibility for clearing away some of the materials at the end of lessons. The very positive relationships between children and all the adults who work with them has a highly beneficial effect on children's learning, and they thrive on the encouragement they receive.

Communication, language and literacy

61. Children of all abilities, including those with special educational needs, make good progress in communication, language and literacy in the reception class. They are given a secure foundation in initial literacy skills, gain confidence and control in speaking and listening with adults and with their peers, and are generally making good progress towards the Early Learning Goals defined as 'standards of attainment' for children aged five. The quality of teaching in this key area is good.
62. At the time of the inspection, early in the autumn term, children play together happily in the home corner and in 'Bob the Builder's' site office. They assume their chosen roles with great assurance and imagination, and they very quickly settle into animated conversations with their friends as they get ready to 'take the babies out shopping' in their pushchairs or, as Bob, talk about the tools they will need to carry out their next building assignment. The youngest children enjoy sharing nursery rhymes and are also happy to assume roles as nursery-rhyme characters.
63. All the children enjoy sharing books with their teacher. Already, they listen attentively when she asks questions about the text. They have learned that books are read from front to back and that print is read from left to right, and they know that print carries meaning. Most children are confident enough to answer questions, although, as is to be expected at this early stage of development, they do not always answer in complete sentences. The higher attaining children can quickly

suggest words that begin with the sound 'm', and many can also identify the letter 'm' in print on the pages of a book. When 'reading' to an adult, higher attaining children can recall the main events in a simple story, predict what might happen and what the 'next word' might say, and use clues from the pictures to help them understand what the story is about. Children of average and lower attainment are taking pleasure from books, handle them confidently, and can 'retell' a story by talking about the pictures.

64. At the time of the inspection, there was little evidence of writing by children currently in the reception class. However, work produced by pupils who have just entered the Year 1 class shows that, overall, they attain broadly average standards for their age. All enjoy using writing to communicate their ideas, have learned to form letters accurately, and can use their phonic knowledge to build simple words. While the writing of lower attaining children is still at an 'emergent' stage, higher attaining children compose meaningful sentences, leave appropriate spaces between words, and are beginning to introduce punctuation.

Mathematical development

65. Pupils make good progress in their mathematical development in the reception class. Examples of work seen shows that by the time they enter Year 1 the vast majority will meet the Early Learning Goals. At this early stage of their time in school, children are already building their confidence in identifying and ordering the numbers one to five. They show an enthusiasm for numbers and counting, and are keen and responsive in lessons. The teaching of mathematical development is good. The teacher skilfully ensures that activities build knowledge and understanding and are sufficiently active and fun to keep the pupils involved. Pupils are encouraged to use their senses to develop their mathematical learning: for example, by listening with their eyes shut to identify how many bricks were being dropped in a tin, by singing rhymes, by clapping when counting and by counting silently in their heads. Pupils are beginning to show an understanding of mathematical terms such as taller and shorter, and enjoy the opportunities to compare the heights of members of the class. There is a good range of opportunities for pupils to learn through practical tasks, for example by using sand and water, through physical activities outside, games and construction kits. The computer is used appropriately to support mathematical development in the reception class. Children are keen to show how they can match pairs of toys and identify sets of cakes using a computer program.

Knowledge and understanding of the world

66. Children make good progress in developing an understanding of the wider world in which they live when they explore the part of Tewkesbury which is near the school. They learn about both 'natural' and 'man-made' features in the landscape, and they recognise and name various buildings which are landmarks in the town. They talk about the architectural details of buildings, noticing features such as 'big brick walls' and 'the tower on the school roof'. They speculate on the use of certain buildings and on the kind of goods delivered to certain shops and sites by lorries they have seen during their walk. Postcards from holiday places at home and abroad sent to the school by 'Barnaby Bear' serve to remind the children of places further afield; while the story of 'Bear in the Air' develops their awareness of flight as a means of travel, whether by balloon or 'plane. From the story, and from aerial photographs, they learn how the land, and buildings, look from above.

67. There were no opportunities during the inspection to make direct observations of activities which contribute to children's knowledge and understanding of 'past' and 'present'. However, evidence from planning, from classroom displays and from photographic records shows that children experience a relevant curriculum and are taught appropriate vocabulary, knowledge and skills as a basis for the later study of history. For example, they routinely use language associated with the passage of time and with changing dates and seasons in relation to everyday activities and observations. They recall the immediate past in relation to their own lives and their families; and they learn some significant similarities and differences between life 'then' and 'now', for example when they 'become' bargees, dressed in traditional costumes, during a visit to the Waterways Museum in Gloucester.
68. There were also no opportunities to see religious education being taught during the inspection but planning and displays shows that children make sound progress in this area. They learn stories from the Bible, such as the good Samaritan, and the importance of belonging to groups including families and the school community.
69. Children benefit from studying fruits and vegetables with magnifying glasses and this helps to develop their scientific understanding of the world. They also have ample opportunities to use construction kits, and to use scissors and simple joining methods to create models from recycled materials.
70. Children have many opportunities to develop their understanding and use of ICT. Already many children are confident when using the mouse to click on icons, move objects on the screen and create patterns. They also have opportunities to use tape recorders, programmable toys and a camera to take photographs as part of the current 'Ourselves' topic.
71. Overall, children make good progress in developing their understanding of the world, and this element of their learning is taught well.

