

INSPECTION REPORT

LEIGH ON MENDIP FIRST SCHOOL

Leigh upon Mendip, Frome

LEA area: Somerset

Unique reference number: 123652

Headteacher: Mrs Gill Harry

Reporting inspector: Mr Alan Fullwood

21184

Dates of inspection: 13 - 15 May 2002

Inspection number: 194752

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

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INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Type of school:	First
School category:	Community
Age range of pupils:	4 to 9 years
Gender of pupils:	Mixed
School address:	Leigh upon Mendip Near Frome Radstock
Post code:	BA3 5QQ
Telephone number:	01373 812592
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Appropriate authority:	The governing body
Name of chair of governors:	Mrs Sparks Beattie
Date of previous inspection:	June 1997

INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Team members			Subject responsibilities	Aspect responsibilities
21184	Alan Fullwood	<i>Registered inspector</i>	English; Information and communication technology; Music; Physical education; Foundation stage; History; Art.	What sort of school is it? The school's results and pupils' achievements; How well are pupils taught? How well is the school led and managed?
9189	John Horwood	<i>Lay inspector</i>		Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development. How well does the school care for its pupils? How well does the school work in partnership with parents?
20444	David Hughes	<i>Team inspector</i>	Mathematics; Science; Religious education; Design and technology; Geography; Special educational needs; Equal opportunities.	How good are the curricular and other opportunities offered to pupils?

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REPORT CONTENTS

	Page
PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT	1
Information about the school	
How good the school is	
What the school does well	
What could be improved	
How the school has improved since its last inspection	
Standards	
Pupils' attitudes and values	
Teaching and learning	
Other aspects of the school	
How well the school is led and managed	
Parents' and carers' views of the school	
PART B: COMMENTARY	
HOW HIGH ARE STANDARDS?	6
The school's results and pupils' achievements	
Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development	
HOW WELL ARE PUPILS TAUGHT?	9
HOW GOOD ARE THE CURRICULAR AND OTHER OPPORTUNITIES OFFERED TO PUPILS?	11
HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL CARE FOR ITS PUPILS?	13
HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL WORK IN PARTNERSHIP WITH PARENTS?	14
HOW WELL IS THE SCHOOL LED AND MANAGED?	15
WHAT SHOULD THE SCHOOL DO TO IMPROVE FURTHER?	17
PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS	18
PART D: THE STANDARDS AND QUALITY OF TEACHING IN AREAS OF THE CURRICULUM, SUBJECTS AND COURSES	22

PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Leigh on Mendip First School is a very small rural school situated in the village of Leigh upon Mendip, five miles from Frome. The 34 pupils on roll, aged from four to nine, are taught in two mixed age classes. Currently, there are slightly more girls than boys. At the time of the inspection, six children were in the Foundation Year. The school mainly serves the immediate area around the school and outlying villages. It is a popular school and is currently over-subscribed in the number of parents wanting their children to start their formal education at the school. Pupils live in a mixture of owner occupied houses and rented accommodation and come from a wide range of backgrounds. Approximately three per cent of pupils are currently entitled to free school meals, which is below the national average. Approximately 29 per cent of pupils are on the school's register of special educational needs, and this is above the national average. No pupils have English as an additional language. There is little movement of pupils to and from the school at times other than their normal first admission or when they transfer to secondary school. The overall level of attainment of the children on entry varies from year to year because of the small numbers involved. This year it was average. At the time of the inspection a temporary teacher who had just started at the school was teaching the Reception/Year 1 class.

HOW GOOD THE SCHOOL IS

Leigh upon Mendip First is a good school where pupils of all abilities make good progress in English, mathematics and science. It provides a good all round education for its pupils and successfully encourages them to develop very good attitudes to learning and to behave very well. It is very successful in meeting its aim of valuing and including all pupils, parents, governors and staff in establishing a stimulating and effective learning environment. The school is led and managed very well. Despite its high costs, the school provides good value for money.

WHAT THE SCHOOL DOES WELL

- It enables pupils to make good progress in English, mathematics and science.
- The quality of teaching and learning is good.
- Provides very well for pupils' spiritual, moral, social, cultural and personal development within a caring and supportive community.
- Provides well for pupils with learning difficulties.
- Works very well in partnership with parents.
- Is led and managed very well.

WHAT COULD BE IMPROVED

- The use made of information and communication technology in other curriculum subjects than English, mathematics, science and geography.

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

HOW THE SCHOOL HAS IMPROVED SINCE ITS LAST INSPECTION

The school has made good progress since it was last inspected in June 1997. Standards of attainment in English, mathematics and science have improved. Pupils' standards of attainment in design technology and information and communication technology are now at expected levels due to the better provision and teaching of these subjects. The quality of teaching has improved and the work provided in lessons is well matched to the needs of all pupils, whatever their age or ability. Good improvement has been made to procedures for assessing pupils' attainment and tracking their progress. The school now provides very well for pupils' social and moral development and is a strongly caring community. The school now provides an interesting range of learning activities and teachers plan the curriculum for their pupils well. Despite many staff changes since the last inspection, the headteacher and governors have worked well together so that staff have a shared sense of purpose in improving the quality of education the school provides and the standards pupils achieve. The school is well placed to make further improvement.

STANDARDS

Generally, while in the Foundation Stage¹ children make good progress in all areas of learning. Children are on track to exceed the Early Learning Goals² in their personal, social, emotional and mathematical development and in their communication, language and literacy skills. Children are on track to achieve the Early Learning Goals in their physical and creative development and in their knowledge and understanding of the world.

There are variations in attainment from year to year in National Curriculum tests at the end of Year 2 because of the small numbers of children involved. In 2001 the school's results were in the top five per cent nationally in reading, writing and mathematics when compared to all schools and schools which take their pupils from similar backgrounds. Since the last inspection, taking into account some variation from year to year, standards have shown an upward trend and a higher percentage of pupils now attain the nationally expected levels for their age. Boys and girls do equally well. Inspection evidence indicates that the attainment of the present group of Year 2 pupils is above national expectations in English, mathematics and science and that pupils are achieving well in relation to their abilities. Pupils' standards in writing are at the expected level for their age. Pupils achieve well in music. Standards of attainment in other National Curriculum subjects are in line with national expectations and pupils make satisfactory progress. Standards in religious education are in line with the expectations of the Locally Agreed Syllabus.

By the end of Year 4, when pupils leave the school, standards of attainment in English, mathematics and science are above national expectations. Standards of attainment in the writing aspect of English are in line with national expectations. Pupils are making good progress in relation to their attainment at the end of Year 2. Standards of attainment are above expectations in art and music. Standards in other National Curriculum subjects are at the expected level for pupils of this age and pupils make satisfactory progress in these

¹ The Foundation Stage begins when children reach the age of three and finishes at the end of the Reception Year. It is a distinct stage in preparing children for later schooling and is based on six areas of learning. These mainly refer to communication, language and literacy; mathematical development, and personal, social and emotional development, but also includes knowledge and understanding of the world, physical and creative development.

² Early learning goals - these are expectations for most children to reach by the end of the Foundation Stage. They refer mainly to achievements children make in connection with the six areas of learning. There are many goals for each area of learning, for example, in language and literacy pupils should be able to write their own name and other things such as labels and begin to write simple sentences.

subjects. They also make satisfactory progress in achieving the expectations of the Locally Agreed Syllabus in religious education.

Pupils with special educational needs make good progress in relation to the targets in their individual education plans because of the good support they receive.

PUPILS' ATTITUDES AND VALUES

Aspect	Comment
Attitudes to the school	Very good. Pupils are keen to come to school, and they are interested and enthusiastic in lessons.
Behaviour, in and out of classrooms	Very good. Pupils behave well around the school and understand clearly how they should behave. They are courteous to staff and visitors
Personal development and relationships	Very good. Pupils' relationships with staff and each other are very good. They are supportive of one another and work very well together, sharing ideas. They readily accept opportunities to take responsibility.
Attendance	Good. There is very little unauthorised absence. Pupils arrive at school on time and are punctual for lessons.

TEACHING AND LEARNING

Teaching of pupils in:	Reception	Years 1 – 2	Years 3 – 4
Quality of teaching	Good	Good	Good

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

The quality of teaching and learning is good overall and varies from satisfactory to very good. It was good or better in three-quarters of the lessons seen. The overall profile of teaching has improved since the last inspection. Teachers plan better because they use procedures to track individual pupils' attainment and progress. They also make learning fun so that pupils are very well motivated to give of their best.

The National Literacy and Numeracy Strategies have been implemented very well and pupils' literacy and numeracy skills are promoted well. Teaching is also good in art, design technology, geography and information and communication technology. However, there was little evidence of pupils using their information and communication technology skills in other areas of the curriculum, and this has rightly been identified by the school as a current target in the development plan. Teaching in other subjects is satisfactory. The quality of teaching of pupils with special educational needs is good.

Teachers make good use of homework to support pupils' learning. Pupils' work is marked well by teachers and often includes comments on how pupils could improve their work. This improves the progress pupils make. Teachers make good use of assessment data to plan work to meet pupils' individual needs and this also improves pupils' learning and the progress they make.

