

## INSPECTION REPORT

### **CLEARWELL C of E (VC) PRIMARY SCHOOL**

Clearwell  
Nr Coleford

LEA area: Gloucestershire

Unique reference number: 115638

Headteacher: Mrs Jean Smith

Reporting inspector: Mrs Patricia Davies

22460

Dates of inspection: 11 – 13 March, 2002

Inspection number: 195588

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

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## INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Type of school: Infant and junior  
School category: Voluntary controlled  
Age range of pupils: 4 to 11 years  
Gender of pupils: Mixed

School address: Church Road  
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Nr Coleford  
Gloucestershire

Post code: GL16 8LG

Telephone number: 01594 834904

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Appropriate authority: The governing body

Name of chair of governors: Revd. David Addison

Date of previous inspection: May 1997

## INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Team members			Subject responsibilities	Aspect responsibilities
22460	Mrs Patricia Davies	<i>Registered inspector</i>	English; Art and design; Design and technology; Information and communication technology; Religious education Areas of learning for the Foundation Stage.	The school's results and achievements; How well pupils are taught; How well the school is led and managed.
9053	Mrs Vivienne Phillips	<i>Lay inspector</i>		Attitudes, values and personal development; How well the school cares for its pupils; How the school works in partnership with parents.
27654	Mrs Robina Scahill	<i>Team inspector</i>	Mathematics; Science; Geography; History; Music; Physical education; Provision for pupils with special educational needs; Equality of opportunity.	How good are the curricular and other opportunities offered to pupils.

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

### **INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL**

Clearwell School is smaller than many other primary schools, with 61 pupils attending. It takes its pupils from the village and the surrounding area. Pupils are taught in mixed-age classes, as year groups are small. There are ten children in the current Reception group in a class with pupils in Years 1 and 2. These children join the school at the beginning of the year in which they have their fifth birthday. They attend part time until the end of the first half term, after which they attend full time. When children first enter the school, there is a wide range of ability, but, taken overall, their attainment is below what might be expected of children of a similar age, particularly their speaking skills. Although there is little difference between the number of boys and girls across the school, there is some imbalance within year groups. At 15 per cent, the proportion of pupils eligible for free school meals is lower than at the time of the last inspection. However, this percentage does not reflect the wide range of social factors represented in the local area and within the school community. The proportion of pupils with special educational needs is above the national average. About a third of these are at the higher level of need, and there is one statement of special educational need. A few pupils have behavioural difficulties. A very small proportion of pupils are from minority ethnic backgrounds. Immediately following the last inspection, the school experienced a time of uncertainty and some disruption to staffing. Uncertainties have now been resolved and the school's staffing and its leadership and management are stable.

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

Clearwell School no longer has serious weaknesses in its leadership and management and gives its pupils a sound education. Although standards in the present Year 6 are below national expectations in English and mathematics, pupils nevertheless make satisfactory progress overall as they move through the school. Attainment in science meets national expectations. The quality of teaching and learning is satisfactory, with some good features. Pupils' attitudes to learning and their behaviour are good. The school is now soundly led and managed, and gives satisfactory value for money.

### **WHAT THE SCHOOL DOES WELL**

- There is good provision for enriching and extending pupils' experience and creating an enthusiasm for learning, particularly through trips and visits.
- The school is successful at meeting its aims of encouraging respect for others in a happy and caring environment. As a result, pupils behave well and relationships are good.
- Staff are hard-working and committed and willingly fulfil many roles and responsibilities.
- The governing body has a good understanding of the school's strengths and weaknesses.
- There are good links with parents as a result of considerable effort by the school to involve them in its life and work.

## WHAT COULD BE IMPROVED

- Standards in English, mathematics and information and communication technology.
- The school's accommodation, which urgently requires improvements to allow the curriculum to be taught in full throughout the school.

*These areas are already being addressed. 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 a satisfactory level of improvement overall since it was last inspected in May 1997 and the capacity for future improvement is sound. There has been a good level of improvement to certain key areas of its work, particularly in the quality of teaching and learning, and to its leadership and management which had some serious weaknesses. The curriculum has also been much improved by the introduction of planning that has a systematic approach to the teaching of knowledge, skills and understanding. Strengths have been maintained in pupils' good behaviour, attitudes to school, the quality of relationships and the school's provision for spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. Good links with the community and other educational establishments have also been sustained. However, whilst the school is caring of its pupils, in that staff have a good knowledge of individual pupils, and assessment systems and their use are satisfactory overall, there is not yet a sharp or precise enough focus on what pupils must learn next in order to achieve more. The school has taken steps to improve its accommodation and is persistent in its attempts to take over the use of the school house and improve facilities, but accommodation continues to be poor and this factor particularly affects the curriculum for physical education, which cannot be taught in full.

## STANDARDS

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

Performance in:	Compared with				<b>Key</b>  <i>well above average</i> A <i>above average</i> B <i>average</i> C <i>below average</i> D <i>well below average</i> E
	all schools			Similar schools	
	1999	2000	2001	2001	
English	A	E	C	C	
Mathematics	D	E	E	E	
Science	E	C	C	C	

These national test results should be considered with some caution because each year group is small and varies in size. As a consequence, the results attained by individual pupils represent a significant percentage of the overall outcome. Within these small groups, the proportion of boys and girls and those with special educational needs, have a significant impact. Such factors account to a considerable extent for variations in results year on year and in differences in the attainment of boys and girls. Neither does the similar school grouping, with which the school's results are compared, accurately reflect the wide range of social factors represented within the school's community. However, a comparison

of the school's test results over time with national averages, indicates that the school's results have broadly kept pace with the national trend overall. Science results have risen since 1997. Taken overall, all pupils, including those with special educational needs, make satisfactory progress.

When children join the Reception group, their below average attainment is most marked in their limited speaking skills. This continues to have an impact on pupils' achievement throughout the school. Reception children make satisfactory progress, but their attainment is still below what is expected when they enter Year 1. Inspection evidence indicates that pupils in the current Years 2 and 6 are attaining standards below national expectations in English and mathematics. Both these year groups have greater proportions of pupils with special educational needs than those in the same year groups last year. This is reflected in the school's targets, which are realistically set lower than last year's. Although the current Year 6 has not benefited from the Numeracy Strategy lower down the school, pupils in Years 3 to 6 are now being well taught and are making good progress in mathematics. Pupils also achieve well overall in geography. Sound progress is made overall in the development of literacy skills. Developments in provision for information and communication technology have not yet had a full impact across the school, and standards are below national expectations for Year 6 pupils. Standards are broadly in line with national expectations in science, geography and history in Years 2 and 6. There was not enough evidence to make overall judgements in art and design, design and technology, music and physical education, nor for information and communication technology in Year 2. Pupils in Year 2 are meeting the objectives of the locally Agreed Syllabus for religious education. There was not enough evidence to make an overall judgement for Year 6 in this subject.

## PUPILS' ATTITUDES AND VALUES

Aspect	Comment
Attitudes to the school	Good. Pupils are keen to come to school. They become actively involved in interesting and challenging tasks.
Behaviour, in and out of classrooms	Good. Most behave well in and out of lessons and show respect for others. There is little bullying.
Personal development and relationships	There are good relationships. Personal development is satisfactory.
Attendance	Satisfactory. A very few pupils have high rates of absence and these depress the overall attendance rate.