Physical development

72. Children in the reception class have regular opportunities for outside play and exercise with access to a range of equipment including wheeled toys, a tunnel and a seesaw. These sessions are well supervised and staff ensure that pupils are encouraged to try different ways of moving and travelling in a safe and controlled way. The children show a sound awareness of space when pushing and pulling wooden trucks around and in and out of plastic cones. There are also regular physical education lessons in the hall. While there is an outside area for children to develop their physical skills, and they are supervised by an adult when using this area, it would be helpful to enclose the space.

Creative development

73. Children benefit from good teaching when they learn to create simple prints, and make good progress when painting expressive self-portraits. They have ample opportunities to choose to paint and draw, and to create their own simple collage pictures. Children's creative development is also fostered by opportunities to take part in role play and to use toys in 'small world' play. They enjoy music and have already learned a good range of songs. They are beginning to learn to clap simple rhythms and can link simple movements to the words of their 'action' songs. The

teacher promotes a sense of fun in the music sessions, and pupils respond well and make good progress in their learning.

ENGLISH

74. On entry to Year 1, pupils' language and literacy skills are broadly average, overall. The school's results in the national tests for pupils aged seven in 2000 were above the national averages and above the average results of similar schools in both reading and writing. Although there are, as yet, no national figures with which to compare the results for 2001, the school's overall results for this year are lower than in the previous year. At the same time, however, the percentages of pupils attaining standards higher than those expected for their age have increased. For the past three years, boys have done better than girls in both reading and writing.
75. In the national tests in 2000 for pupils aged 11, the school's results were in line with the national average, but below the results of similar schools. Nevertheless, the percentage of pupils attaining standards above those normally expected of pupils of the same age was above the national average. In 2001, an overall increase in the percentage of pupils attaining the nationally expected standard for their age was offset by a fall in the percentage of pupils exceeding that level.
76. Fluctuations in pupils' performance in national tests year-on-year are mirrored by similar variations in the profiles of attainment in current year groups throughout the school. Inspection findings confirm such variations and also establish that occasional, apparent variations in performance by boys and girls are attributable more to the capabilities of individual pupils than to any gender imbalance overall. There is no evidence that teachers have different expectations for the performances of boys and girls, or that boys and girls receive different degrees of support in lessons. There are examples of high and low attainment, to varying degrees, in all year groups. However, pupils of all abilities, including those who have special educational needs and the more able pupils, make consistently sound progress in English and, whatever their respective starting-points, build steadily on their prior attainment.
77. At the time of this inspection, early in the autumn term, pupils in Years 2 and 6 demonstrate broadly average standards for their ages, although with some variations in performance associated with different aspects of the English curriculum. For example, pupils aged six to seven have relative strengths in speaking and listening, reading comprehension, handwriting and spelling. By comparison, their ability to decode unfamiliar words when they read, to punctuate their written work, to construct complex sentences and to use grammatical conventions accurately are slightly weaker. In addition, their knowledge of the work of well-known authors and poets is rather more limited than is usually the case with pupils of this age. In Year 6, pupils' skills in speaking and listening, their understanding of, and response to, fiction, their knowledge about language, their ability to use technical terms to describe language and to define concepts and ideas accurately in other subjects, are rather more advanced than some other skills. Similarly advanced is pupils' ability, overall, to write for a range of curriculum purposes in English and other subjects matching style appropriately to the purpose of their writing. There are many examples of written work in which pupils use well chosen, powerful words and imaginative ideas, for example to describe a setting for a story or to generate suspense. Equally, there are good examples of empathetic writing and of informative accounts in history. Nevertheless, pupils' handwriting and the presentation of their work are not always as good as they might be; their library and reference skills are relatively under-developed; and, as with younger pupils, grammatical mistakes, weaknesses in sentence structure and in the organisation of

written work, and the inappropriate use of colloquialisms are to be found quite frequently in written work. As a consequence of a recent drive to raise standards in spelling throughout the school, most pupils, demonstrate the ability to spell reasonably accurately or at least plausibly. However, weaknesses in spelling still persist in the work of some of those older pupils who find it difficult to combine, simultaneously, the many skills required to produce written work of a high standard. Pupils' knowledge of their own literary heritage (as represented by well known authors and poets from the past and by contemporary writers for children) is underdeveloped in this age group, just as with younger pupils.