OTHER ASPECTS OF THE SCHOOL

Aspect	Comment
The quality and range of the curriculum	Good. The school provides an interesting range of learning activities and teachers plan the curriculum for their pupils well. This is a considerable improvement since the last inspection. The school provides a very good range of extra curricular activities which enhance the curriculum. The school has very good links with the community and partner schools.
Provision for pupils with special educational needs	Good. Pupils with special educational needs have access to the full curriculum offered to all pupils in the school. Good support is given to these children and they make good progress in relation to their previous attainment.
Provision for pupils' personal, including spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	Very good. The school provides very well for pupils' social and moral development. Pupils are given frequent opportunities to work and play together and to discuss the principles of right and wrong. Teachers encourage pupils to respect the feelings, values and beliefs of others and to care for those who are less well off than themselves. Provision for pupils' spiritual and cultural development is good and help pupils develop an appreciation of the diversity and richness of other cultures.
How well the school cares for its pupils	The school takes very good care of its pupils. The small size of the school enables staff to know all the pupils well and to give them very good support. It provides a very safe, caring environment, and a very good foundation for the pupils' learning. Procedures for assessing pupils' attainment and progress are very good.

The school's links with its parents are very good. Parents have extremely positive views of all aspects of the school's work.

HOW WELL THE SCHOOL IS LED AND MANAGED

Aspect	Comment
Leadership and management by the headteacher and other key staff	The school is led and managed very well. The headteacher gives a clear educational direction to the work of the school and ensures that all involved in the school work together to provide a good quality of education for pupils. She has been very successful in creating a feeling of community where pupils feel very valued and supported.
How well the governors fulfil their responsibilities	Very good. The governing body is very supportive of the school and works extremely hard to involve itself in the everyday life of the school. Governors regularly visit the school and are involved in activities. Governors fulfil their statutory duties and are increasingly becoming more directly involved in monitoring the work of the school.
The school's evaluation of its performance	Good. Many methods are used to track how effective the school is in raising standards. They include careful analysis of results of national tests, monitoring teaching and learning and closely tracking pupils' progress.
The strategic use of resources	Good. The governors make good use of the budget to support the school's educational priorities. They apply the principles of best value very well.

The accommodation is satisfactory overall, the state of the 'temporary' building having been improved by refurbishment and decorating. The school makes good use of the space it has. For example, one area now provides a very good library/computer area.

PARENTS' AND CARERS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

What pleases parents most	What parents would like to see improved
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• The good standard of teaching.• Their children make good progress.• The range of activities outside lessons.• Their children like school.• Behaviour is good.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• No issues for improvement were identified by parents.

The inspection team agrees with the exceptionally positive views of parents.

PART B: COMMENTARY

HOW HIGH ARE STANDARDS?

The school's results and pupils' achievements

1. The overall level of attainment of the children on entry varies from year to year because of the small numbers involved. This year it was at the expected level for children of this age. Pupils make good progress in English, mathematics and science and achieve well in relation to their previous attainment. Pupils with special educational needs (SEN) make good progress because of the good support they receive and most attain the standards expected for their age when they leave the school. Overall, standards of attainment are at least as high as they should be, and in many year groups they are better.

2. Most children in the Foundation Stage are generally making good progress in all areas of learning. They are on track to exceed the Early Learning Goals in their personal, social, emotional and mathematical development and in their communication, language and literacy skills. Children are on track to achieve the Early Learning Goals in their physical and creative development and in their knowledge and understanding of the world. Children settle quickly into school routines, behave very well and grow in confidence and perseverance because of the good care and support they receive. Frequent opportunities are provided for children to develop basic skills in reading, writing and mathematics and to listen attentively to stories and instructions. Children's oral skills are promoted well in small group and class discussions and by adults' careful and sensitive questioning. Frequent opportunities are provided for children to enjoy books and stories and to read to staff and their parents. This ensures they achieve well and make good progress. High expectations and the provision of many opportunities to write enable pupils to compose simple sentences to record their work and ideas. Most children have a good understanding of numbers to ten and can calculate addition of these numbers both mentally and in written form. Children's knowledge and understanding of the world are promoted well through opportunities to explore first hand a variety of objects and to learn the vocabulary associated with them. They operate computers confidently. Children are increasingly able to use their imaginations when responding to stories, music and imaginative play and when developing their physical skills.

3. In the year 2001 National Curriculum tests at the age of seven, pupils' attainment in reading and writing was in the top five per cent nationally when compared both to all schools and to similar schools. Since the last inspection, pupils' attainment has shown an upward trend in reading but varied from year to year in writing. The performance of girls is similar to that of boys. The current group of pupils in Year 2 is on track to achieve above average attainment in speaking, listening and reading and average levels in writing. Most pupils make good progress in English because of the good teaching they receive. Pupils' progress in writing is good. Fewer opportunities for writing imaginatively were observed during the inspection. Standards have been maintained since the time of the last inspection.

4. In mathematics, the results in the year 2001 National Curriculum tests at the end of Year 2 were in the top five per cent nationally when compared to all and similar schools. Since the last inspection pupils' attainment has shown a consistent upward trend and standards are now higher. The performance of boys and girls was similar. Inspection evidence indicates that the attainment of the current group of Year 2 pupils is above

national expectations. Pupils make satisfactory progress. They have a secure understanding of place value to 1000 and can add, subtract, multiply and divide these numbers. They make good progress because of teachers' good planning of work that builds effectively upon their understanding and enables them to achieve well.

5. Teacher assessments in science at the end of Year 2 in 2001 show that the percentages of pupils reaching the expected Level 2 and the higher Level 3 were high in comparison with the national average. Currently, the attainment of Year 2 pupils is above national expectations. Most pupils understand scientific concepts, such as light and dark and distinguish between living and non-living things. Pupils make good progress because of the good teaching they receive and the way work is adapted to their individual needs. Standards have improved since the time of the last inspection.

6. By the end of Year 2, pupils' standards of attainment are in line with national expectations in information and communication technology (ICT). Pupils are achieving well in this subject due to the increased confidence of staff in teaching the subject. By the end of Year 2, pupils are confident in using word-processing, data handling and control technology programs. Standards have improved since the last inspection.

7. By the age of seven, pupils' standards in religious education are in line with the expectations of the Locally Agreed Syllabus. Pupils understand the values of family life and the importance of relationships. They know some Bible stories and that a major element in Christianity is caring for others. Pupils make satisfactory progress in their understanding of Christianity and other world religions.

8. By the end of Year 2, pupils' standards of attainment in art, design and technology, geography, history and physical education are in line with national expectations. All pupils make satisfactory progress. Standards in music are above national expectations and pupils make good progress in relation to their previous attainment. Standards in design and technology have been improved and standards in the other subjects have been maintained.

9. In English at the end of Year 4, pupils' standards of attainment are above national expectations. Pupils make good progress and attain above national expectations in speaking, listening and reading. Pupils make good progress in developing confidence in explaining their ideas and discussing their opinions because of the frequent opportunities they have to do so. They listen attentively to their teacher and the views of others. Many pupils reach standards in reading above national expectations. The high priority given to this aspect by the school ensures that pupils read frequently to adults at school and to their parents. They learn to enjoy reading as well as being able to read. Pupils' confidence in reading is promoted well by ensuring that they are aware of a range of strategies, including phonics, picture and contextual clues when reading unfamiliar word and phrases. Pupils are currently making good progress and attaining expected standards in writing. Pupils' writing is becoming more structured and descriptive, but in free writing situations, they sometimes fall back into simple errors of spelling and punctuation.

10. In mathematics at the end of Year 4, pupils' standards of attainment are above national expectations and they make good progress in developing their mathematical skills. Pupils calculate numbers to 1000 confidently and have a good understanding of symmetry and shape.

11. By the end of Year 4, pupils' standards of attainment in science are above national expectations. Pupils make good progress in relation to their previous attainment at the end of Year 2 because of the good quality of teaching they receive. Pupils are knowledgeable about forces and about the needs of living organisms. They identify different sorts of change

in materials, such as physical and chemical change. Pupils' understanding of scientific concepts is promoted well by teachers, who have a secure understanding of these concepts themselves and present everyday problems for pupils to solve. Standards have improved since the time of the last inspection.

12. Pupils' attainment in ICT is in line with national expectations at the end of Year 4. This is an improvement on the standards found at the time of the last inspection. The school has made good progress in this area due to the greatly improved resources and the training for teachers to use them. Pupils make satisfactory progress in the skills of word-processing, data handling and control technology using the 'Logo' program.

13. By the end of Year 4, pupils' standards of attainment in religious education are in line with the expectations of the Locally Agreed Syllabus. Pupils develop a sound understanding of the importance of pilgrimage in different religions and how people pray in order to talk to God and listen to what He has to say to them. Pupils make satisfactory progress.