## TEACHING AND LEARNING

Teaching of pupils in:	Reception group	Years 1–2	Years 3–6
Quality of teaching	Satisfactory	Satisfactory	Satisfactory

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

Evidence from lessons seen and pupils' work shows the overall quality of teaching and learning to be satisfactory, including for those with special educational needs. No unsatisfactory teaching was seen in lessons during this inspection. Within this picture, there are particular strengths. For example, teaching and learning were consistently good in lessons for pupils in Years 3 and 4, and teaching in this class was very good in one lesson seen. Mathematics is well taught overall, and particularly in Years 3 to 6. Science and



geography are also well taught in these older year groups. Staff work hard to plan for and manage different year groups within mixed age classes. They have good relationships with pupils, and this ensures that behaviour is well managed. A significant factor in arousing pupils' enthusiasm and involvement is the positive impact of first hand or practical experience, particularly through visits. In the most effective lessons, the strong features already described were enhanced by lively focused teaching that had high expectations, a strong sense of purpose and good pace. Where numeracy was well taught, discussion and activities were effectively varied to challenge pupils of different abilities. In these lessons, pupils were interested in their work, applied good levels of effort, and consequently made good progress. However, this is not always the case. Although activities are suitably modified for pupils in different year groups in most lessons, and good use is made of mixed age teaching to allow pupils with higher or lower ability to work with other year groups, activities are less well modified within year groups for pupils of different abilities. Neither does marking consistently give pupils guidance about how they can improve. English is satisfactorily taught throughout the school, as are basic literacy and numeracy skills; so too, is mathematics in Years 1 and 2. Pupils have greater chances to use information and communication technology, but opportunities are not always taken in lessons. There was not enough evidence to make overall judgements about teaching and learning in other subjects.

#### OTHER ASPECTS OF THE SCHOOL

Aspect	Comment
The quality and range of the curriculum	Satisfactory. Extra-curricular opportunities, community links and links with other educational establishments are good. However, provision for physical education does not meet national requirements.
Provision for pupils with special educational needs	Satisfactory. Targets on individual education plans are specific to individuals, but some targets lack enough precise detail for pupils' progress to be closely tracked. Pupils with statements of educational need are well provided for.
Provision for pupils' personal, including spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	Good overall. Provision for moral and cultural development is good; it is satisfactory for spiritual and social development.
How well the school cares for its pupils	Satisfactory overall, including health and safety. Behaviour, personal development and healthy living are well monitored and promoted. Child protection procedures are fully in place.

The school has good links with parents based on its warm welcome for them.

## HOW WELL THE SCHOOL IS LED AND MANAGED

Aspect	Comment
Leadership and management by the headteacher and other key staff	Sound. There is a democratic and collegiate approach to leadership, development and delegation. Key areas of responsibility are satisfactorily led and managed by the headteacher and staff.
How well the governors fulfil their responsibilities	Governors are very supportive of the school and have a greater awareness of their roles and responsibilities. They have a good understanding of the school's strengths and weaknesses and are now well placed to shape the school's direction.
The school's evaluation of its performance	Satisfactory. Analysis of standards and achievement is increasing, but is not yet sharply focused enough. Governors are aware of the need to develop further their monitoring role as critical friend.
The strategic use of resources	Satisfactory overall. The school makes good use of available facilities for physical education; it is beginning to consider whether it is getting best value for the standards it achieves.

Staffing and learning resources are satisfactory overall. Accommodation continues to be poor.

## PARENTS' AND CARERS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

What pleases parents most	What parents would like to see improved
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• They feel the school to be approachable.</li> <li>• Teaching is good.</li> <li>• The school expects children to work hard.</li> <li>• The school is helping children to become mature and responsible.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The range of activities outside lessons.</li> </ul>

Parents continue to have positive views of the school and its work. Inspection findings agreed with much of what pleases parents most, particularly the school's approachability, although evidence from the inspection found the other areas of parents' greatest satisfaction to be satisfactory. Inspection evidence did not agree with parents' views on extra-curricular activities, as these were found to be good.

## **PART B: COMMENTARY**

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

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

1. In the national tests in 2001, Year 6 pupils attained standards broadly in line with national averages for all schools and for similar schools in English and science. The proportion of pupils attaining the higher level (Level 5) was above the national average for English, but below for science. Test results were well below national averages in mathematics in comparison with all schools, and in comparison with similar schools. However, a comparison of the school's test results over time with national averages, indicates that the school's results have broadly kept pace with the national trend overall, and those in science have risen over time since 1997. In the national tests in 2001, for pupils then in Year 2, results were above the national average for all schools and for similar schools for mathematics. They were below the national average for writing and well below for reading. In comparison with the school's benchmark group for the similar school's comparison, these results were well below in writing and very low for reading, this last result falling into the lowest five per cent nationally. Teacher assessments for science, however, showed Year 2 pupils to be attaining standards that were very high in comparison with the national average and in the top five per cent nationally.

2. These test results, however, should be treated with some caution because year groups are small and sometimes have less than ten pupils. The Year 2 group taking the tests last year, for example, had only eight pupils. Each pupil therefore represents a significant proportion of the overall results. Within this context, the proportions of pupils with special educational needs (SEN), or the balance of boys and girls within the group, make a considerable impact. This accounts to a considerable extent for variations in results year on year and differences in the attainment of boys and girls. Comparisons with similar schools should also be viewed with care, as the school's benchmark group of similar schools does not accurately reflect the varied range of social factors represented within the school's community. This is mirrored in the wide range of attainment of children when they first enter the school into the Reception group.

3. Taken as a whole, all pupils make satisfactory progress from an overall below expected level of attainment on entry to the school, including those with special educational needs. Within this sound picture there are some strengths. For example, the school actively and conscientiously seeks to improve and enrich pupils' experience of the wider world through trips and visits. The good levels of interest and enthusiasm with which pupils respond to these opportunities, when they are well used during lessons, positively affects their progress. This is true of geography, where pupils make good progress overall. Pupils at Key Stage 2 (Years 3 to 6) are also currently achieving well in mathematics, because they are well taught through the school's implementation of the Numeracy Strategy, despite the oldest pupils not having benefited from it use lower down the school before it was fully introduced. The school is now turning its attention to English, and to writing in particular, to raise standards and to increase pupils' achievement. New assessment procedures in English are enabling staff to look closely at individual pupils' achievement and to set specific learning targets to help them improve their work. In fact, the school is now paying much closer attention to test and assessment information, to help it judge how well it is supporting pupils' achievement and where improvements need to be made. However, this approach is too recent to have made a significant impact on standards. As a result, work is not yet always well matched to pupils' differing needs and abilities, and, where this happens, prevents pupils' progress from being greater than satisfactory.

4. Inspection evidence indicates that pupils in the current Years 2 and 6 are attaining standards below national expectations in English and mathematics. Both these year groups have higher proportions of pupils with SEN than those in the same year groups last year. The school's targets for the present Year 6 realistically reflect this difference, as they are lower than those set for last year's Year 6, which were exceeded in English but not met in mathematics. Standards in information and communication technology (ICT) are also below national expectations for Year 6, because they have not had enough opportunities to develop fully the expected knowledge and skills. There was not enough evidence to make an overall judgement about standards in ICT for pupils in Year 2. Standards in science are in line with national expectations for pupils in both year groups.

5. When children first join the Reception group, their below expected attainment is most marked in their limited speaking skills. This continues to make an impact on pupils' learning throughout the school, as many have difficulty explaining ideas clearly in their written work and when they speak. As a result, although pupils are keen to read, and higher and middle attainers read with increasing accuracy at their own particular level, generally, pupils are much less confident in understanding or explaining what they have read. For example, Year 6 pupils have a limited understanding of text beyond its literal meaning. In writing also, formal skills, such as the organisation of their writing into sentences, or paragraphs for Year 6 pupils, the use of punctuation and handwriting are stronger than the quality of the content. This often lacks liveliness or interest, although both were seen in the work of more able pupils.

6. Similar difficulties occur in mathematics. In number work, most Year 2 pupils have a good understanding of place value and are using numbers to 100. Pupils currently in Year 6 are familiar with number rules using numbers to 1000, and have developed a variety of methods for calculating number problems mentally. However, although these older pupils are gaining confidence when asked to explain their work, many still find this challenging, especially the lower attainers and those with SEN. Pupils make sound progress in science, often well supported by practical and investigative activities. By Year 6, pupils carry out their experiments with confidence, understand which factors have to be varied, and, when required, record their work carefully, using a variety of methods. Standards are broadly in line with national expectations in geography and history in Years 2 and 6. There was not enough evidence to make overall judgements about standards or achievement in art and design, design and technology, music and physical education, nor for ICT in Year 2. Pupils in Year 2 are meeting the objectives of the locally Agreed Syllabus for religious education, but there was not enough evidence to make an overall judgement about standards in this subject for Year 6 pupils.