78. At the time of the last OFSTED inspection in 1997, high attaining pupils were judged to be 'insufficiently challenged'; some pupils between the ages of seven and 11 were making 'insufficient progress in relation to their prior attainment'; and, it was suggested, 'more use could be made of ICT' to support work in English. Since that time, the standards achieved by the more able pupils have shown a steady improvement overall, so that, at the time of this inspection, all available evidence points to the fact that, with very rare exceptions, higher attaining pupils in all year groups are making consistently sound progress, in lessons and over time, in relation to their starting-points. The school's statistical analysis of its results in national English tests, and the English co-ordinator's analysis of pupils' written responses to specific tasks in those tests, have enabled staff to target areas of weakness such as spelling, and there are already firm intentions to address other identified weaknesses such as grammar and sentence structure in pupils' writing. More use could still be made of ICT to support work in English. Some spelling programs are already used to good effect to support pupils with special educational needs, and there are some examples of published work where ICT has been used to good effect to present pupils' written work for a wider audience. Nevertheless, the use of word processing, in particular, to help pupils to draft, edit and redraft their writing is an area that still needs to be developed, and which would be of particular benefit to older pupils who are already familiar with the drafting process.
79. In the lessons observed, the teaching was mainly good and was never less than satisfactory. Most teachers are secure in their knowledge of English as a subject, and, with only very occasional exceptions, lessons are delivered clearly and confidently. Teachers are able to question pupils skilfully, analyse their responses, and immediately correct misunderstandings or give supplementary explanations to make sure that key points have been learned. Most teachers are adept at turning situations that arise spontaneously into learning opportunities. All model reading aloud well, and there is also some effective teaching of writing, particularly in Years 5 and 6. Teachers of older children show their pupils strategies which will empower them as learners and which promote independence. For example, pupils are given notes to help them focus on the structure and organisation of their written work, according to their needs; the use of dictionaries is routinely promoted in some classes; the drafting of written work, redrafting and subsequent editing are taught explicitly; and, the use of 'brainstorm' diagrams and other such analytical planning tools are demonstrated to help pupils understand just how to approach writing tasks such as developing a character. If there is a weakness in some of the teaching where such useful strategies are employed, it is simply that expectations that pupils should apply what they have been taught are not always quite rigorous enough. This is also true of some of the marking of pupils' work, where common errors may well be overlooked in favour of highlighting success or shortcomings in regard to the specific objectives set for the task. In this way, for instance, many grammatical errors and weaknesses in sentence structure tend to be overlooked when the

objectives are more concerned with content, the presentation and layout of information, or the use of particular linguistic styles or devices. In a very similar way, too, many teachers do not routinely insist on high standards in handwriting and the presentation of work on those occasions when these are not the specified objectives of the activities in which pupils are engaged. Overall, combined evidence from lesson observations and from a scrutiny of pupils' completed work shows the teaching enables pupils to make sound progress in English.

80. Given the semi open-plan design of the school building, several teachers are constrained to teaching literacy lessons in areas where normal working noise from adjacent areas intrudes. In the cases of Years 5 and 6, these teaching areas also serve as thoroughfares which are in almost constant use. Such circumstances present teachers with additional challenges as they seek to engage their own pupils in discussion, and also make it difficult, at times, for pupils to sustain the high level of uninterrupted concentration necessary to gain maximum benefit from some whole-class activities during the literacy hour.
81. The English co-ordinator gives sound leadership and management in the subject and has fulfilled a particularly useful function in identifying and targeting general weaknesses in pupils' performance. She has been instrumental in organising in-service training for staff and has secured effective support for the school through the services of local education authority advisory staff. However, her own role in leading developments and in monitoring teaching is relatively underdeveloped, and these aspects of her work now need to be strengthened. Resources for English are just adequate. However, when funds allow, there is a need to improve the range and quality of books available for pupils to read, particularly, though not exclusively, for older, lower attaining pupils. These new resources should not just supplement, but should also replace some of the outdated colour-coded, structured scheme materials that already exist. They should also seek to stimulate pupils' interest in a range of literary genres and in the work of well-known authors and poets, past and present. At the time of the inspection, the school library had been recently relocated in the Year 5 classroom following several changes in the use of space in different areas of the school. The school realises that a working classroom is clearly not an ideal location for such a vital resource. However, in addressing this shortcoming, staff should also consider the age and quality of the books in the library and their suitability to support the revised National Curriculum and to match the range of pupils' ages, interests and abilities. Weaknesses in pupils' library skills also need to be addressed.

MATHEMATICS

82. On entry to Year 1, the mathematical knowledge and understanding of pupils are broadly average. The results of the national mathematics tests (SATs) at the end of Year 2 in 2000 were well above both the national average and the average results achieved by similar schools. In the SATs results of 2001 there was a reduced percentage of pupils who achieved or exceeded expected levels. At the time of the inspection, there were no national figures available to compare with the school's results in 2001. Inspection findings show that standards are broadly average in Years 1 and 2, and all pupils, including those with special educational needs, are making satisfactory progress. In Year 1, pupils can count in tens and solve simple money problems by using their knowledge of number bonds. Most pupils in Year 2 show confidence when using numbers up to 100 when measuring, and many can

mentally calculate number bonds quickly to 20. A scrutiny of previous work shows that, by the end of Year 2, many pupils can use their knowledge of the five and ten times tables. Some can calculate simple fractions of whole numbers and identify properties of three-dimensional shapes.