14. By the end of Year 4, pupils' standards of attainment in art and music are above national expectations. Pupils make good progress and the high standards noted at the time of the last inspection have been maintained. Pupils make satisfactory progress and attain expected standards in design and technology, history, geography and physical education. Since the time of the last inspection, standards have been maintained except in design and technology where they have improved.

15. The achievements of children with SEN are good. Pupils receive effective support in lessons often learning in small groups that ensure they make good and well monitored progress. Pupils enjoy their work and respect and value that of others in the class or group.

Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development

16. Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development are very good and are a strength of the school. During the last inspection the attitudes and behaviour were reported as good and improvements have clearly been made to achieve the now very good levels. The pupils are very happy to come to school and actively join in the activities. For example, 18 pupils stayed after school for the science club. They are polite and courteous to visitors and are very keen to show their work and talk about what they are doing.

17. The mutual respect between staff and pupils allows the school to operate as a harmonious community. Pupils are given appropriate independence in lessons and encouraged to consider others. For example, in a Year 2, 3 and 4 'Eagles' art lesson, pupils were allowed to choose their own groups to work in but reminded to make sure nobody was left out. In lessons staff were always willing to listen and discuss the ideas which pupils were keen to put forward, so they were actively involved through meaningful question and answer sessions.

18. In lessons, pupils' interest is clearly evident. Their attitudes to work are very good. They settle quickly and sustain their concentration throughout the lessons. Staff take every opportunity to encourage pupils' growth in self-esteem and to increase their competence and confidence. The morning registration period is extremely well used to develop both pupil/teacher relationships and the personal development of the pupils. The school creates a safe and secure environment in which pupils feel confident in answering questions without the fear of rebuke if they make a mistake.

19. Behaviour throughout the school is very good. In lessons there is no evidence of any adverse behaviour and pupils are able to work in a good learning environment. In some lessons, for example an 'eagles' class information technology lesson, the attitudes and behaviour of the pupils were excellent. At break time they play very well together and during the lunch session there is again very good behaviour. A particular strength of the school is the total absence of any oppressive or anti-social behaviour.

20. Pupils' personal development is very good. The low number of pupils in the school and the relatively small class sizes enable staff to monitor and support the pupils closely as they grow up. The very good relationships that are evident throughout the school enable staff to maximise the benefit of direct contact time with the pupils. Pupils take responsibility whenever it is given. For example, a 'special person' is chosen each day to carry out duties such as returning the registers and the chosen pupil has to choose another pupil to go with him or her. The appointment for duties is done on a daily basis to ensure total inclusion. A significant feature of the school's methods to support pupils' personal development is the working in pairs which ensures that they think about issues and consider others. Pupils' spiritual development is very good. They are beginning to appreciate other people's attitudes and values, with some developing understanding of those with different religious beliefs. Pupils are caring and thoughtful.

21. Attendance is good with figures being maintained above the national average since the last inspection. There is very little unauthorised absence. There have been no exclusions.

HOW WELL ARE PUPILS TAUGHT?

22. The quality of teaching and learning is good overall and varies from satisfactory to very good. It was good or better in three-quarters of the lessons seen. The overall profile of teaching has improved since the last inspection. Teachers plan better because they use procedures to track individual pupils' attainment and progress. They also make learning fun so that pupils are very well motivated to give of their best.

23. The quality of teaching of children in the Foundation Stage is good. It was good in seven out of ten lessons observed. The teacher and teaching assistant collaborate well and have established good relationships with the children. They manage the pupils well. There is a good balance of self-chosen and adult-directed activities. The teacher is very new to the school but provides well for these young children. Together the teacher and experienced teaching assistant ensure that the differing needs of Foundation Stage and Year 1 children are met. Good use is made of assessments carried out when children start at the school. Regular ongoing assessments are made and used effectively to plan for children's learning. The organisation of activities ensures that children work productively throughout a session whatever their age. Children make good progress as a result.

24. The quality of teaching in Years 1 and 2 is good. It was good in eight out of ten lessons observed. The quality of teaching of Years 3 and 4 is also good and was good in approximately two-thirds of the lessons observed. Teachers have a good understanding of the National Curriculum and make good use of the school's assessment and tracking procedures to provide stimulating activities that successfully motivate pupils to work hard and achieve well. Teachers make learning fun and successfully increase pupils' self-esteem and confidence by the judicious use of praise and encouragement. The pace of lessons is brisk and teachers have high expectations of what pupils can achieve and how they should behave. All pupils, including the more able, are suitably challenged by the tasks that teachers set and make good progress and achieve well. Teachers consistently involve pupils in their own learning by clearly identifying what it is they hope the pupils will achieve in

lessons and by evaluating how well these objectives have been achieved at the end of the lesson. For example, in a Year 2, 3 and 4 literacy lesson, the teacher enthused her pupils with her own love of words as she questioned the pupils well to come up with interesting connective words to make sentences more interesting. The pupils responded well and through praise and encouragement suggested 'meanwhile', 'although', 'however' and 'therefore' as alternatives. These were put to good use when Year 3 pupils collaborated well with the teaching assistant to write a short story. Where teaching is satisfactory, the teachers' knowledge of the curriculum is less secure and pace of work slower than in the better quality teaching, for example physical education.

25. The National Literacy Strategy has been implemented well and teachers have a good understanding of the literacy framework. Teachers plan their lessons in detail and the structure and programme of the National Literacy Strategy are closely followed. Teachers provide a range of relevant and interesting tasks to meet the needs of pupils with different abilities and ensure that they make good progress and achieve well. The strong emphasis on learning basic literacy skills is effective.

26. The National Numeracy Strategy has been implemented well and the quality of teaching is generally good. All lessons begin with a short mental arithmetic session and end with a structured summing-up session. This enables pupils to understand what they have learned and gives teachers a good knowledge of what the pupils understand. Teachers make very good use of questioning to make pupils think and explain how they arrived at their answers. Assessment and the recording of pupils' progress are linked closely to the National Numeracy Strategy.

27. The quality of teaching in science is good. Lessons are planned well due to teachers' good knowledge and understanding of the curriculum and the use they make of assessment information to plan work to meet the wide range of individual needs in the mixed-age classes. As a result pupils make good progress. Good links are made with other curriculum subjects, such as mathematics and information and communication technology (ICT). The quality of teaching of ICT, art, and design and technology is also good. However, teachers could make better use of pupils' ICT skills in other subjects of the curriculum. Teachers are confident in the demonstration of new techniques and make good use of resources to ensure that pupils make good progress. The quality of teaching and learning in geography, history, music and physical education is satisfactory.

28. The teaching and learning of pupils with special educational needs (SEN) are good. They participate in clearly planned lessons and, where individual education plans (IEPs) are in evidence, they are soundly constructed and used both to monitor and prescribe for future individual need. Teaching assistants support these pupils effectively.

29. Teachers use homework well to support pupils' learning. It is regularly set and parents are aware of their role in ensuring it is completed. The quality of marking is good and pupils' books contain regular comments to help the pupils improve. Good use is made of assessments of pupils' attainment and progress to plan future work, as was seen when the teacher altered her literacy planning for the Tuesday in the light of the difficulties some pupils had experienced the day before.

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

30. The quality and range of learning opportunities for pupils is good. The school provides a broad, balanced and relevant curriculum for pupils in Years 1 to 4 in all subjects of the National Curriculum. In religious education, the school conforms to the Locally Agreed Syllabus. The implementation of 'Curriculum 2000' and the use of national guidelines for curriculum planning have improved curriculum design and ensure full coverage so that the school now exceeds its statutory requirements. As a consequence of this clearer and more precise planning, standards of pupils' learning have also improved and the curriculum no longer contains unsatisfactory elements. This is a considerable improvement since the last inspection.

31. The curriculum is based on appropriate policies and guidelines and teachers plan their work well both on a weekly and on a longer-term basis. Teachers' planning pays careful attention to providing work for different groups of pupils. For example, meticulous attention is paid to ensuring that appropriate elements of the curriculum are presented to pupils in both classes where more than one key stage is represented.

32. The curriculum provided for children in the Foundation Stage is good. Classrooms are set out to provide areas to support different aspects of children's learning. The teacher and teaching assistant ensure that all children have similar experiences. Overall resources are good.

33. The officially recommended strategies for teaching literacy and numeracy have been implemented across the school and are used well in both classes. Teachers make good use of the techniques and skills they have derived from their literacy and numeracy training and apply them effectively to other subjects. They plan lessons with clear and appropriate structures ensuring both coverage of the subject area and provision for meeting the wide range of ages and needs in each class.

34. There is no apparent discrimination between sexes or ages with regard to access to the curriculum. Although classes span more than one key stage, all pupils, including those with special or additional educational needs, are afforded equal access to an appropriate curriculum. Within the school there is a commitment to the celebration of a wide variety of cultures. This is evidenced by visits to the school from people of other cultures, for example, an afternoon of African drumming and a visit to the school by the Kala Arts dancer.

35. Pupils with special educational needs (SEN) have access to the full curriculum offered through the extra support they receive from teachers and teaching assistants. Advice from the local education authority (LEA) and support staff is well used. The school fully complies with the Code of Practice and good use is made of visiting professionals and outside agencies.