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

7. Strengths in pupils' attitudes, values and personal development identified in the last inspection have been well maintained. Pupils are keen to come to school. They enjoy the wide range of learning opportunities the school offers, particularly those that allow them to experience a taste of life beyond their home and village. They are happy to do what is asked of them, and sometimes show much pleasure in their achievement. Pupils become actively involved in tasks that interest them, and when discussion is challenging and keeps them closely focused on what they have to learn. However, some easily become inattentive and restless when activities do not readily enthuse them and fully meet their needs, or their work is not directly supervised by an adult. In general, pupils' good attitudes and willingness to work hard provide a firm foundation for learning.

8. Behaviour in the school is good. Most pupils behave well in and out of lessons. They show respect for others in line with the school's aims, its code of conduct and the simple rules which pupils help to shape. Although some pupils' listening skills are not as well developed as expected, they try hard to do their work and are keen to please the teacher. During the inspection, pupils' behaviour and attitudes were satisfactory or better in all lessons. They were good or better in 81 per cent of lessons, of which, in just over 12 per cent they were very good. Sometimes bullying occurs, but this is not part of the school culture. It is dealt with promptly and firmly, which resulted in three, rare, fixed term exclusions in the year prior to the inspection.

9. Personal development is satisfactory. Children join the school with a mixed range of experiences and knowledge. As a result, the school knows that it needs to try to bring personal development much closer to that usually found among children of primary school age. The school works hard to cultivate children's ability to listen to others, to relate to each other and to develop self-confidence. As a consequence, by the time Year 6 pupils leave the school, their personal development is close to that typical of their age group. This is as a result of good efforts to extend pupils' experiences and learning opportunities. However, some continue to need constant reassurance, and lose confidence when faced with work they find difficult.

10. In line with the school's aims, pupils learn to show good levels of respect for others, and to enjoy the responsibilities they are given as house captains in Year 6, or for specific jobs. Group work is a regular feature of literacy, numeracy and afternoon reading sessions, which is an improvement since the last inspection. Most pupils understand the impact of their actions on others although, for some, this is not well developed. Many are not used to taking the initiative to find out information or to plan work independently, for example in the library. These opportunities are limited in part by lack of space in the library, and because it has to be used for a range of purposes, rather than as a key source of information to support reading and independent work. At playtime, older pupils rely on an adult to organise games. This is partly because the lack of space makes it hard for pupils of all ages to use initiative and imagination and to play together constructively. Relationships are good because pupils of all ages respond well to the school's community spirit and to the efforts to encourage them to work and play together well.

11. Attendance is satisfactory. Almost all pupils come to school regularly, and arrive on time unless they have good reason to be absent or late. Three or four pupils have high rates of absence, in spite of the school's best efforts to improve their attendance and punctuality. Their absences have an adverse effect on their progress, and depress the school's overall attendance rate.

## **HOW WELL ARE PUPILS OR STUDENTS TAUGHT?**

12. Evidence from lessons seen during the inspection, and from pupils' work, shows the overall quality of teaching and learning to be satisfactory, with some strong features. This is a good level of improvement on the findings of the last inspection, when teaching was found to be unsatisfactory in ten per cent of lessons, with the greatest improvement being to teaching and learning at Key Stage 2. These positive features and developments reflect the hard work and commitment of staff, particularly when planning for and managing different year groups within mixed age classes. Relationships between staff and pupils continue to be good, and this ensures that behaviour is also well managed. During this inspection, teaching and learning were satisfactory or better in all lessons seen. They were good or better in 50 per cent of lessons. Teaching and learning were consistently good in those lessons seen in Years 3 and 4, and teaching was very good in one literacy lesson in this class. Teachers' use of first hand or practical experience, through visits or the use of

resources and activities, makes a significant impact on pupils' interest. Where examples of this approach were seen and well used, for example in history, geography and religious education, pupils' enthusiasm made a strong impact on their learning, so that they achieved well. Where mathematics was well taught during the inspection, particularly at Key Stage 2, discussion and activities were effectively varied to challenge pupils of different abilities. Science and geography are also well taught at Key Stage 2.

13. All areas of learning for Reception aged children are soundly taught. Through careful and conscientious planning of her time, and the deployment of support staff and other adult help, the teacher ensures that these children have dedicated direct teaching time with her during the day, particularly for English. This is well managed within the demands of also teaching two other year groups. However, during whole class teaching, where the class teacher has to address a wide range of different needs, activities are sometimes not well matched to these children's needs. This is partly because not enough close attention is given to the small steps for learning recommended for young children. Mixed age classes are a challenge for all the staff. In most lessons, activities are suitably modified for pupils in different year groups, and good use is made of mixed age teaching to allow pupils with particularly high or low attainment, or with special educational needs, to work with other year groups as appropriate. However, across the school and in all subjects, planned tasks for pupils with different abilities within year groups are less consistently varied to meet their needs. This factor contributes to pupils sometimes making satisfactory, rather than good, progress both in lessons and over time. Furthermore, the quality of marking does not consistently give pupils guidance about how they can improve their work.

14. In all classes, there are pupils who find it difficult to concentrate, apply good levels of effort to their work or find it hard to explain or express their ideas. Teachers tackle this well, particularly through their good knowledge and understanding of each child, and the warmth of their relationship with their pupils. In the most effective lessons, lively focused teaching and a good pace gave teaching a strong sense of purpose and urgency, and helped to ensure that pupils' interest was captured and that they worked hard. The very good lesson was characterised by high expectations in all these areas. Groups of pupils were skillfully targeted for closely focused direct teaching that picked up on previously completed work to show pupils how it could be extended and improved. Emphases on reading and writing skills were effectively interwoven during each group session. Pupils of all abilities were included through questioning and shared work, and lower attaining pupils were successfully helped to contribute and improve their ideas. Where attention strayed or effort was less than expected, intervention was swift. In a good numeracy lesson for higher and middle attaining pupils in Years 5 and 6, questioning was varied to challenge pupils of different abilities. Activities reflected the same strength. This approach enabled pupils to develop their own strategies for multiplying three digit numbers.

15. In other strong lessons, pupils made good progress because resources or practical activities held their interest and attention for sustained periods. This was true for a history lesson, also with Year 3 and 4 pupils, taught by the headteacher. Pictures were used effectively to question and remind pupils what they had learned about Tudor homes during a recent visit. Their interest and enthusiasm sustained their concentration during subsequent activities for a protracted period of time, and made a strong contribution to their good progress.

16. Pupils with SEN are satisfactorily taught overall. These pupils concentrate well in lessons, especially in practical subjects, or where they have had first hand experience. Lower attainers, and those with special educational needs, are well supported in class and work closely with learning support workers. A small group of Year 6 pupils have booster classes three times a week to give them extra support in mathematics, and there are extra

and additional support groups for literacy. When activities, such as mathematical puzzles, captured their interest they responded well, but their loss of concentration during direct teaching or when they did not have resources to help them, affected the accuracy of their answers.

17. English and basic literacy and numeracy skills are satisfactorily taught. Pupils have greater chances to use ICT, particularly as a result of the school's Internet and e-mail facilities, but opportunities to use ICT are not always taken in lessons. There was not enough evidence to make overall judgements about the quality of teaching and learning in all other subjects.

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

18. The school offers a satisfactory curriculum that includes religious education and all the required subjects of the National Curriculum, with the exception of physical education. There are strengths in the school's enrichment of pupils' experience through visits and arts events. Links with the local community and partnership institutions are also well developed, and make a good level of contribution to the curriculum. However, limited accommodation, both within the school and on outside play areas, considerably limits aspects of physical and social development and restricts the development of outdoor education for Reception aged children. In spite of this, the school offers as wide a range of opportunities for physical development as possible, and continues to seek further ways of improving provision.