83. The results of the Year 6 national tests in 2000 were above the national average and the average results of similar schools. The SATs results in 2001 show a similar percentage of pupils achieving the expected level but a reduction in those achieving a higher level. No national figures were available for comparison at the time of the inspection. Inspection findings are not quite as favourable as the school's 2000 results and more closely reflect the 2001 results. Overall, pupils' standards in Year 6 are broadly average in mathematics, with the majority reaching the expected standard. Overall, all pupils, including those with special educational needs, are making sound progress, and their achievements are satisfactory in relation to their starting points. In Year 6, most pupils confidently recall and use their tables, apply different strategies to work out number problems and enjoy the challenge of finding different methods of calculating answers. The scrutiny of work shows that by Year 6 pupils have a secure understanding of shape, space and measures and are learning to handle data effectively.
84. Overall, the quality of teaching is sound. However, good teaching was observed in Year 3 and for the higher attaining group in Years 5 and 6. The twice weekly setting by ability in Years 5 and 6 is addressing the needs of the higher attaining pupils which were not adequately met when the school was last inspected. In the vast majority of lessons, pupils are given tasks which are appropriately matched to their differing abilities. Good lessons are characterised by tasks which challenge the pupils. For example, in Year 3, a higher attaining pupil was encouraged to explain the use of partitioning verbally when adding two numbers involving hundreds, tens and units. In another good lesson, the higher attaining pupils in Years 5 and 6 were encouraged to check their own calculations and enthusiastically rose to the challenge of learning about and applying Napier's method for long multiplication. Homework is used soundly throughout the school for pupils to practise and apply their learning. Where available, learning support workers give good support to pupils' needing additional help and are well briefed by teachers. Teachers are familiar and secure with the National Numeracy Strategy. The three-part lesson structure is soundly established and planning is satisfactory. Teachers share the purpose of the lesson with pupils, effectively linking it to previous learning. The explanations of how the learning can be applied to real-life situations are a sound feature of lessons in all parts of the school. The final part of the lesson is often well used for pupils to explain what they have been doing or for teachers to recap on the purpose of the lesson. However, the opportunity for pupils to share what they have learned is not a feature of these sessions. This would be a useful assessment tool and would help pupils evaluate their own learning.
85. There are insufficient opportunities for pupils to use ICT in numeracy lessons. Indeed, computers were not used in any lessons seen during the inspection. A scrutiny of previous work shows that pupils do have occasional opportunities to apply their mathematical skills in other subjects, particularly in science.
86. Teachers make useful ongoing observations of pupils' progress during lessons and adapt their teaching appropriately. Assessment is used to set challenging end of Year 6 targets which are agreed with the local education authority. The headteacher thoroughly analyses the standardised and optional national test results

each year to identify groups of pupils or individuals who need extra help. The co-ordinator has drawn up a thorough action plan identifying how areas for improvement, for example fractions, can be taught each term to differing abilities of pupils from Year 2 through to Year 6. Individual targets for pupils are included for the following year on the annual reports to parents. However, these sometimes need to be more specific. In addition, pupils often need to be more aware of particular areas of mathematics in which they need to improve over a short term, for example, to learn certain times tables in the next half term. A portfolio of assessed work is kept for each child and provides a useful record of progress.

87. The co-ordinator provides useful feedback to staff on an occasional basis on their weekly planning. The previous co-ordinator, the headteacher, observed numeracy teaching last year but the current co-ordinator has not yet had the opportunity to carry out this form of monitoring. The role of the co-ordinator has improved since the last inspection but still requires strengthening so that systematic procedures for checking the quality of teaching and learning are securely established. Resources are sufficient, in good order and well organised. Individual white boards, number squares, counting and measuring equipment were used effectively in lessons.

SCIENCE

88. On entry to Year 1, the scientific knowledge and understanding of most pupils are broadly average. The results of the statutory teacher assessments in Year 2 in 2000 were very high in relation to the percentage reaching the expected standard, compared both with the national average and with the average results of similar schools. However, the percentage exceeding this level was below the national average and the results of similar schools, and suggested that the more able pupils should be doing better. In 2001, reduced percentages achieved or exceeded the expected levels in Year 2. At the time of the inspection, there were no national averages available to compare with these 2001 results.
89. Inspection findings show the achievements of the vast majority of pupils are sound in Years 1 and 2, and their standards are in line with those expected. However, relatively few demonstrate above average standards, and evidence therefore confirms that more able pupils continue to underachieve in some lessons. The progress of pupils with special educational needs is considerably more consistent, and is sound.
90. The results of the SATs in Year 6 in 2000 were in line with the national average but were below the average results of similar schools. A closer analysis shows the percentage reaching the expected standard was above the national average but the percentage exceeding this level was below average. These results in Year 6 closely mirror those in Year 2 in 2000 and 2001 in relation to the likely underachievement of more able pupils. The results in Year 6 in 2001 show the school maintained the same percentage achieving the expected level, but increased the percentage reaching a higher standard.
91. Inspection findings show that all pupils in Years 3 to 6 make mainly sound progress in science, and most demonstrate average standards in Year 6. The last OFSTED inspection also found that pupils generally achieved standards which matched the expected levels in Years 2 and 6. The increased percentage of Year 6 pupils achieving above average standards in 2001 suggests the school is now catering more effectively for the needs of more able pupils in Years 3 to 6. Inspection

evidence broadly supports this indication, but also shows there remains scope for these pupils to achieve more highly in some lessons.