36. Provision for personal, social and health education (PSHE) is good. Governors have given due consideration to sex education having regard to the ages of the pupils. Good use is made of school time to promote care and consideration of others and the involvement of the wider community. Health education is supported by visits from local services. For example, the health visitor gives a presentation on 'Looking after Yourself' and 'Five a Day'.

37. The school supports pupils' individual interests well through a very good range of out-of-school clubs and activities, both before and after school, together with extra-curricular activities. Some of these have been specifically for gifted or talented pupils, such as the local 'more able' workshops. Out of school and extra-curricular activities enhance learning in many areas of the curriculum; for example, dramatic productions with other schools such as 'Noyes Fludde', sporting activities and games, as well as visits to local farms or quarries.

38. Pupils' learning is enhanced by very good links with the community. The school is clearly an integral part of the local community from which the majority of pupils come. There are active links to a number of village groups and the school supports many events such as the village fair. Members of the Evergreens are invited into school for events and there are links to the church through the governing body. Pupils go out into the community for a range of visits. These include the Roman Baths, the local museums and local farms and quarries. The vicar comes in to help with assemblies. Parents give talks on local matters, such as childhood in the village during World War II, and local professionals such as the road safety officer and local librarian support the school's work.

39. The local cluster of schools form a very good partnership with Leigh upon Mendip First School. For example, together they have secured 'Out of School Hours Learning' funding. New pupils visit before they join and, because of both the small numbers involved and the mixed-age classes where they may already have friends, a smooth induction is ensured. The school has many contacts with the other schools in the area through participation in joint events, such as a music-making morning.

40. Provision for pupils' spiritual development is good. The school fully meets the requirement for a daily act of worship and pupils are able to reflect quietly on their feelings and those of others. In religious education, for example, older pupils were asked to contemplate or meditate on the feelings of Muslim people when seeing Mecca for the first time during the Hajj. Daily assemblies, in which pupils are given time to think and reflect, make a very good contribution to pupils' spiritual development.

41. Provision for moral development is very good. Pupils are trustworthy and know the difference between right and wrong. Pupils work collaboratively and teachers use praise well to promote respect and moral responsibilities. Pupils are encouraged to actively support local and national charities, for example, the Asthma Swimathon, Jeans for Genes, and Ted's Day Out for the Bath Hospitals. The pupils were recently involved in organising fund raising activities for the 'Blue Peter' appeal to improve mobility for elderly people.

42. The school makes very good provision for the social development of its pupils. Social relationships within lessons are generally very good. Pupils are well used to helping each other both in and out of the classrooms. Pupils are encouraged to work co-operatively and to celebrate each other's success well. The social development of pupils is enhanced by the provision the school makes in its out of school activities both before school in the mornings and within the 'Sunflower Club' on two days a week after school. The school is an orderly, social, learning community and this reflects the skill and hard work of staff and the responsible behaviour of pupils. Visits to and with other schools in the local 'CASS' cluster provide for further social development and interaction.

43. The provision for pupils' cultural development is good. The school provides a wide range of visits related to curriculum topics; for example, the visit to a Mosque in Bristol or

the Roman Baths in Bath, and visits to the school by a range of performers like the 'Jake's Ladder' Theatre Company. Strong links are made between the subject curriculum and cultural experiences such as the visit by Indian dancers to the school. This is an improvement since the last inspection when it was judged that the school did not encourage an appreciation of the diversity and richness of other cultures.

44. The spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of pupils remains a strength of the school.

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL CARE FOR ITS PUPILS?

45. Provision for the welfare of the pupils is very good, and has improved from the good standards seen during the last inspection. Procedures for health and safety are in place and all the issues identified at the time of the last inspection have been rectified. A member of the governing body is responsible for health and safety and a full risk assessment has been carried out. Whilst the school ensures the safety of pupils in all activities, the records to demonstrate that the appropriate assessments have been carried out require formalisation. Fire drills are carried out on a regular basis and good records kept. The school has a critical incident policy in place.

46. Child protection systems are fully in place, and the headteacher is the identified child protection officer; all staff, including new members, are made fully aware of requirements and procedures. First aid facilities within the school are good, although the lack of space prevents the provision of a dedicated medical room. Facilities for disabled children are provided.

47. The school is a place where the pupils feel safe and secure. There is a consistent approach to welfare across the school, provided by a caring and dedicated staff. All pupils are known and valued by teachers and by the support staff, who play a significant role in the care of the pupils. All the staff show a real commitment to enabling pupils to achieve their best. The very good relationships that exist ensure that staff quickly become aware of any welfare issues.

48. Procedures for promoting good behaviour and for eliminating oppressive behaviour, should it occur, are very good. The regular review of procedures includes consultation with parents and pupils, and there are 'special editions' of policies in the classroom for the pupils to see and understand. A range of rewards and sanctions is applied consistently around the school and results in the high levels of very good behaviour seen during the inspection. The school has very good systems in place to monitor and encourage good attendance. Parents are made aware of the importance of good attendance through the prospectus and the home/school agreement.

49. The school uses the pupil profile records to ensure ongoing monitoring of pupils' personal development. A strength of this system is the active involvement of the pupils through discussion of the profile. In addition to the profile, there are comments about personal development within the interim and the annual reports. Beyond these formal methods of promoting and monitoring personal development, the close relationships between teachers and pupils ensure that all opportunities are used in an ongoing process.

50. Pupils with special educational needs (SEN) are well cared for and included in all aspects of school life. There are good procedures for identifying and supporting pupils with special educational needs. They are regularly assessed to ensure that programmes of work remain suitable for them.

51. The school's assessment procedures are very effective across the full curriculum. A range of procedures and tests enables the school to track pupils' progress from a recognised baseline of attainment on entry to the school. This information is very well used to inform curricular planning and establish the learning needs of all pupils.

52. The school has a refined system of sampling pupils' work and communicating individual progress to both pupils and parents.

53. Day-to-day marking and the annotation of pupils' work are consistently carried out to a high standard and they enable the children to use teachers' feedback to accelerate their learning. These assessment procedures, their recording, and the teachers' use of the knowledge gained from them, promote a high standard and rate of learning and the good achievements of pupils. This is an improvement since the previous inspection, when marking and recording of pupil progress were inconsistent. The tracking of pupils' progress and the use of this information to inform planning are a strength of the school.

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL WORK IN PARTNERSHIP WITH PARENTS?

54. The school's links with parents have continued to be a strength of the school since the last inspection, and are still very good. Parents are very satisfied with the school. Their responses to the questionnaires, together with their comments at the parents' meeting and during conversations in school, are exceptionally positive about all aspects of the school. The inspection team supports these very positive views.

55. The very good partnerships between the staff and parents are based on an established home/school agreement. A significant element of the partnership is the use made by the school of a questionnaire sent out to parents to obtain their views on how the school is doing. The school has an 'open door' policy to allow parents to talk about their child. Parents receive very good information about the school through a very good prospectus and frequent, high quality, informative newsletters.

56. In the event that their child has special educational needs (SEN), parents are fully involved in the processes of assessment and review. They are also fully involved in monitoring their child's progress.

57. Parents contribute well to their children's education by supporting the home/school agreement and listening to their children read, or by supporting them in doing their homework. Several parents provide direct support by helping in school, and others are actively involved through being members of the governing body or through the 'friends' association.

58. There is an active 'friends' association which provides financial and practical support for the school as well as organising social events for pupils and their families. The governors' annual report is a well-produced and comprehensive document that meets all legal requirements.

59. The quality of information provided for parents is excellent. The annual report from governors and the school prospectus are both informative and comprehensive. There are frequent well-presented and informative newsletters, supported by letters home as appropriate. A strength of the school is the reporting of progress to parents. In addition to

termly meetings for parents, there is an interim report and an annual report. All pupils have a 'profile' folder which is discussed with the pupil before it is sent home each term. This ensures that both child and parent contribute to and are fully involved with the child's education.

HOW WELL IS THE SCHOOL LED AND MANAGED?

60. The school is led and managed very well. The headteacher gives a clear educational direction to the work of the school and her style of management ensures that all involved in the school work together so that pupils have a good quality education and achieve well in relation to their abilities. Despite the many changes in teaching staff since her appointment, the headteacher has worked very hard and effectively to create a good feeling of community amongst pupils, parents, governors and staff, and a sense of purpose in continual improvement in what the school does. Good tracking procedures have been introduced and are used effectively to ensure that pupils make the best progress they can. The headteacher uses the expertise of a number of outside agencies to monitor the quality of teaching. Together with the Key Stage 1 co-ordinator, she has carried out some lesson observations of staff to acknowledge their strengths and identify any weaknesses. The headteacher is aware of the need to make more time for this aspect of management. She is supportive of staff, making clear her high expectations and involving all concerned with the school in decision making. She has been very successful in ensuring that pupils' personal development is promoted well. Pupils feel very valued and supported.