19. Since the school was last inspected, there has been good progress in planning for the systematic development of skills. All staff take an active part in planning and developing the curriculum to accommodate the mixed age classes. As appropriate, subjects are planned on a two or three year cycle to ensure that pupils do not repeat the same topics. National guidance has been used to support planning, and, in some cases, has been added to or adapted to meet the needs of the school. This is true for art and design, and history, for example. Adequate planning is in place for ICT, but pupils are not getting enough opportunities to use computers and gain a full range of experiences, in English and mathematics, for example. This is due in part to some computers having limited capacity for performing a wide range of functions, although the possibilities of ICT are not yet being fully planned for or used in all subjects. A review of the design and technology curriculum is planned to make sure that teachers have enough time within each topic to ensure that all aspects are covered.

20. The National Literacy and Numeracy Strategies have been fully implemented and updated, but there is limited formal planning for the improvement of speaking and listening skills in literacy, or for other subjects. Literacy and numeracy skills are satisfactorily developed in English and mathematics and also in other subjects. For example, in science, pupils measure accurately and draw graphs to record their results. In history, pupils record their work in different ways, for example by recording World War II events in the form of a news report or a radio play. The curricula for history, geography and religious education, in particular, benefit from well planned visits that successfully interest and motivate pupils. Pupils in Years 5 and 6 also have the opportunity each week to learn French.

21. The Foundation Stage curriculum for children in the Reception group is satisfactory. Planned work follows the topics covered by the Year 1 and 2 pupils in the same class, but is modified to reflect the learning goals nationally recommended for children of a similar age. Planning for language, literacy and mathematics is detailed, but is less so for the other areas of learning. Attention is appropriately given to what children are expected to attain by the time they enter Year 1, but does not focus closely enough on the earlier smaller

learning steps for this age group, which systematically build up the children's skills, knowledge and understanding to the expected levels. Improvements to outdoor education are planned through the purchase of wheeled toys and their use on the small area of flat playing space. Good use is also made of the local area for walks. These weekly occasions are carefully linked with work taking place in lessons.

22. All pupils have equal access to the school's activities, are integrated well into classes and participate fully in lessons, including those pupils with special educational needs. The school caters appropriately for pupils with special educational needs. These pupils are well supported in class and work closely with learning support workers. Individual education plans are specific to individual pupils, and, where appropriate, there are group targets. The school is good at recognising pupils' particular difficulties, but does not consistently translate this information into precise and detailed targets that allow the pupils' sometimes small steps of learning to be identified and tracked. The school plans to introduce the new Code of Practice for SEN once the co-ordinator has completed her training.

23. Appropriate provision is made for teaching personal, social and health education (PSHE) through 'Circle time'. The Healthy Eating project, which has involved the sale of fruit each day to eat at breaktimes, is appreciated by both pupils and parents. There are specific lessons for Years 5 and 6 concerning sex education and the awareness of the dangers of drug misuse. Parents are informed of this and invited to view the video material. Opportunities to develop Citizenship are provided through involvement with a Creative Arts Project and visits to an Indian Temple and a Mosque. Pupils' learning is enriched by the good provision of extra-curricular activities, which include computer activities, the choir, mathematics, football and cookery. Pupils have the opportunity to learn musical instruments with visiting teachers. Out of school visits and visitors to the school are particularly effective in enriching the curriculum, and are instrumental in motivating pupils and improving their achievement.

24. The school makes good use of the immediate and wider community to extend and enrich pupils' learning experiences. Many worthwhile visits out of school introduce pupils to different ways of life and activities, such as Indian dance, water sports and drama. Visitors, including local artists and clergy, come to share their talents and experience with pupils. The village community ensures that links with local people are strong. The school benefits from good links with other schools in its cluster group that foster effective professional and curriculum development, and reduce any sense of isolation. A link has also been established with a primary school in Gloucester to allow Clearwell pupils to experience an urban environment, and to meet pupils from a wider range of minority ethnic backgrounds. Pre-school groups are visited by staff before children join the Reception group. Secondary school facilities are used now for physical education, and some secondary students join the school as part of their work experience.

25. Provision for pupils' personal, spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good and has improved since the school was last inspected. Pupils benefit from the good quality and range of extra-curricular activities, based on trips, visits and good use of the local and wider community.

26. The school gives satisfactory support to pupils' spiritual development, which is restricted by the limited experience of individual pupils and missed opportunities in lessons outside circle time and assemblies. As a result, although the school gives time for pupils to reflect on the meaning of special stories or religious themes in assemblies, they find it hard to sit still and pause for thought in other situations. The school makes good use of links with the local church and of religious education, to try to foster spiritual awareness and to value special occasions. Art work by Years 3 and 4 pupils, inspired by famous paintings, and the



pupils' own sense of the magic of a winter scene, was an example of good planning and a well-used opportunity. A moment of wonderment was experienced by Years 1 and 2 pupils during the inspection, when their teacher revealed a symmetrical pattern created by folding a sheet of paper in half.

27. Aims, such as instilling respect for moral values and tolerance of other ways of life, underpin the school's consistent approach to moral development, which it nurtures well. The clear code of conduct and careful attention to teaching principles of right and wrong are significant factors in helping pupils to learn to tell the difference between acceptable and unacceptable behaviour. They are taught carefully to show respect for each other and the adults they meet.

28. Overall, in adverse circumstances, provision for social development is satisfactory. The school fosters the values of honesty and fairness well, but is less successful in promoting a sense of personal responsibility, initiative and understanding of living together. This is partly because inadequate play facilities limit pupils' opportunities to try out a wide range of playground games and ways of interacting that pupils in other schools rely on, day in day out, for effective personal and social development. The steep slope and uneven surface of a very small playground make it impossible for children to enjoy many traditional playground games safely. This has a detrimental effect on their social development, which is already slower than usual in a few cases. The school does its best to compensate for this by taking pupils on a wide range of visits, outings and outdoor activities. These involve pupils in learning how to relate to others, to work together in groups, to follow rules of the game and to take responsibility for their own actions. The school constantly encourages pupils to think of and to respect others. Older pupils are given increased responsibility for helping teachers, such as selling fruit at break, and serving as house captains. However, there is limited scope for all pupils to be given more opportunity to show initiative, particularly with their work, and to have a voice in shaping the life of the school.

29. The school makes good provision for pupils' cultural development as a result of its genuine effort to expand pupils' horizons. For example, all children have had opportunities to visit other schools and an art gallery, and to see the work of a sculptor and take part in workshops in African drumming and with a dance group. However, within the everyday life of the school, opportunities to develop pupils' cultural awareness further are sometimes overlooked. For example, their responses to extra-curricular activities are shown more vividly in photographs of them than in their own original artwork, songs, poetry or journals. The school makes good use of the village community and local area to provide Christmas parties at the castle, visits to Father Christmas at Clearwell Caves and walks to learn about the natural environment, and its history and geography. The school is to be commended for its recognition of the need to introduce children to the diversity and richness of culture outside their community. It makes remarkable efforts to take pupils to places such as Gloucester and Cardiff, and to introduce pupils to their colourful markets, shops selling food and clothing from around the world, and their different places of worship.

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

30. Pupils describe the school as caring, kind and welcoming to new people. The school has a strong sense of community and friendship within which it has effective procedures to protect and safeguard its pupils' welfare. It has to work harder than most schools to take steps to guarantee pupils' well being, health and safety. This is particularly because of the small and potentially dangerous playground, which is steep, sloping and uneven, and offers inadequate space for the usual range of outdoor activities required for pupils' physical and social development. Space within the school building is also very limited, which places an

extra burden on staff to organise assemblies, wet playtime and lunchtimes safely and with attention to health and hygiene. Child protection procedures are fully in place and are well known by staff. The school promotes healthy living admirably with the daily sale of fruit at morning break, which is organised by Year 6 pupils.