92. In Year 1, pupils make sound progress when learning to recognise and name external parts of the human body. Pupils understand that their bodies change as they grow older, and they are beginning to develop their understanding of the way they use their senses to experience the world around them. Year 2 pupils have a satisfactory understanding of the importance of healthy eating and the need for exercise. Most make sound progress when learning that exercise makes the heart beat faster but the achievements of more able pupils are restricted by the limited demands of worksheets which are used after the practical activity. An analysis of work completed in the last academic year by Year 2 pupils shows the tasks set promoted the skills and understanding necessary for most pupils to reach average standards, but provided too few opportunities for pupils to demonstrate higher standards.
93. In Year 3, pupils have learned about magnetism, and are able to use appropriate scientific language, explaining that opposite poles attract and similar poles repel. Most make good progress when conducting simple experiments to test the power of different magnets, although some would benefit from making and explaining predictions of outcomes before their testing. Year 4 pupils understand that some materials conduct electricity while others act as insulators; and Year 5 pupils generally achieve well when learning how day and night are created by the movement of the earth on its axis. Most have a satisfactory understanding of why the sun's position appears to change during the day. In Year 6, most pupils make sound progress when conducting systematic investigations devised by their teacher, but more able pupils, in particular, require more opportunities to plan and undertake their own enquiries, to test their ideas, and to decide their own methods for recording results.
94. The quality of teaching is sound overall, and enables most pupils to make satisfactory progress in the subject. The last OFSTED inspection also found that the teaching was sound in science. Teachers have secure subject knowledge, provide clear explanations and organise their lessons efficiently. Pupils respond well to the teaching, demonstrating positive attitudes to science and good behaviour. Teachers introduce appropriate scientific vocabulary and reinforce this during lessons. They use effective questioning skills to probe pupils' understanding; and their lessons form part of a coherent programme for the development of pupils' knowledge and skills in the subject. Teachers plan their lessons carefully and have a clear understanding of what they expect pupils to learn. The overall quality of their planning is sound. However, all pupils are usually set the same tasks in science lessons, and more able pupils sometimes require more challenging work. Very limited use is made of ICT to support pupils' learning in science.
95. Procedures for monitoring and evaluating the quality of teaching and learning in the subject are underdeveloped. While the headteacher, who has very recently taken on the role of science co-ordinator, has a good knowledge of pupils' performance in the statutory tests in science, he has limited awareness of the quality of teaching and learning in the subject. The previous science co-ordinator helped to introduce the good scheme of work provided by the Qualifications and Curriculum Authority, and organised resources well. However, she also had no rigorous strategies for monitoring the subject, either through lesson observations or the analysis of pupils' work from across the school. At present, weaknesses in the school's monitoring

mean it is in a relatively weak position to identify strengths and weaknesses in teaching and learning, and to target areas for improvement.

96. There are sufficient resources for science, and they are readily accessible.

ART AND DESIGN

97. Pupils' achievements in art and design are satisfactory overall in Years 1 to 6. Their standards are mainly in line with those expected for pupils of similar ages, across the school, and examples of good work are sometimes evident. The last OFSTED inspection found that standards in art were above average.
98. In Year 1, pupils create carefully observed self-portraits in pencil, demonstrating sound drawing skills. They also make sound progress when creating portraits using fabric and threads. In Year 2, pupils make satisfactory use of ICT to create abstract pictures, and their pastel copies of the work of famous artists show sound skills. Good standards were achieved last term by Year 2 pupils, following their visit to Tewkesbury Abbey. Their clay tiles, representing parts of the abbey, are well designed and made; and their pastel drawings are bold and represent good achievement.
99. In Year 3, pupils have made sound progress when drawing parts of the local environment, and Year 4 pupils learn about the work of Stanley Spencer and create satisfactory drawings of their faces, demonstrating sound skills. Year 5 pupils achieve well when using simple viewfinders to focus their attention on still-life compositions, and make good progress when drawing in pastel and charcoal. In Year 6, pupils make sound progress when creating images which convey movement, using collage. They benefit from discussing the work of David Hockney, and have created abstract representations of faces which reflect elements of the artist's work.
100. The quality of teaching is sound overall, although good teaching was observed in Year 5, by the co-ordinator for the subject. Pupils have positive attitudes and behave well in art and design lessons. Teachers have at least satisfactory subject knowledge, and their lesson planning is sound. Appropriate emphasis is given to the development of pupils' understanding about art, for example through discussions about the work of famous artists, while ample opportunities are also provided for pupils to create their own responses to the natural and made world around them. In the most effective teaching, pupils are given well judged guidance to help them to develop their skills in the subject, while in some lessons pupils would benefit from more focused instruction, for example to develop their drawing skills.
101. The art and design co-ordinator is enthusiastic about the subject, willingly provides advice to her colleagues and organises resources for the subject efficiently. However, she appropriately recognises that the monitoring and evaluation elements of her role as co-ordinator are underdeveloped.
102. Resources for art and design are good.

DESIGN AND TECHNOLOGY

103. Overall, pupils' achievements are satisfactory in design and technology and their standards are generally in line with the national expectations.
104. In Year 1, pupils make sound progress when making simple puppets from rolled newspaper. They demonstrate satisfactory skills when cutting and gluing textiles to the puppet forms to create clothing. In Year 2, pupils achieve sound standards when making models which incorporate a simple winding mechanism, for example to lift Father Christmas, made from textiles and card, down a cardboard chimney. They also make sound progress when using construction kits to create model abbeys after visiting Tewkesbury Abbey.
105. In Year 3, pupils are able to decide on the ingredients for sandwiches, know the equipment they will need to make the sandwiches and write clear instructions for the making process. They have made picture frames, using wood, card and perspex. However, evidence suggests that pupils received too much adult assistance in making these, which provided limited challenge as a result. In Year 4, pupils have designed and made simple money containers, using fabric and threads, and these demonstrate broadly satisfactory standards. Year 5 pupils have created sound designs for containers, and their finished products are well made and carefully finished with paint and decorative embellishments. Year 6 pupils achieve satisfactory standards when making vehicles which incorporate pneumatics to facilitate movement, and know how to strengthen wooden frames for model shelters by using card triangles glued to each corner. However, their masks, made from card and paper, demonstrate joining and finishing skills which are usually typical of the work of slightly younger pupils.
106. No design and technology lessons were taught in Years 1 to 6 during the inspection, so it is not possible to make a secure judgement about the quality of teaching in the subject. However, an analysis of pupils' completed work shows the teaching enables pupils to make satisfactory overall progress in design and technology. Evidence suggests that teachers' subject knowledge is broadly satisfactory but also shows there is sometimes scope for higher expectations for the achievements of Year 6 pupils. Year 3 pupils benefit from a popular design and technology club and have made good progress when using construction kits to make a range of model playground apparatus during these sessions.
107. A good scheme of work, produced by the Qualifications and Curriculum Authority, has been introduced, but the school has limited strategies for evaluating the success of its implementation. Procedures for checking the quality of teaching and pupils' standards have not been established by the previous co-ordinator, and the new co-ordinator, who took responsibility for the subject very recently, has yet to formulate a sufficiently precise plan to develop his monitoring role. Resources for the subject are good, overall, and are well organised.