61. Within such a small school, the two full time teachers have a number of subject co-ordinator roles to carry out, and part-time staff also have a subject responsibility. However, the school's smallness does allow for the whole staff to be involved in curriculum planning and provision. This is effective in ensuring that the National Curriculum is being taught and pupils' attainment and progress closely tracked in all subjects. Staff know the pupils well and provide suitably adapted work to meet the wide range of ability levels and ages within classes. Their role in monitoring the quality of teaching is being developed. The school has developed a collection of pupils' written English work graded by National Curriculum Levels. Teachers use this well to ensure consistency when assessing pupils' current work. Similar collections are being developed in mathematics and science.

62. School development planning is good. The headteacher ensures that all staff and governors are fully involved in this process. Targets in the plan are detailed and relevant, and progress towards meeting these targets is closely tracked by the headteacher and the governing body. The policy for performance management is in place and is used to provide relevant professional development for individual staff. The school's self-evaluation procedures are developing well.

63. The governing body is very supportive of the school and its staff, and governors work extremely hard to involve themselves in the everyday life of the school. Many governors visit the school on a regular basis and help in classes and extra-curricular activities. They have attended a wide variety of training courses to increase their expertise and the help that they are able to provide. Because of the good leadership of a very involved chair of governors, the last item on any governors' meeting agenda is, 'What have we done tonight to improve the quality of teaching and learning for pupils?'. The governors have an appropriate committee structure in place and meetings are minuted and presented to full governor meetings. Meetings are very well attended. Each governor has adopted an area of the curriculum. Through training and visits to the school, they are concerned to help with

the provision of a broad and relevant curriculum for the pupil. Governors have discussed how best to do this and how to be consistent in their approach by identifying what to look for. This work is developing. Governors fulfil their statutory duties and are becoming more directly involved in monitoring the work of the school.

64. The co-ordinators for pupils with special educational needs (SEN) and the designated special needs governor have provided good leadership. They have ensured that individual needs have been identified, as well as enabling specialist intervention, overseeing statutory responsibilities and maintaining good relationships with other agencies. This has included making provision for extended activities for 'gifted and talented' pupils.

65. The school is well staffed, although during the inspection one of the full-time teachers was on maternity leave. The teaching staff are well supported by teaching assistants and other support staff. All performance management reviews required have been carried out.

66. Resources throughout the school are good. During lessons seen the equipment was adequate in quantity and good in quality. The school management team is determined that pupils should receive the same opportunities as those in larger schools.

67. The accommodation is satisfactory overall. The school comprises one main building plus one long-established 'temporary' building. The size of the accommodation is adequate for the number of pupils, but the condition of the 'temporary' classroom is an ongoing concern. At the present time, it is satisfactory as a result of refurbishment and redecoration carried out by staff, parents and governors. The separation of the two buildings means that pupils have to go out in bad weather conditions several times during the school day. The main building has been extended, and further minor modifications are planned. These changes have enabled the school to provide a library/computer area for pupils to use.

68. The use of the school budget and additional funds is appropriately targeted to educational priorities by the finance committee of the governing body and the school development plan. The school applies the principle of best value to the purchase of consumables and uses the services and advice of the local authority in the acceptance of tenders for large projects. The administration is efficient.

WHAT SHOULD THE SCHOOL DO TO IMPROVE FURTHER?

69. The governors, headteacher and staff, with the support of outside agencies as appropriate, should continue to raise pupils' standards of attainment by:

- Ensuring that pupils' developing information and communication technology (ICT) skills are used well in other curriculum subjects than English, mathematics, science and geography.
(This is a target in the current school development plan paragraph 116)
- In addition to the key issue above, the following more minor points for development, also included in the school improvement plan should be considered for inclusion in the action plan:
 - * Improve pupils' standards in writing.
(Paragraph 81)
 - * Improve the monitoring of teaching and its impact on learning through providing more opportunities for staff to observe their colleagues.
(Paragraph 61)
 - * Develop the role of the governing body in directly monitoring the work of the school.
(Paragraph 63)

PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS

Summary of the sources of evidence for the inspection

Number of lessons observed	27
Number of discussions with staff, governors, other adults and pupils	13

Summary of teaching observed during the inspection

	Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
Number	0	4	16	7	0	0	0
Percentage	0	15	59	26	0	0	0

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

Information about the school's pupils

Pupils on the school's roll	YR – Y4
Number of pupils on the school's roll (FTE for part-time pupils)	34
Number of full-time pupils known to be eligible for free school meals	1

Special educational needs	YR – Y4
Number of pupils with statements of special educational needs	0
Number of pupils on the school's special educational needs register	9

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	0

Attendance

Authorised absence

	%
School data	4.4
National comparative data	5.6

Unauthorised absence

	%
School data	0.5
National comparative data	0.5

Both tables give the percentage of half days (sessions) missed through absence for the latest complete 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	34
Any other minority ethnic group	0

This table refers to pupils of compulsory school age only.

Exclusions in the last school year

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

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

Teachers and classes

Qualified teachers and classes:

YR–Y4

Total number of qualified teachers (FTE)	2.56
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	13.3
Average class size	17.5

Education support staff:

YR–Y4

Total number of education support staff	6
Total aggregate hours worked per week	64.45

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Financial information

Financial year	2001-2002
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	£
Total income	141532.00
Total expenditure	139240.00
Expenditure per pupil	4219.00
Balance brought forward from previous year	4225.00
Balance carried forward to next year	6517.00

Recruitment of teachers

Number of teachers who left the school during the last two years	2.35
Number of teachers appointed to the school during the last two years	1.85

Total number of vacant teaching posts (FTE)	0
Number of vacancies filled by teachers on temporary contract of a term or more (FTE)	1
Number of unfilled vacancies or vacancies filled by teachers on temporary contract of less than one term (FTE)	0

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Results of the survey of parents and carers

Questionnaire return rate

Number of questionnaires sent out
Number of questionnaires returned

34
20

Percentage of responses in each category

	Strongly agree	Tend to agree	Tend to disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know
My child likes school.	90	10	0	0	0
My child is making good progress in school.	90	10	0	0	0
Behaviour in the school is good.	90	10	0	0	0
My child gets the right amount of work to do at home.	75	25	0	0	0
The teaching is good.	100	0	0	0	0
I am kept well informed about how my child is getting on.	75	15	5	5	0
I would feel comfortable about approaching the school with questions or a problem.	75	15	0	10	0
The school expects my child to work hard and achieve his or her best.	90	10	0	0	0
The school works closely with parents.	85	5	0	10	0
The school is well led and managed.	65	25	10	0	0
The school is helping my child become mature and responsible.	85	15	0	0	0
The school provides an interesting range of activities outside lessons.	95	5	0	0	0

Other issues raised by parents

Parents felt that their children had a feeling of belonging at the school and were proud of it. They felt that the school cared for their children very well and made learning fun.

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

70. Children are admitted into the Reception Class at the beginning of the year in which they are five. They attend on a part-time basis for the first few weeks. The carefully planned admissions procedures, which start well before the children are admitted to the school, ensure that children settle quickly into the school. Before starting school, most children have attended some form of pre-school provision. Children are assessed on entry to school to find out what they can do. The results of these assessments, because of the small numbers of children involved, show wide variations in attainment from year to year. The attainment of the current group of reception pupils was at the expected level for their age.

Personal, social and emotional development

71. Children make good progress in their personal, social and emotional development because of the good standard of teaching they receive. The teacher and teaching assistant provide very good role models. They have high expectations of the children and relationships are good. Children are encouraged to listen attentively to instructions and explanations of adults and to the views of other children during class and small group discussions. The children behave very well, quickly learning to share equipment and to take turns, for example, when acting out imaginary situations at the 'Vet's'. Adult involvement in imaginary play ensures that children make good progress in their linguistic and social interaction with others as they pretend to deal with a dog with a broken leg, taking x-rays, discussing what action to take and bandaging the broken leg. Children concentrate for extended periods of time and respond positively to activities. There is a good balance between teacher-focussed activities and opportunities for self-choice activities. By playing games, they learn to take turns and share. They work well both individually and when working in small groups. All children will exceed the Early Learning Goals for this area of learning by the end of the Foundation Stage. Standards have improved since the last inspection.

Communication, language and literacy

72. Most children in the Reception Classes will exceed the expectations of the Early Learning Goals in this area by the time they enter Year 1. Teaching is good and activities are planned to encourage speaking, listening, reading and writing. All children make good progress in all aspects of this area of learning. Teachers give good emphasis to the development of children's oral skills by providing frequent opportunities for them to speak in a variety of small group and whole class discussions. Through encouragement and valuing children's attempts at explaining their ideas and offering their opinions, staff build up pupils confidence and self-esteem. Teachers encourage children to respond to questions and to extend the detail of their original utterances. Through a well-structured programme, children learn to match letters to sounds and how to write them. They learn to identify the sounds at the beginning and end of words. Children can write their own names, and correctly spell a number of simple words for themselves. Higher attaining pupils write extensively for their age. All children are beginning to write simple sentences when recording their work. Children are given many opportunities to 'write', as a writing corner is always provided as a choice of activity and many often choose to use this. For example, they write lists and messages in role-play situations. Children enjoy listening to stories and know how a book is

organised. All children have made a good start in learning to read. Through group reading sessions and when they listen to reading individually, children are encouraged to use a variety of strategies to read unfamiliar words and understand what they have read. They can retell stories that are well known to them. Books are freely available to children in their classroom. Good use is made of reading diaries to encourage a positive partnership with parents in helping their child learn to read. Reading books are sent home regularly, as are lists of words the children are learning to read. Reading diaries show good communication between parents and the school in celebrating successes and noting difficulties. These well-established routines help children to gain confidence and enjoyment in reading and to achieve well. Standards have improved since the last inspection.