31. The school keeps good records of attendance and reasons for absence. It has improved these significantly since the last inspection so that it is now quite clear who is absent and why. This makes it easier to track unauthorised absence. When necessary, parents are called on the first day of absence if staff are unclear about why a child is not in school.

32. The school is keen to encourage good behaviour and to eliminate bullying. It has clear policies, which are used to good effect to raise standards of behaviour and to deal with incidents of name-calling, aggression or any form of bullying or racism.

33. Adults in the school know children very well, and use their knowledge helpfully to encourage and support pupils when difficulties arise with attendance, behaviour and attitudes to work. With most pupils, other than those with identified special educational needs, this process has usually been informal. However, the school has begun to use formal procedures, including notes on reasons for absence, incidents in class or at play, and concerns about behaviour, to monitor personal development more systematically. As a result, it is easier to identify what action is needed. Monitoring and support for pupils' personal development is good, overall.

34. Assessment systems are satisfactory and now operate throughout the school. The importance of their further development is appropriately acknowledged as a priority within the school's strategic planning. Recent improvements are particularly significant as they allow teachers to focus more closely on exactly what individual pupils need to do to improve and, once fully established, these developments will enable the school to track pupils' progress as they move through the school. Increasing analysis of national and other test information is giving the school more information about its performance and where it needs to improve achievement. The current priority is raising standards in writing. Samples of written work from each pupil will now be checked each half term, to assess a National Curriculum Level and to set specific targets for improvement. A first analysis and setting of targets have already taken place. Future plans are to introduce the same approach for assessing and raising reading standards and to complete a computer database of assessment information for monitoring pupils' achievement over time. However, these improvements are very recent and have not yet influenced standards of achievement. Assessments in mathematics are made at the end of each unit of work; assessment of individuals has, for example, identified those older pupils needing extra small group support in Year 6, helped staff group pupils during lessons and informed longer term planning. The approach to assessment suggested in national guidance is used for science, ICT and all foundation subjects, with the exception of music and physical education, where assessment is underdeveloped, and for art and design where progress is tracked through the use of individual sketchbooks. However, assessments in these subjects are not always matched to National Curriculum Levels to help teachers identify more precisely what pupils must do to move to higher levels.

35. Early assessments made of children's attainment during their first half term in school are now being recorded on the computerised assessment program. So, too, are assessments made at the end of their Reception year. In this way, the school can assess the progress made by children during that time. At present, there is limited analysis of this information to look for any trends in attainment across groups year on year, or to judge the comparative strengths in attainment or achievement and areas needing particular attention in each group. However, these assessments are satisfactorily used to identify those

children who might have special educational needs. Targets on individual education plans for pupils with SEN are regularly reviewed and new targets set. However, when these targets are too broad, they sometimes have to be repeated and therefore do not give a clear enough picture of how much progress has been made over time. Arrangements for supporting pupils with a statement of need are good. Activities are well-planned and extra support is carefully allocated.

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

36. Parents think the school is doing a good job. Their views are generally more positive than at the last inspection. This is because they recognise the genuine improvements in teaching and in the school's great efforts to encourage their children's personal development.

37. The school has good links with parents based on its warm welcome for them, which makes them feel comfortable about approaching staff with any questions or concerns. The school's place in the village, at the heart of the community, supports its relationships with parents well. As a result, a core of active, local parents steers the Friends' Association enthusiastically and offers a range of social and fund-raising events, such as the duck race on the river and regular cake sales. Even parents who find it difficult to come to school for other events are happy to attend social functions and school productions such as the Christmas play in the church. Most parents support the school by coming to events and meetings. Their interest in the school's social life is generally stronger than in its academic activities. As a result, the impact that parents have on the life and work of the school is satisfactory.

38. Most parents respond well to what the school asks them to do to support their children. They hear their children read, help with other homework, or willingly follow an agreed action plan to improve a child's behaviour. A few parents are much less responsive to requests for help and to support their children's education, and some pupils lack help and encouragement from home with their work and reading. This affects what the school can do to ensure that all children make the progress of which they are capable. As a result, in spite of the level of support from the majority, the contribution of parents to children's learning and to the standards they reach is unsatisfactory overall.

39. Lack of space makes it hard for the school to use its initiative to involve parents more fully in their children's learning. For example, it is impractical to invite all parents regularly to come in to see the school at work, to attend assemblies and coffee mornings, or to take part in the creative activities that many schools take for granted as a way of including people in their daily life.

40. The school provides satisfactory information for parents. Its prospectus is easy to read, although not as lively and informative as those that include examples of children's drawing and writing. The report of the governing body barely meets the requirements for what is to be included as it does not have enough information under each heading. This is a missed opportunity to show parents what the school has done and to illustrate the children's wide range of achievements year by year.

41. Parents receive satisfactory information about children's progress from reports and meetings, but, as the school recognises, its arrangements for keeping parents up to date need to be reviewed. The timing of parents' consultation meetings is unhelpful, which the school acknowledges, as there is no formal opportunity to agree and then work on targets to speed up progress before the end of a particular school year. Reports on pupils' progress give an outline of what each child has learned subject by subject, but without a

clear idea of whether this is what other pupils of the same age or capabilities know, understand and can do. Staff give fewer specific goals for improvement than might be expected, as there is no space for sharply focused targets on report forms, nor for pupils or parents to add their own comments. It is difficult for parents to know exactly how to help their children, because written comments do not tell them precisely what the child needs to do and why.

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

42. There are no longer serious weaknesses in the leadership and management of the school. Overall, this represents good level of improvement on the findings of the last inspection. Immediately following the previous inspection, the school experienced an uncertain time, during which there was some disruption to staffing and changes to senior staff. The school is now stabilised and is soundly led and managed. There are close and well-informed relationships between the staff and governing body. Planned improvements are being introduced, and developmental priorities are appropriate. Within these present circumstances, the capacity for the school's future improvement is sound. Its most significant priorities focus on the raising of standards, and on developing assessment procedures so that staff have more precise information about what pupils can and cannot do. Recent developments reflect the school's greater and growing analysis of the quality of its work and of the standards it achieves. However, this scrutiny is not yet sharply focused enough to identify what pupils need to do to improve, and so ensure that progress is consistently good in all subjects.

43. The school is successful at meeting its aims of encouraging respect for others in a happy and caring environment. As a result, pupils behave well and relationships are good. Pastoral care is strong because staff know pupils well and are good at identifying where pupils have particular educational needs or emotional and behavioural difficulties. This knowledge has resulted in specific initiatives to improve and enrich pupils' experience and understanding. These include visits and links within the local area and wider afield, and developments to personal, social and health education. The success of these projects is clearly seen in pupils' enthusiasm for work where they have first hand or practical learning experiences. In these lessons, they make good progress. The school is also getting to grips with raising pupils' achievement, although some improvements are too new to have yet made enough impact. This is true of improvements to assessment, for example. The greatest success in raising standards is to be seen in the steady upward overall trend in science results in the national tests for pupils in Year 6. Pupils at Key Stage 2 are also making good progress in mathematics as a result of the school's good teaching of the Numeracy Strategy.

44. There is a democratic and collegiate approach to leadership, development and delegation, within which a committed staff work hard, and willingly fulfil many roles and responsibilities. This includes the headteacher, who teaches pupils across the year groups at Key Stage 2 and satisfactorily manages key areas of responsibility, including literacy and special educational needs. Sound procedures are now operating for monitoring the quality of teaching and learning and for developing the performance management of staff. All teachers observe, and give written feedback on, each other's lessons, including identifying some areas for development. Monitoring activities undertaken by the science subject leader have had a positive effect on raising pupils' achievement. Key issues from the last inspection relating to curriculum have been effectively addressed, and systematic development of skills, knowledge and understanding is now planned for in all subjects. This has also increased the subject knowledge of staff.