GEOGRAPHY

108. There is sufficient evidence from the observation of three lessons, the scrutiny of pupils' work and of teachers' planning, and discussions with staff and pupils, to show that pupils aged seven and 11 attain standards which are broadly average for their ages. They make satisfactory progress overall, in lessons and over time, gradually extending their knowledge and understanding of places, of geographical

patterns and processes, and of environmental change. Through appropriate studies which involve fieldwork, they also develop sound skills in geographical enquiry.

109. Pupils in Year 2 made sound progress in geographical enquiry when they conducted a traffic survey in streets close to the school. They quantified the amount of traffic over a given period and recorded their findings, listing different types of vehicle according to the numbers seen. In a lesson seen, they were able to make simple comparisons between Tewkesbury and a contrasting seaside locality. They commented on significant similarities and differences between the 'human' and 'physical' features of each place, and demonstrated an appropriate level of awareness of the main differences between inland and marine environments. Using photographs of well known buildings in the town, they can identify ways in which the town environment itself has changed over time as a result of changes in human activity. In Year 4, pupils demonstrate similarly sound skills for their age in geographical enquiry. For example, they use photographs to 'investigate' activities in and around the village of Chembakolli in southern India. They are able to draw on their previous knowledge of the monsoon climate of the area, and they observe, amongst other things, the effects of the climate on the lives of the villagers. In a study of mountainous regions of the world, pupils in Year 6 use atlases, including gazetteers and grid references, to locate Nepal and the Himalayas. They know that the Himalayas are in Asia, while both the Cumbrian mountains and the Austrian Alps, areas studied in previous lessons, are in Europe. They are aware that the height of mountains not only affects the climate but also the human activities in any geographical area.
110. Evidence from the scrutiny of work shows that pupils' skills in making and interpreting maps and plans of different scales, and their grasp of geographical language, develop incrementally, year-on-year, as they move up through the school.
111. The teaching of geography was sound in all lessons observed. Teachers make sure pupils know, from the outset, what they are intended to learn, and they use introductions well to revisit relevant skills and knowledge acquired in previous lessons. Throughout lessons, they use questioning to good effect to assess what has been learned and to make sure that pupils understand key points. Lessons are planned to provide a variety of activities, sometimes including useful opportunities for collaborative work and for the development of skills in speaking and listening.
112. The role of subject co-ordinators in monitoring standards of work and teaching was underdeveloped at the time of the last OFSTED inspection in 1997. The current post-holder responsible for co-ordinating and monitoring work in geography is new to her role this term, and, as yet, has not had any opportunity to monitor provision directly through the scrutiny of teachers' planning and of pupils' work, or by observing teaching. Evidence strongly suggests that sufficiently rigorous monitoring procedures had yet to be established by the previous co-ordinator. As a consequence, insufficient progress has been made in rectifying the deficiency identified in last inspection.
113. The school is currently teaching geography following the guidance set out for schools by the Qualifications and Curriculum Authority. Last term, teachers sensibly carried out an audit of the units of study used thus far, partly in order to identify resource needs, but also in order to determine where units might be changed or amended to best suit the school's needs. The co-ordinator is beginning to build on the findings of the audit and rightly perceives the need to give more prominence to

studies of the local area, particularly for pupils in Years 1 and 2. It will also be important to ensure that any changes made are accompanied by clear, planned progression in the development of pupils' geographical skills, knowledge and understanding in these two year groups. The use of educational visits to bring geography to life for pupils is a strength of provision. Although there is some evidence in Year 5 to suggest that ICT is used occasionally to support work in geography, for example to down-load maps from the internet, there remains ample scope for its wider use. Other resources for the subject are broadly adequate and are well organised. Nonetheless, some atlases and information books, including those in the school library, are rather dated and need to be replaced when funds allow.