Mathematical development

73. A range of activities supports children's learning in this area. Teaching is good and all children make good progress. The work planned covers all areas of mathematical development and most children will exceed the Early Learning Goals by the end of the Foundation Stage. Activities are appropriate and practical in nature. For example, children made use of a variety of containers to estimate which was the biggest and held the most, and which was the smallest. Good questioning by the teaching assistant ensured that children thought about what they were doing, for example, 'What will happen when you have filled this container and pour it into the other one if the container is bigger?' Gradually children realised the graduations in size of the containers and were able to order them correctly. Children have a good understanding of numbers to ten and can read and write them, although many are still writing them backwards. They are able mentally to add one more to a given number and give the correct answer. They are beginning to double numbers up to ten. Higher attaining pupils convert simple problem-solving questions to numbers. For example, they converted 'Harry had five biscuits; he gave Nicola two. How many did he have left?' into the sum, $5 - 2 = 3$. Children are able to draw and interpret simple bar charts, about matters such as their favourite food and drinks. Children name common two- and three-dimensional shapes and know some of their properties. Children respond well to mathematical activities as staff make learning fun. Standards have improved since the time of the last inspection.

Knowledge and understanding of the world

74. Most children reach the expected levels in this area of learning by the end of their Reception Year, because teaching is often good and provides many planned opportunities for independent learning. Children use and name their five senses when investigating a variety of fruit, some of which they do not know. Through good questioning by staff, children begin to use a wider vocabulary to describe them. Words and phrases such as 'smooth', 'cold', 'hairy', 'sticky wet', 'sweet' and 'sour' were learned as the children enjoyed feeling, smelling and tasting the fruit. They construct different buildings using lego and make use of previously learned house types to describe them as 'semi-detached', 'bungalow' and 'flat'. Children have opportunities to design artefacts for a given purpose. For example, they made hand puppets out of old socks for imaginary play, or learned about animal movement as they used card to make their own creatures with moving limbs. Children have regular access to a computer, which they use to support their learning in mathematics and literacy. Children confidently operate the computer. They learn how they have changed since they were babies, in terms of their needs and what they look like. They learn the names of different parts of their bodies. Children can classify different materials by a single property, such as whether they are magnetic or not. Frequent opportunities are given to them to learn about

different Christian festivals, such as Christmas and Easter. Children also learn about the festivals of others as they compare and contrast Christingle with Diwali.

Physical development

75. Most children reach the expected levels in this area of learning by the end of the Foundation Stage and many exceed them in the confidence of their movement, particularly their running skills. Teaching is good and many children make good progress. Children use a range of small and large equipment with confidence and appropriate control. For example, they use pencils and paintbrushes to good effect in their daily work. Most children are well co-ordinated and move around their classroom and the school building in a controlled manner. There is no covered outdoor play area but the school has improved the resources available for outdoor play, which are now satisfactory. Playground markings and the teaching of some playground games have helped to support children's constructive play outside. For example, many girls were seen playing hopscotch. Good progress is made by children because of the active involvement of staff in encouraging children's outdoor play. For example, they join in and teach simple throwing and catching games with children. The provision made for children's outdoor play has been improved.

Creative development

76. No teaching in this area was observed during the inspection, except in music where it was satisfactory. Children make satisfactory progress overall and good progress in the aspects of exploring materials and using their imagination in art and design. All are likely to reach the expected levels by the end of the Foundation Stage. Children sing a range of songs and rhymes from memory. They quickly pick up the refrain to the 'Giant's Song' and move in time to the music as they sing 'Left, right, tie them up tight'. Most children clap a steady beat in response to musical stimuli and identify high and low sounds in the music. Opportunities to learn about colour and texture are promoted well as children learn to shade in pencil using different patterns, and experiment with 'marbling' techniques. Children paint freely and confidently using their imagination and own experiences. Opportunities for children to use and develop their imaginative skills through role-play are promoted well.

ENGLISH

77. Standards in English are above national expectation at the end of Year 2 and Year 4. Across the school, pupils, including those with special educational needs (SEN), make good progress and achieve well in relation to their abilities because of the good teaching they receive.

78. By the end of Year 2 and Year 4, standards of attainment in speaking and listening are above national expectations. In Years 1 and 2 pupils are given frequent opportunities to speak in a variety of situations, including class and group discussions, show and tell sessions and drama. Pupils show an understanding of stories and are confident in giving answers and explaining their reasoning. This was observed in a literacy lesson when Year 2 pupils discussed the frustrations of a boy called Mark who found the painting of a raging sea difficult to achieve. Through good questioning by the teacher, pupils were able to understand the nature of his dilemma and realise that confidence and hard work were needed for success. In the whole-class discussion, Year 4 pupils were able to listen to and build on each other's answers and extend their explanations making reference to the text when discussing the work of favourite authors, such as Jacqueline Wilson. The teacher's obvious

love of words is successfully passed on to pupils as they use a range of connective words and phrases to join sentences in an interesting manner. Pupils are confident that whatever they say their contributions will be listened to and valued. They are, therefore, never afraid to answer questions, even when unsure if they are right. The literacy hour provides good opportunities for pupils to listen carefully, and the emphasis that the teacher puts on encouraging active listening has a positive impact on this aspect. Overall pupils' ability to express themselves using an extended vocabulary is good as they understand and use specific English vocabulary such as 'phoneme', 'adjective' and 'adverb' with confidence. Opportunities to discuss feelings, opinions and concerns are given. For example, following a religious education lesson about important journeys and the idea of pilgrimage, pupils acted out getting ready for the journey and discussed how they would feel when they got there.

79. The school gives a high priority to the teaching of reading and fully involves parents in promoting high standards through the use of the home-to-school reading diaries. Consequently, pupils' standards of attainment are above national expectations at the end of Year 2 and Year 4. In Year 1, pupils build upon the good start they have made in reading during the Foundation Stage and many were reading at Level 2 during the inspection, the expected level for pupils at the end of Year 2. They show understanding by predicting what might happen next in the story. Average and above average attaining seven year old pupils read well, often with good understanding and with expression. Standards are above national expectations. They have learned to take in the detail of stories and can talk knowledgeably about the different characters. Good emphasis by the teacher on using a number of strategies when stuck on a word ensures that pupils succeed in their reading. In particular they read ahead of the word and then re-read the sentence to make use of the context of a word. This was demonstrated in a literacy lesson in which pupils concentrated on reading through the whole of the sentence in order to identify the correct pronunciation of words such as 'read' and 'tear' where the same spelling covers different meanings and pronunciations.

80. In Year 4 most pupils are able to read a good range of fiction and non-fiction books. The school encourages pupils to read regularly and, through a number of annual events such as book week, it ensures that pupils want to read and enjoy doing so. Higher attaining pupils are beginning to use inference and deduction to understand the author's intention. They read fluently and with good expression. A significant number are working at Level 4. Most other pupils, including those with special educational needs, are reading at Level 3, the expected level for this age group. All pupils talk enthusiastically about their favourite authors, such as J. K. Rowling and Jacqueline Wilson. Pupils understand how to use the index and contents page of information books and how to find the books they require in the well-stocked school library.

81. Standards in writing at the end of Year 2 and Year 4 are in line with national expectations. Most Year 2 pupils write simple stories using correctly punctuated sentences. Their spelling is less well advanced although they receive regular spellings to learn at home and are generally successful in learning them for spelling tests. Nevertheless many pupils, including higher attainers, can misspell simple words, such as yellow, brown, table or crowded, in their written work even when they know how to spell them correctly. Higher attaining pupils are beginning to make more careful use of description in their writing using phrases such as 'steamy smoke', and 'amazing flames'. Pupils are given frequent opportunities to write in a range of forms, including story, poetry, reports and letters. However, a scrutiny of their books shows some imbalance in the use of these different forms. There are many examples of pupils reporting on what they did at the weekend or in the holidays. However, opportunities for more imaginative work, as when they wrote about

the rocking horse that came alive or retold in their own words the story of how the zebra lost his stripes, are less frequent. Pupils have made good progress since September.

82. In Year 4, many pupils' spelling standards have improved considerably over the past twelve months although their work shows lapses in this area from time to time. Pupils' writing is now more structured and descriptive and there is better development of plot and characterisation in their work. Generally, most pupils make good use of punctuation, including speech marks. However, in their imaginative writing they can sometimes fall below this standard and their sentences become too long and written as they speak and lack punctuation. Throughout Years 3 and 4, within the literacy strategy, grammar and punctuation are taught systematically and pupils extend their range of writing. Pupils have made good progress since September.