45. The governing body has ably addressed key issues from the last inspection, and is now well placed to shape the school's direction. There is now a greater awareness of governors' roles and responsibilities, and they have a good understanding of the strengths and weaknesses of the school. The allocation of roles and responsibilities has been eased by recruiting new members, and a greater knowledge of the school's work has been achieved through a useful pairing of governors with curriculum areas, planned governor visits and a Governor of the Month system. Communication has been improved through regular and frequent contact between the Chair and the headteacher, and an informative monthly newsletter. Governors are very supportive of the school and its work, and the close support of the Chair was particularly effective during the difficult period following the last inspection. Strategic and financial planning are sound, and the school generally makes satisfactory use of its resources. The school's improvement plan has useful details about ongoing progress in achieving its objectives, although criteria for judging the success of initiatives tend to be broad, particularly in relation to outcomes in raising standards. The governing body is well aware of the need to develop further its role as a critical friend to the school and its monitoring of the standards the school achieves.

46. Financial administration and monitoring are satisfactory, and there is sound use of new technology. Staffing is also satisfactory. Within this small community, informal support and liaison with existing and new staff are strong. As a result of good links with local schools and training institutions, the school benefits from having secondary aged pupils on work experience, and initial teacher training students. Through their many and varied roles, all support staff play a valuable part in the school's work. Learning resources are adequate overall, although the capacity of some computers is not enough to meet the needs of the ICT curriculum. Neither is there enough large equipment for gymnastics. Resources for history, geography and science are well used to stimulate pupils' interest and funding for arts projects effectively extend pupils' experience. The school's evaluation of its effectiveness and consideration of whether it is getting best value for the standards it achieves is satisfactory and improving.

47. Accommodation continues to be poor. Since the previous inspection, the school has taken steps to make improvements, and is doggedly fighting to take over the adjoining and empty schoolhouse for expansion. Negotiations have been protracted and the school's financial reserves reflect money saved for building and refurbishment developments once the school is able to use the space. During the inspection, improvements were being made to the pupils' toilet facilities. In the meantime, space within the school is cramped and resources and paperwork are badly stored, particularly in staff and administrative areas. Access to the library for developing research skills is inhibited by its position as a thoroughfare and the need to use it for small group teaching. The sloping playground continues to be a hazard and is not an adequate play area. Its inappropriateness as a games area, and the lack of hall space, means that the school cannot fully meet statutory requirements for teaching physical education or adequately develop outdoor education for Reception aged children. Nevertheless, compensatory facilities are well used, and the school does all it can to cover all aspects of the subject.

48. The high unit cost per pupil reflects the small size of the school, and overall, the school gives sound value for money. Pupils' progress, the quality of leadership and management, and of teaching and learning, are all satisfactory overall.

## WHAT SHOULD THE SCHOOL DO TO IMPROVE FURTHER?

49. To raise standards of achievement in all subjects and for all pupils, the governors, headteacher and staff should:

- improve standards in English, mathematics and ICT, by:
  - \* planning opportunities for the improvement of speaking and listening skills in English, in other subjects and at the Foundation Stage so that pupils are enabled to extend their vocabulary and explain ideas more clearly;
  - \* developing and extending current assessment systems so that they give teachers more precise information about what individual pupils must do to improve their work.;
  - \* using assessment information more effectively to plan work that is consistently challenging and meets the different needs of pupils within year groups, and to set specific whole school and individual targets;
  - \* extending and developing the existing strengths of teaching and learning to all subjects and lessons so that all pupils consistently make good progress;
  - \* using marking to give pupils guidance about how they can improve their work;
  - \* ensuring that all targets in individual education plans for pupils with SEN are precise enough for small amounts of progress to be tracked and measured.
  
- In English, by:
  - \* giving pupils more planned opportunities to develop research skills through the use of the library and ICT facilities;
  - \* ensuring that the oldest pupils record enough work in all subjects, including science and religious education;
  - \* allowing pupils more opportunities to draft and redraft their work in books and on the computer.
  
- In ICT, by:
  - (Paragraphs: 1-6; 7; 10; 12-16; 19-20; 21; 34-35; 41; 42-43; 45; 53-55; 59-65; 67-72; 74-77; 81; 89-90; 91-94)*
  - \* continuing to improve ICT resources so that all pupils have good access to updated equipment that can fulfil a necessary range of functions;
  - \* fully exploiting opportunities in lessons to use and develop ICT skills;
  - \* undertaking further ICT training, as planned, to increase staff expertise.
  
- Urgently pursuing improvements to the school's accommodation, to allow the curriculum to be taught in full throughout the school, including:
  - (Paragraphs: 10; 18; 21; 28; 30; 39; 47; 57; 97)*
  - \* the proposed use of the school house to extend the school's facilities and space;
  - \* regular and frequent access to the school's library to support the development of pupils' research skills;
  - \* the development and use of outside areas, where possible, for promoting physical education and outdoor education for Reception aged children.

50. Other areas in need of development, which the governors should consider for inclusion in the school's action plan, are:

- \* making more use of the recommended small steps for learning for very young children to plan activities and track the progress of the Reception group;  
*(Paragraphs: 13; 21; 52)*
- \* giving more chances for all pupils to take initiative and responsibility in and out of lessons;  
*(Paragraphs: 10; 28; 89)*
- \* reviewing, as planned, current provision for design and technology, to ensure teachers have enough time to fully cover all aspects of the subject within each topic;  
*(Paragraphs: 19; 81-82)*
- \* developing further the governing body's role as critical friend through its monitoring of the standards the school achieves;  
*(Paragraphs: 42; 45)*
- \* reviewing arrangements for parents' consultations meetings and improving the quality and extent of information in pupils' annual reports, so that parents know more about what their children need to do to improve and why;  
*(Paragraph: 41)*
- \* extending the amount of information included in the governing body's annual report in order to show parents what the school has done and illustrate the children's wide range of achievements year by year.  
*(Paragraph: 40)*

## PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS

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

Number of lessons observed	16
Number of discussions with staff, governors, other adults and pupils	29

### Summary of teaching observed during the inspection

	Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
Number	0	1	7	8	0	0	0
Percentage	0	6	44	50	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 one six percentage points.

### Information about the school's pupils

Pupils on the school's roll	Nursery	YR–Y6
Number of pupils on the school's roll (FTE for part-time pupils)	N/A	61
Number of full-time pupils known to be eligible for free school meals	N/A	9

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Special educational needs	Nursery	YR–Y6
Number of pupils with statements of special educational needs	N/A	1
Number of pupils on the school's special educational needs register	N/A	20

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

Pupil mobility in the last school year	No of pupils
Pupils who joined the school other than at the usual time of first admission	7
Pupils who left the school other than at the usual time of leaving	6

### Attendance

#### Authorised absence

	%
School data	5.1
National comparative data	5.6

#### Unauthorised absence

	%
School data	1.8
National comparative data	0.5

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



### Attainment at the end of Key Stage 1 (Year 2)

Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 1 for the latest reporting year:	<b>Year</b>	<b>Boys</b>	<b>Girls</b>	<b>Total</b>
	2001	3	5	8

<b>National Curriculum Test/Task Results</b>		<b>Reading</b>	<b>Writing</b>	<b>Mathematics</b>
Numbers of pupils at NC Level 2 and above	<b>Boys</b>	2	2	3
	<b>Girls</b>	4	5	5
	<b>Total</b>	6	7	8
Percentage of pupils at NC Level 2 or above	<b>School</b>	75 (100)	88 (100)	100 (100)
	<b>National</b>	84 (83)	86 (84)	91 (90)

<b>Teachers' Assessments</b>		<b>English</b>	<b>Mathematics</b>	<b>Science</b>
Numbers of pupils at NC Level 2 and above	<b>Boys</b>	2	3	3
	<b>Girls</b>	3	5	5
	<b>Total</b>	5	8	8
Percentage of pupils at NC Level 2 or above	<b>School</b>	63 (100)	100 (100)	100 (100)
	<b>National</b>	85 (84)	89 (88)	89 (88)