HISTORY

114. As a consequence of timetabling arrangements, few history lessons could be observed. However, evidence drawn from lessons seen in Year 1 and Year 6, from teachers' planning and from the scrutiny of pupils' work shows that pupils of all ages and abilities make satisfactory progress, and that pupils' standards are broadly average.
115. The achievements of all pupils, in all year groups, are satisfactory. Through the various topics and periods they study, they acquire a satisfactory grasp of chronology and of historical dates and language. For example, pupils in Year 1 talk about seaside holidays '50 years ago' when they reflect on the video they have watched about 'The Magic Grandfather'. They use terms such as 'promenade', 'penny-farthing' and 'goat-cart' to describe what they have seen, and they are able to explain why people might collect 'souvenirs' to remind themselves of happy events in their lives. They also know that objects such as souvenirs allow us to find out about the past. A limited range of recorded work produced by pupils in Year 2 last year shows that they had a satisfactory grasp of differences between life in Victorian times and their own lives today, and there is further evidence of a visit to the Gloucester Waterways Museum where they dressed and 'lived' as 'barges', learning about Victorian life almost 'at first hand.'
116. Work produced by pupils currently in the Year 3 class demonstrates a growing awareness of distinct periods of history. For example, they know that the Celts lived in Britain before the Romans, and that the Romans were followed by Saxons and Vikings. They learn to compare historical periods. For example, they are able to draw up lists detailing significant differences in the way the Celts and Romans lived, the Celts developing circular farm buildings using clay, wood and straw, while the Romans built elegant, decorated villas, towns and cities, often using bricks or stones as their building materials. Pupils in Year 5 learn about differences between the ways of life of ancient Greeks and Spartans, recognising, for example, the value placed by the Greeks on education, while the Spartans prized physical fitness. A strong feature in the work of last year's Year 5 cohort was the historical study which arose from a visit to the 'plague village' of Eyam in Derbyshire. It is quite evident that this visit served as a powerful stimulus for learning. It helped pupils to assimilate considerable information about the kind of conditions which gave rise to the plague in London in 1665, and also enabled them to empathise strongly with the feelings and the courage of the people of Eyam. Pupils in the current Year 6 class are engaged in a study of ancient Greece. They demonstrate average standards for their age in their use of enquiry skills when they use a variety of texts and

illustrations to find out about school life. They use relevant dates and terms, link ideas from different sources, organise their work appropriately, and communicate their findings clearly. They are also able to use evidence to inform their own judgements. For example, on the evidence available, they conclude that there were inequalities in life in ancient Greece insofar as only rich boys, and no girls, were able to attend school, and all the teachers were men. They compare life at school in ancient Greece with their own experiences of school in Tewkesbury.

117. At the time of the last OFSTED inspection in 1997, work for the more able pupils was found to be insufficiently challenging. No evidence to support this view was found during the current inspection of history and their tasks enable them to make sound progress in the subject.
118. Too few lessons were observed in history to support an overall judgement about the quality of teaching in the subject. However, teaching was sound in the two lessons observed in Year 1 and Year 6. The scrutiny of pupils' current written work suggests that teaching is possibly slightly more confident and well informed in Years 3, 5 and 6 than elsewhere.
119. In all year groups, pupils' work is enhanced by educational visits to places of historical interest, and it is clear that history makes a good contribution to pupils' skills in English as well as to their social and cultural development. There is evidence to suggest that the school is increasingly using ICT to support work in history. Video recordings and CD-ROMs are already used by some teachers and there is a growing stock of suitable materials amongst the resources seen. However, there is little evidence as yet to show that computers have been used for data-handling in history, and this is an area of its work that the school might usefully seek to develop. The co-ordinator is new to her role and, although informed about the coverage of the subject by informal means, has yet to begin to monitor teaching, learning and standards. There is no evidence of the monitoring of teaching and learning by the previous co-ordinator. Resources for history are satisfactory and are well organised.

INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY

120. From the limited use of ICT seen and the amount of evidence available during the inspection, it is not possible to make a judgement about the standards achieved or the quality of teaching.
121. Teachers' planning shows the basic requirements of the subject to develop pupils' skills are ensured with the use of the scheme of work provided by the Qualifications and Curriculum Authority. There were also a few examples of work where ICT had supported learning in other subjects. However, ICT is not an integral part of learning and teachers do not maximise opportunities for pupils to use computers, particularly in literacy and numeracy lessons. The school recognises this an area for development. During the inspection many computers in the classrooms were switched off for all, or most, of the time.
122. The last inspection found that resources required improvement and that there was no policy or scheme of work. These areas have been soundly addressed. Resources are now sufficient to meet the requirements of the curriculum. With the

very recent installation of a computer suite, the school is in a strong position to move forward in this subject.

123. In Years 1 and 2, pupils learn to control a mouse and enter text into a word-processing package. They are beginning to understand how to switch between upper and lower case letters and use the function keys for deleting, spacing and placing of the cursor. Pupils have produced patterns using the Paintbox program; and control technology is introduced through the use of programmable toys. In Year 3, work is planned to develop word processing skills and insert pictures into text. Some Year 4 pupils were observed learning how to change the size and position of digital photographs onto a frame. They were confident when controlling the mouse, could use the icons and access files with stored work. Some current Year 6 pupils are confident when locating files, saving and accessing from a floppy disc, altering images on digital pictures, accessing information from the internet and sending e mails. A good deal of this confidence comes from use of computers at home. The school uses carefully chosen programmes with pupils with special educational needs to help their learning, for example in spelling.
124. The co-ordinator has had responsibility for the subject for six months. She is enthusiastic and is currently being trained to a level sufficient to lead training for members of staff. She has already provided support material for staff to build their knowledge of word-processing software. Resources are now sufficient, and the government funding has been used appropriately to support this development. The school has suitable security arrangements for pupils' use of email and restricted access to the internet. The school is beginning to assess pupils, using assessments at the end of units of work, and this is a sensible strategy. The co-ordinator has not monitored teaching and learning in the school and this is an area for development.