83. Pupils with SEN make good progress as a result of the structured teaching and good support they receive in lessons. As for other pupils, the teacher and teaching assistant make good use of assessment procedures to plan work which is adapted to meet their needs and this has a positive impact upon standards.

84. The quality of teaching is good, and frequently very good. It was very good in half the lessons observed. Teachers have a good understanding of the National Literacy Strategy. Their enthusiasm for English has a positive effect on pupils' confidence and interest. Teachers make good use of questioning to develop understanding and extend learning and most pay good attention to developing subject-specific vocabulary. Other characteristics of the good teaching seen are well-planned lessons and good management of pupils and learning support assistants. Teachers use praise well to reward pupils' efforts, raise self-esteem and encourage pupils to achieve as well as they are able. Lessons are well-structured and a brisk pace of work is maintained. Good use is made of assessment to plan future work for pupils. The marking of pupils' work is supportive and analytical, with teachers indicating ways in which individual pupils could improve their work. There are some examples of pupils using their developing information and communication technology (ICT) skills in English but this is an area rightfully recognised by the school as a development target.

85. The co-ordinator for English is currently on maternity leave. However, all staff teach English well and set very good examples of the use of the National Literacy Strategy. The school makes a detailed analysis of pupils' strengths and weaknesses in assessments, including National Curriculum tests. The need to improve standards in writing has been recognised as an area for development and is included as a target in the school development plan. Pupils' literacy skills are used well in other curriculum subjects, such as history and geography. The good standards in English noted at the time of the last inspection have been maintained.

MATHEMATICS

86. Standards attained by pupils in Year 2 and Year 4 are above average. Results of the National Curriculum tests in 2001 show pupils' standards at the end of Year 2 to be in the top five per cent nationally for all and similar schools. Overall the trend in standards achieved over the past four years has been one of marked improvement. Boys and girls do equally well.

87. The introduction of the National Numeracy Strategy has increased pupils' ability to calculate, and brought a very clear improvement since the last inspection. Standards then in national tests were well below national expectations, whereas work seen in the school was in line with national expectations.

88. Pupils in Year 1 are able to complete various counting activities such as addition and subtraction with numbers up to 20 and understand zero. They follow number patterns and can count both forwards and backwards. They understand the concept of regular shape and can distinguish between two and three-dimensional shapes. Pupils in this year are able to sort by using more than one attribute and are beginning to understand the properties of shapes. They understand a good range of mathematical language such as sum, total, add-on and subtract. By the end of Year 2 pupils can recognise and use the mathematical symbols: +, -, ×, ÷ and =, and manipulate numbers up to 1000. They recognise two- and three-dimensional shapes and understand the idea of symmetry. The high level of attainment reached, which is above the national average, is due to the generally good teaching and careful planning by the teachers.

89. By the end of Year 4, children understand more complex mathematical concepts such as lines of symmetry and that shapes can display several such lines. They understand the idea of angles and right angles and that these are one of the properties of shape. They recognise the differences between similar shapes such as equilateral and isosceles triangles.

90. The quality of teaching is good and varies from good to satisfactory. It was good in two-thirds of the lessons. Teachers plan their lessons well to a consistent format in both classes. They set clear expectations for each group in the class and ensure full coverage of the curriculum for each year group. They use teaching assistants well and sensitively. Teachers do not rely entirely on published materials but sensibly provide their own materials to match the needs of individual groups of pupils. They spend a high proportion of their time in direct teaching and use high quality questioning to develop pupils' understanding. As a result, pupils enjoy their work and their attitudes are good in all lessons. They are able to sustain concentration and work well with others.

91. Assessment and recording of pupils' progress are well linked to the National Numeracy Strategy. Day-to-day marking and annotation of pupils' work are both accurate and helpful to aid individual learning. The requirements of the National Curriculum are well met and pupils are exposed to the full range of attainment targets. The adoption of the National Numeracy Strategy has ensured an improvement since the last inspection.

SCIENCE

92. Standards of attainment by the end of Year 2 and Year 4 are above national expectations. Pupils make good progress and achieve well. Teacher assessments in 2001 indicated that at the end of Year 2 pupils achieved very highly in comparison with the national average.

93. At the time of the previous inspection standards throughout the school were reported as satisfactory, but the planning of science programmes and the coverage of National Curriculum attainment targets were unsatisfactory. The introduction of a new syllabus based on the Qualification and Curriculum Agency's official guidelines has had a positive

impact on the subject and resulted in a marked improvement in curriculum provision. The formal science curriculum is well supported by the activities of the science club, which is run by a parent and a school teaching assistant, and by the use of local or regional facilities such as 'Bristol Explore' science museum.

94. By the end of Year 2, pupils have some understanding of the concept of light and dark and the relationships between light source and a shadow. They can distinguish between living and non-living things and understand some of the properties and differences between materials, such as wood and paper. By the end of Year 4, pupils understand forces and the measurement and direction of forces, the differences between physical and chemical change and the need of living organisms, for food, water and oxygen.

95. The quality of teaching and learning of science is good. Teachers plan their lessons well and provide work for individual groups appropriate to both their age and level of understanding. They use materials well to ensure that pupils both enjoy science lessons and co-operate well. Pupils' attitudes to their work are good. They enjoy their lessons and are keen to take part in planned activities. Good links are made with other subjects. For example, in mathematics with the use of counting and the recording of results, and in information and communication technology (ICT) in the use of specific programmes like 'Flexitree' in the analysis of the properties of living organisms. Pupils are able to understand scientific ideas because of the skilled way in which teachers present problems. For example, they introduce the identification of scientific classification with sweets, or use the acronym, MRS GREN, to distinguish living from non-living things.

96. A good assessment procedure for monitoring pupils' progress is used consistently throughout the school. Workbooks are well marked and pupils are able to develop their learning by reference to teachers' careful notes on their work.

97. Resources for the subject meet the needs of the curriculum and are well organised, although there is a shortfall in consumable materials. Where there is a need for limited or specialist equipment, the school is able to call on the resources of other schools in the area.

98. There has been a marked improvement in science since the last inspection. Programming of the curriculum, pupils' progress and the depth of coverage are now good and no longer unsatisfactory.

ART AND DESIGN

99. Overall, pupils' standards of attainment at the end of Year 2 are in line with national expectations and all pupils make satisfactory progress. Pupils' standards of attainment at the end of Year 4 when they leave the school are above national expectations and they make good progress as they mature and begin to use their imaginations to apply the skills they have previously learned. Standards at the end of Year 4 have improved.

100. Pupils in Year 2 use a variety of media when using their imaginations to produce observational drawings, paintings and collage. For example, their garden pictures show effective use of colour. They make use of a variety of mediums, such as colour wash, crayons and coloured pencils, to copy William Morris designs. Year 1 pupils complete observational drawings of fruit showing texture and shape well. They show good technique in shading as they draw the local church. A good range of techniques is taught to pupils, including marbling, dying and collage.

101. Year 4 pupils demonstrate good detail in their observational drawings and William Morris prints. They paint well, making good use of a variety of paints, including poster and watercolour, when they copy famous portraits by Whistler, Munch and Picasso. Pupils use their art and design and technology skills well when making simple pop-up books depicting the Siege of Troy and the story of King Midas.

102. The quality of teaching of art is good. Pupils are taught the correct techniques for putting perspective into their drawings or for working with clay. Teachers have a good knowledge and understanding of the curriculum and show confidence when demonstrating techniques to pupils. Safety issues are always emphasised and pupils enjoy artwork and are motivated well by the work set. Teachers use the good range of art resources available to support pupils in their learning. Cross-curricular links are clearly identified in teachers' planning and are evident in pupils' work, which is displayed well throughout the school. The subject makes a good contribution to the development of pupils' understanding of other cultures.

DESIGN AND TECHNOLOGY

103. There has been a marked improvement in design and technology since the last inspection. Progress across the school is now satisfactory. Assessment procedures are firmly in place throughout the school and there is due attention to the design process in lessons. This is underpinned by a clear policy and scheme of work based on national guidelines. Standards of attainment in design and technology are now in line with national expectations at the end of both Year 2 and Year 4. No lessons were observed in design and technology in Years 3 and 4, but scrutiny of work and displays confirm these standards of work.

104. In the infants, pupils understand the 'design paradigm' of planning, prototype and production and can explain details of their designs to others. Pupils understand the use of appropriate tools (and that hands are tools) both in craftwork and in food technology. By the end of Year 4, pupils have increased their skills in the subject. They can produce artefacts such as photo frames based on their own designs and can design simple moving toys, for example a 'Jack in the Box'.

105. The quality of teaching and learning is good. Teachers plan their lessons well and give clear explanations to pupils with regard to what is expected of them in lessons. They record pupils' developing skills. Good use of teaching assistants ensures that all pupils, including those with special educational needs (SEN), are able to benefit from the range of activities available. Although there are no dedicated rooms for technology or food technology, resources are adequate to meet the needs of the curriculum.