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

### Attainment at the end of Key Stage 2 (Year 6)

Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 2 for the latest reporting year:	<b>Year</b>	<b>Boys</b>	<b>Girls</b>	<b>Total</b>
	2001	6	6	12

<b>National Curriculum Test/Task Results</b>		<b>English</b>	<b>Mathematics</b>	<b>Science</b>
Numbers of pupils at NC Level 4 and above	<b>Boys</b>	5	4	6
	<b>Girls</b>	4	3	6
	<b>Total</b>	9	7	12
Percentage of pupils at NC Level 4 or above	<b>School</b>	75 (57)	58 (57)	100 (86)
	<b>National</b>	75 (75)	71 (72)	87 (85)

<b>Teachers' Assessments</b>		<b>English</b>	<b>Mathematics</b>	<b>Science</b>
Numbers of pupils at NC Level 4 and above	<b>Boys</b>	4	3	6
	<b>Girls</b>	3	3	5
	<b>Total</b>	7	6	11
Percentage of pupils at NC Level 4 or above	<b>School</b>	58 (57)	50 (57)	92 (86)
	<b>National</b>	72 (70)	74 (72)	82 (79)

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

### ***Ethnic background of pupils***

	<b>No of pupils</b>
Black – Caribbean heritage	2
Black – African heritage	0
Black – other	0
Indian	0
Pakistani	0
Bangladeshi	0
Chinese	0
White	48
Any other minority ethnic group	1

*This table refers to pupils of compulsory school age only. Not all parents have identified the ethnicity of their children.*

### ***Exclusions in the last school year***

	<b>Fixed period</b>	<b>Permanent</b>
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	3	0
Other minority ethnic groups	0	0

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

### ***Teachers and classes***

#### **Qualified teachers and classes: YR–Y6**

Total number of qualified teachers (FTE)	3.5
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	17.14:1
Average class size	20

#### **Education support staff: YR–Y6**

Total number of education support staff	4
Total aggregate hours worked per week	39.25

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

Total number of qualified teachers (FTE)	N/A
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	N/A
Total number of education support staff	N/A
Total aggregate hours worked per week	N/A
Number of pupils per FTE adult	N/A

*FTE means full-time equivalent.*

### ***Financial information***

Financial year	<b>2000-2001</b>
	<b>£</b>
Total income	184145.00
Total expenditure	181873.00
Expenditure per pupil	2933.00
Balance brought forward from previous year	10280.00
Balance carried forward to next year	12552.00

**Recruitment of teachers**

Number of teachers who left the school during the last two years	0
Number of teachers appointed to the school during the last two years	0

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

*FTE means full-time equivalent.*

## Results of the survey of parents and careers

### Questionnaire return rate

Number of questionnaires sent out  
Number of questionnaires returned

61
24

### Percentage of responses in each category

	<b>Strongly agree</b>	<b>Tend to agree</b>	<b>Tend to disagree</b>	<b>Strongly disagree</b>	<b>Don't know</b>
My child likes school.	58	33	8	0	0
My child is making good progress in school.	54	33	0	8	4
Behaviour in the school is good.	33	67	0	0	0
My child gets the right amount of work to do at home.	29	62	8	0	0
The teaching is good.	92	8	0	0	0
I am kept well informed about how my child is getting on.	46	50	4	0	0
I would feel comfortable about approaching the school with questions or a problem.	92	8	0	0	0
The school expects my child to work hard and achieve his or her best.	88	12	0	0	0
The school works closely with parents.	75	25	0	0	0
The school is well led and managed.	75	25	0	0	0
The school is helping my child become mature and responsible.	79	21	0	0	0
The school provides an interesting range of activities outside lessons.	67	8	21	0	4

## **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**

51. Children in the Reception group are taught within a mixed-age class with pupils in Years 1 and 2. At the time of this inspection there were ten children of Reception age. These children enter the school at the beginning of the year in which they have their fifth birthday, and attend full time. Early assessments, taken within the first half term of these children's time in school, show that there is a wide range of ability within each small year group although attainment overall is below what might be expected of children of a similar age. This is most marked in language and literacy, as many children do not speak with confidence and have a limited vocabulary. The school reports that some aspects of personal and social development also need extra support, for example in playing with others. Because of their limited language and literacy skills, attainment generally remains below what is expected by the time pupils enter Year 1. Inspection evidence indicates that all areas of learning are satisfactorily taught, and children in the present Reception group are making sound progress.

52. Taken overall, there has been a satisfactory level of development to this area of the school's work since the last inspection. The learning goals nationally recommended for these young children are appropriately used for planning activities and strengths in teaching, outlined below, have been maintained. However, planning and providing for the very different needs of Reception aged children within this mixed age class is challenging. A particular strength of teaching is the good management of groups. This is because the class teacher carefully and conscientiously plans her time so the Reception aged children have periods of direct teaching from her during the day, as well as sessions when they come together with the older pupils. This approach is particularly successfully managed for language and literacy, and for mathematics. The Reception children also have close help and guidance from a trained learning support worker. Much time and effort is given to planning appropriate activities for these children and all staff liaise well. Both adults contribute to ongoing assessment diaries for each child and there is good informal communication about children's achievement and needs. Planning for language and literacy and for mathematics is detailed, but is less so for the other areas of learning. Whilst broad learning objectives are identified for other areas or subjects, planning does not take enough account of the small steps for learning recommended for these young children, in order to focus closely on their particular needs and to help them improve. This was sometimes seen during whole class teaching, when a wide range of different needs within the three year groups had to be met.

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

53. Children in the current Reception group are generally at ease with each other and with those adults they know. During the inspection, for example, they played together amicably and with enjoyment in the role play area, sharing and taking turns to use the dressing up resources, such as the wolf mask and Red Riding Hood's cloak. They readily sought help from the learning support worker when making *Get Well* cards for the character of Granny in 'Little Red Riding Hood'. The topic on traditional fairy stories had captured their interest, and they were positive and enthusiastic about their work. Circle time was used as a good opportunity for these children to work together with the older pupils in the class as they passed a squeeze of the hand or a smile around the class. However, many of the children within this small group are reluctant to talk to, or make eye contact with, less familiar adults. They also lack confidence when speaking within the larger whole class

group. This was particularly apparent when ideas had not been initially discussed, and they were not fully familiar with talking about what they were asked to share with others. Religious education topics allow children to develop respect for others and their way of life. For example, whilst watching a video, they were encouraged to look for similarities and differences between Christian traditions and those of Muslims.

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

54. These children are quiet and attentive during group and whole class teaching. Weekly *Show and Tell* and circle time sessions are good opportunities for children to listen to each other. So, too, was the discussion that took place during the inspection before they set out on their walk to the woods. In circle time, they listened intently. However, when asked by unfamiliar adults, children give brief answers to questions about their work and offer little further detail. Children enjoy stories. Their limited responses to questions about what happened to Granny in 'Little Red Riding Hood' show that they knew what happened in the story. Whilst more able children write independently and copy accurately and legibly, others show only an awareness of some letter shapes. These letters are not well formed although some children can write their first name. Whilst reading and writing activities are planned for in detail, there is less sharply focused planning for developing speaking skills as an integral part of all activities.

### **Mathematical development**

55. During the inspection, and as part of their topic on shape, a small group of children threaded beads to create a repeating pattern, working without adult support. Some accurately alternated two colours. Whilst the others showed some awareness of repeating their pattern, they were not able to do this regularly. Scrutiny of work indicates that most children accurately complete simple addition and subtraction sums using numbers to ten. More able children had used numbers to 12. Higher and middle attaining children write numbers correctly, although lower attainers sometimes write them the wrong way round. Sometimes sums are recorded independently, although scrutiny of children's work indicated that the same worksheet activities are sometimes completed by children of all abilities.