MUSIC

125. Due to timetabling arrangements, it was only possible to observe two music lessons. It is, therefore, not possible to make an overall judgement about pupils' achievements in the subject, or pupils' standards from Years 1 to 4. However, in the lessons seen, in Years 5 and 6, pupils demonstrated broadly average standards when interpreting simple notation to clap sequences. They showed satisfactory skills in using untuned percussion instruments and made sound progress in the lessons seen in developing their understanding of notation and duration. The limited evidence of pupils' singing suggests that overall standards in this element of the subject are satisfactory. In the singing in assembly, by Year 1 to 6 pupils, they sang with secure control of pitch and with good diction. However, their awareness of dynamics was rather limited, and this had a negative effect on their otherwise good performance. It was possible to observe recorder tuition and the choir. Pupils made good progress in these sessions and achieved above average standards. In the last inspection, pupils' overall attainment in music was in line with the expected standard.
126. Evidence from the lessons seen shows that pupils have positive attitudes to music, and generally concentrate hard on their tasks. The commitment of pupils in the choir is particularly notable. The lesson observed in Year 5, taught by the music co-ordinator, demonstrated her secure music knowledge and her good teaching skills in

the subject. In Year 6, the teaching was satisfactory and enabled pupils to make sound progress in the lesson.

127. The enthusiastic music co-ordinator readily provides advice when it is requested from her colleagues, and teaches music to two other classes in addition to her own class. She has introduced a commercial scheme of work for Year 1 and 2 pupils, while teachers of the older pupils continue to use the useful scheme of work she has created. An enthusiastic school choir and a school orchestra are taught by the co-ordinator, who makes a valuable contribution to the quality of music education at the school. While it was not possible to observe the orchestra during the inspection, a tape recording of their recent performance shows they achieve well. Some pupils benefit from specialist tuition in violin, keyboard, flute and clarinet; and all pupils are able to listen to visiting musicians who regularly perform for them. Resources for music are well organised and are good, overall.

PHYSICAL EDUCATION

128. Because of timetabling arrangements, there was insufficient evidence to judge the standards achieved by pupils in Year 2 or the overall quality of teaching in Years 1 and 2. In the games skills lesson observed in Year 1, pupils' skills were in line with those expected for their age and the quality of teaching was sound. The pupils were able to concentrate and persevere when practising skills using small apparatus. They showed awareness of space and increased control and accuracy when throwing and catching bean bags, and when rolling and dribbling a ball.
129. In Year 6, standards are in line with those expected nationally in gymnastics and games, which were the areas observed. The school reports that the majority of pupils are able to swim 25 metres by the time they are 11, which is the national expectation. The current Year 6 pupils show increasing control and precision when practising volleyball skills. The majority used the time well to practise skills, to listen to guidance and to watch demonstrations. Year 4 pupils practised and developed forward rolls and some were able to control different speeds of rolls effectively.
130. In the few lessons seen, the quality of teaching was mainly sound but sometimes good. It was good when the teacher had good subject knowledge and was able to build pupils' skills in volleyball by ensuring that pupils practised drills of particular techniques and learned how these could be applied in a game. Good attention was paid to health and safety in lessons and pupils and teachers wore appropriate clothing. Although lessons built on previously learnt skills, planned over a sequence of lessons, opportunities were missed for pupils to evaluate the skills of others and themselves in order to understand how to improve further.
131. There is a sufficient range of resources and the accommodation is adequate to meet the demands of the National Curriculum. The co-ordinator is an enthusiast, and is well supported by a colleague with a range of skills and qualifications. She manages a small budget for the subject and provides support for colleagues. However, she has not had the opportunity to watch lessons taught by colleagues and this restricts her awareness of provision in physical education. The school has a very good range of after-school sporting activities, and opportunities for competitive events, for pupils in Years 3 to 6. These are led by staff, parents and sometimes by older pupils from the adjoining secondary school.

RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

132. From a scrutiny of pupils' completed work it is clear that pupils make satisfactory progress in their learning in religious education. In Years 2 and 6, pupils' knowledge and understanding are in line with the expectations of the locally agreed syllabus.
133. Religious education is taught regularly. However, because of timetabling arrangements only two lessons were observed, which provides too small an evidence base to make a secure judgement about the quality of teaching. However, in the two lessons seen, in Years 2 and 6, the teaching was sound.
134. Lessons were structured and, supported by the syllabus, were part of a sequence of lessons developing knowledge and understanding. In Year 2, pupils showed appropriate knowledge about aspects of Jesus' life and an understanding of the customs associated with the Christian celebration of Harvest. They were able to compare a Harvest festival seen on a video with their own experiences. Year 6 pupils demonstrated sound knowledge of aspects of Jesus' life and some understanding of the use of terms to describe his role, such as king, teacher and shepherd. Pupils were usefully asked to reflect when they were discussing and writing. This is an improvement since the last inspection when reflection was an area for development. The teaching in Year 6 was effective in showing respect and understanding for the beliefs of others. There is very limited use of ICT to support the subject.
135. The objectives from the agreed syllabus are used suitably to make end-of-year assessments to inform the annual reports to parents. The current co-ordinator is temporary but, even under the previous co-ordinator, there has been little monitoring of the quality of learning in the subject. Resources are sufficient. Well organised boxes of artefacts, books and tapes are available to support the teaching of Christianity, Islam and Judaism. Good use is made of visits to support learning including visits to Tewkesbury Abbey and local places of Christian worship.