GEOGRAPHY

106. Only one geography lesson was observed during the inspection. Scrutiny of pupils' work and displays, however, show that standards of work are in line with national expectations in Key Stage 1 and in Years 3 and 4. Pupils make sound overall progress through the school, and those with special educational needs (SEN) are well supported and also make satisfactory progress. The school has developed a scheme of work based on the national guidelines and this ensures satisfactory coverage across the school. In Years 1 and 2, pupils are studying the differences between differing environments for living. They can compare life in Leigh with that on a Scottish Island and understand the difficulties relating to transport for island people.

107. By the end of Year 4, pupils have a satisfactory appreciation of maps and are developing good mapping skills. They have studied land usage in the local environment and can relate this to the buildings in their village. Pupils are beginning to appreciate the difference between two contrasting locations such as the United Kingdom and a village in India. They understand the relationships between locations and can identify them on maps of the world.

108. Although no overall judgement on the quality of teaching can be made, the lesson that was seen, together with other inspection evidence, suggests that it is good throughout the school. Teachers plan their lessons and the curriculum well, paying attention to its demands and making clear adjustments to suit the needs of differing year groups. They link the subject well to other areas of the curriculum, for example, with mathematics and information and communication technology (ICT) when pupils analyse land usage by way of a pie chart. The school uses the joint facilities of local schools to enhance the teaching of geography. For example, pupils undertake a 'geography adventure trail' with two other local small schools.

109. Resources for the subject are satisfactory to meet the needs of the curriculum and good use is made of the local environment, for example, visits to local farms and quarries.

HISTORY

110. Pupils' standards of attainment at the end of Year 2 and Year 4 are in line with national expectations and all pupils make satisfactory progress. No lessons were observed during the inspection and, therefore, no overall judgement can be made of the quality of teaching. However, evidence from an examination of school documentation, and from pupils' work and discussions with them, indicates that good provision is made for the subject. Standards have been maintained since the last inspection.

111. Pupils in Year 1 gain an understanding of the past through studying the toys we use now and those that were popular in the past. They learn about toys and games from around the world. Year 2 pupils begin to understand why the Romans invaded Britain and how their superior fighting skills defeated the Celts. Teachers make good use of different writing forms, such as pamphlets and letters. Pupils design leaflets advertising the benefits of the Roman baths and empathise with evacuees through writing their own letters home after a frightening and weary journey out of the city. Years 3 and 4 pupils learn about the resistance of Boudicca as she fought the Romans and about their great buildings, such as the Coliseum. Pupils are enabled to gain an understanding of this period of history as work is adapted to meet their needs, both in age and ability. Their work shows greater detail and accuracy the older they are. Pupils' literacy skills are promoted well.

INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY (ICT)

112. The standards attained by pupils at the end of Years 2 and 4 are broadly in line with national expectations. Standards have been improved since the time of the last inspection.

113. Pupils show confidence in their work, especially in finding things out, developing ideas and making things happen by using computers. Pupils in Year 1 operate literacy and numeracy programs independently, and show good control in operating the 'mouse' to select icons and enter their answers. Pupils in Years 2, 3 and 4 use their word processing skills to produce stories and letters. Pupils' data-handling skills are developed appropriately as they

produce charts and graphs to display the information they have collected. They use adventure game programs with enthusiasm, anxious to get to the next stage by finding the clues in programs such as 'Granny's Garden'. Work seen during the inspection showed pupils' confidence in using a 'Logo' program to give the instructions for the cursor to draw a shape, such as a square or triangle, on the computer screen. Pupils show confidence in operating such programs and are often successful in their instructions. Regular short teaching sessions ensure that all pupils learn the skills needed in order to operate the computer independently some time later in the week.

114. The quality of teaching and learning is consistently good. Teachers ensure that everyone can see the computer being used for demonstration purposes and, by including everyone in their questioning, they ensure that all pupils have a chance to succeed. They teach confidently, knowing the sorts of problems that pupils are likely to encounter and reminding them of basic commands which they are likely to forget, such as pressing the return button at the end of each instruction. Pupils are very keen to learn and they enjoy the opportunities they receive for operating the computer themselves.

115. Since the last inspection, more advanced computers are available, both in classrooms and in a small computer 'suite' in the main building. The completion of government-funded training for all teachers has had a positive impact on their confidence and the quality of lessons. Teaching assistants are soon to receive training. Procedures for assessing pupils' attainment and progress are in place. Pupils who attend the before and after school club enjoy the many opportunities they have to use their favourite programs. However, the skills they have learned in ICT lessons are not well used in other areas of the curriculum, and this has rightly been identified by the school as a current target in the development plan.

MUSIC

116. By the end of Year 2 and Year 4, pupils' standards of attainment are above those expected for pupils of these ages. Pupils enjoy their music-making activities and make good progress. The good standards noted at the time of the last inspection have been maintained.

117. By the end of Year 2 and Year 4, the majority of pupils sing a range of songs from memory. They sing enthusiastically and with good pitch, for example, during their rendering of 'Living and Learning' during assembly. They are able to play simple tunes and rounds on the recorder, keeping to their own part while others perform theirs. All pupils in Years 2, 3 and 4 are learning to play the recorder and read standard musical notation within the lines of the treble clef. Most pupils are able to keep a steady beat when clapping a rhythm. Pupils show interest and concentrate well in lessons.

118. The quality of teaching and learning was satisfactory in the lessons observed during the inspection, all of which were taken by a specialist teacher who visits the school for one afternoon a week. The teacher has a good knowledge of the subject but little experience of teaching Foundation Stage and Year 1 pupils. Lesson planning is satisfactory. It does not identify what it is the pupils are to achieve by the end of the lesson but only the activities they will take part in. However, pupils demonstrated enthusiasm and good concentration levels in these lessons.

119. Class teachers also add to the school's musical provision. This was not seen during the inspection and, therefore, no judgement can be made about the quality of their teaching. There is a good range of resources for the teaching of music.

PHYSICAL EDUCATION

120. Pupils' standards in physical education at the end of Year 2 and 4 are in line with national expectations. Pupils make satisfactory progress.

121. Year 1 pupils show control when holding curled and stretched shapes with generally good extension of their limbs. They work together well in pairs, copying one another's movements. All pupils respond immediately to their teacher's instructions and commands and enjoy physical activities. Year 2 pupils are developing their hand-eye co-ordination as they learn to catch, throw and strike a ball. During playtimes they show good running skills and move confidently as they twist, turn and change direction. Year 4 pupils show sound hand-eye co-ordination skills when fielding a ball, and they listen attentively to instructions during lessons. They play a variety of games at playtimes, demonstrating satisfactory skills in movement and striking a ball in football.

122. Teaching and learning are satisfactory. Teachers have an appropriate knowledge of the subject and ensure pupils are motivated well by keeping instructions to a minimum and providing plenty of energetic activity. The pace of lessons is satisfactory; good attention is paid to safety considerations, and praise is used well to motivate pupils to even greater efforts.

123. There is a satisfactory range of resources and facilities for the development of sport. A very wide range of sports is offered to pupils through the weekly sports club, which is enthusiastically led by two parent volunteers. Over half the school attend these sessions. The school holds an annual mini-Olympics sports day. This includes javelin, discus, shot and hurdling events.

RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

124. Standards of attainment match the levels expected by the Locally Agreed Syllabus at the end of Years 2 and 4. Although no lessons were observed in the infants, during the inspection, other inspection evidence would suggest that by the end of Year 2 pupils understand some of the values of family life and the importance of relationships, and can appreciate their own feelings and those of others. They know some simple Bible stories, for example, the parable of the Good Samaritan, and that a major element in Christianity is caring for others.

125. In Years 3 and 4, pupils begin to understand other general religious concepts such as the relevance of journeying in both religious practice and history; for example, the journey to Mecca by followers of Islam, or Mary and Joseph's journey to Bethlehem at Christmas. Lessons are well linked to school assemblies where general spiritual themes are explored, such as the idea of listening rather than hearing and that listening is the way to hear what God is saying in the silence. The quality of school assemblies shows a considerable improvement since the last inspection and the responses of pupils are now most positive.

126. Teaching of religious education is carried out in a sensitive way and the teaching observed was always sound or better. Teachers use a variety of techniques and resources to promote interest among the pupils, such as video film and the use of mock interviews to stimulate pupils' thinking. Teachers maintain a good pace and ensure that all pupils, including those with special educational needs (SEN), are fully involved in learning.

127. Pupils' attitudes to religious education are good. They are attentive during lessons and assemblies and are keen to contribute their ideas while being prepared to listen to those of others. During lessons pupils are able to appreciate their own feelings and emotions and those of others and thus develop a clearer understanding of the human condition.

128. The school has adequate resources to deliver the curriculum and is able to access further specialist resources from within the local school 'federation'. Good use is made of outside agencies such as the local vicar and of visits to sites of religious significance, for example, the local Church for the Easter Service, and a Mosque in Bristol. The subject makes a good contribution to pupils' spiritual and cultural development.