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

56. The school is keen to extend children's knowledge and understanding, particularly through direct experience. Reception children benefit from weekly walks that usefully focus on and extend activities taking place in the classroom. For example, during the inspection, the children went to the woods. Discussion before they set off focused on links with the fairy stories they were learning about, and what the woods would be like. The children were enthusiastic about their trip and this helped them, when asked, to speculate about the story characters they might meet in this setting. Other walks have taken them to the local church and recreation ground. They have also tested their wind spinners outside and been on a number hunt. During work on electricity, children drew pictures of the lighthouses they would make and used the computer to make simple safety posters. They have explored forces and drawn pictures of what happened when a lorry was pushed down a ramp. Currently, they are learning about old toys and comparing how they are made. As part of their focus on the character of Granny in 'Little Red Riding Hood', they are going to make her some cakes.

## **Physical development**

57. Despite the limitations of the school site, the school does its best to give these children opportunities for outdoor play and physical education: this is another reason for the planned walks around the immediate locality. Additionally, a weekly physical education lesson takes place in the village hall. Plans are also in place to extend the children's experience through the purchase of wheeled toys that can be used on the flat area of the playground. During activities in the classroom, children hold pencils accurately, although colouring in is not always neatly done or letters well formed.

## **Creative development**

58. During role-play activities, these children used dressing up clothes and objects with interest and enjoyment to 'become' characters they had met in fairy stories, sometimes using speech. In a whole class music lesson, children were keen to explore the sounds of untuned musical instruments although their opportunity to do this was limited by being required to take part in the same activities as the older pupils. During art and design activities, they make bubble prints and take part in collage and painting activities, for example to represent a traditional Chinese tale.

## **ENGLISH**

59. In the most recent national tests in 2001 for Year 6 pupils, standards in English were broadly in line with the national average for all and for similar schools. The proportion of pupils attaining the higher level (Level 5) was above national averages. The results indicated that these pupils had made satisfactory progress since taking the national tests when they were in Year 2. Those Year 2 pupils taking the national tests in 2001 attained standards that were below the national average for writing, and well below for reading. In comparison with similar schools, these results were well below the national average for writing, but were very low for reading, falling into the lowest five per cent within that benchmark grouping of schools. No pupil attained the higher level (Level 3) for writing. Variations in results each year, and differences in the performance of boys and girls, reflect the considerable impact made by the proportions of boys and girls, and of those pupils with special educational needs, on the small size of each year group.

60. Inspection evidence indicates that pupils in the present Years 6 and 2 are attaining standards below national expectations in all aspects of the subject. Many pupils have limited and unconfident language skills when they first start school, and this is most significant in relation to their spoken language. In response to these challenges, the school makes appropriate use of funding to give pupils additional and extra literacy support. Its increasingly sharply focused analysis of national and other test information has shown the need to focus on raising standards for all pupils in writing. In response to this need, the headteacher has recently introduced new assessment methods that look closely at the writing of individual pupils, assess what they can and cannot do, and set specific target areas for improvement for individuals and groups of pupils. This approach will next be introduced for reading. The Literacy Strategy is soundly taught overall, but has strengths in some aspects of the teaching of reading and writing. As a result of these factors, all pupils make satisfactory progress overall, including those pupils with special educational needs. This reflects the findings of the previous report. Year 2 pupils have made good progress during their recent work on traditional fairy stories. However, although staff plan lessons carefully in order to improve pupils' achievement in reading and writing, less emphasis is given to planning for the improvement of speaking and listening skills, both within English and in other subjects.

61. Throughout the school, all but the more able have a narrow range of vocabulary and have difficulty explaining ideas clearly. This, in turn, inhibits both the content of their writing and their response to what they read. Most pupils listen attentively, particularly when they have been enthused by direct experience through visits, work is well matched to their needs or teaching firmly focuses their attention. Some, however, find it difficult to pay attention for sustained periods, or do not work with enough concentration when they are not directly supervised by an adult.

62. Pupils have good attitudes to reading, although a significant proportion does not read regularly at home. Many pupils in Year 6 name and talk about stories they have particularly enjoyed. Those in the current Year 2 were thoroughly enjoying their work on well-known fairy tales, particularly when it was presented in play script form. With some prompting, they identified characteristics of a script, such as the use of brackets for stage directions. They were keen to read the parts of different characters, and did so with improving expression. More able Year 2 pupils read accurately and expressively. So, too, do middle attaining pupils, sometimes needing help with unfamiliar words. Lower attainers need a lot of support to read simple text and make little attempt to sound out words they do not know. More able pupils in Year 6 read with some fluency, whilst some middle attainers are accurate, but hesitant, readers. Where Year 2 pupils are confident speakers, they happily talk about the illustrations and make some simple predictions about how the story might develop. Generally, however, pupils are less confident understanding and discussing what they have read. Even the more able Year 6 pupils struggle to explain the meaning of unfamiliar words from the context of the sentence, and have limited understanding of the text beyond its literal meaning. Pupils also make limited use of non-fiction books to develop research skills, for example in history, although some higher attainers do so voluntarily in lessons. The development of research and enquiry skills is partly inhibited because it is difficult to use the library, which is small and, of necessity, is used as a thoroughfare to reach other parts of the school. Some pupils have used CD Roms or the Internet to look for information, but these opportunities are also limited as not all computers in school can be used for this purpose.

63. Sentence construction and the correct use of punctuation are generally well taught. As a consequence, many Year 2 pupils write simple sentences and use full stops accurately. More able pupils include exclamation marks and capital letters for emphasis and effect. Spelling is either accurate or phonetically correct. Handwriting also receives good attention. Higher attainers in Year 2 join letters and higher and middle attainers in Year 6 have neat and fluent joined handwriting. Year 6 pupils are becoming increasingly aware of the conventions of formal styles of writing. During the inspection, they identified words and phrases that characterised official letters from solicitors or local government officials. The arguments in their persuasive writing are appropriately structured and organised into paragraphs. However, in keeping with findings from the last inspection report, writing often lacks liveliness and interest, although both were seen in work completed by more able pupils in Years 2 and 6. For example, Year 6 pupils wrote empathetic and descriptive accounts of conditions during World War II, as part of their history topic. In this writing, there was some well-chosen vocabulary, and varied openings to sentences and ideas had been extended with the use of simple connectives.

64. Overall, the quality of teaching and learning is satisfactory, although within this picture there are strengths, some of which have already been indicated above. This is an improvement at Key Stage 2 (Years 3 to 6) on the findings of the previous report. Texts and stories are often well chosen to capture pupils' imagination or to illustrate teaching points effectively. Where this happened most successfully during the inspection, pupils made good progress. For example, written work produced recently by Year 2 pupils in connection with their studies of fairy stories showed the quantity of writing to have increased and the



content improved. During the inspection, teaching and learning were satisfactory in all lessons, except in one with pupils in Years 3 and 4, where teaching was very good. In this lesson, time was very effectively used and the literacy strategy model skilfully adapted to give high quality focused teaching to particular groups of pupils. In addition to the good management of groups, there were high expectations of concentration, effort and good behaviour. Pupils were kept closely on task, and this was a crucial element in them making good progress, as many found it hard to maintain attention. Previous work was well used to illustrate and promote spelling and reading skills, and to show pupils what they needed to do to improve their writing. Confident subject knowledge and a lively and positive manner encouraged pupils of all abilities to contribute. Explanatory text was well modelled by the class teacher, and pre-prepared sheets of paper and displayed instructions enabled pupils successfully to structure their writing. Pupils in Years 5 and 6 had also been well supported in the organisation of different types of writing. The improving assessment of pupils' achievement is helping teachers to plan modified activities to meet different needs, and work is suitably varied for the different year groups within their class. However, scrutiny of pupils' work and some lessons seen suggest that activities are not consistently well modified to meet the needs of different ability groups within each year, and sometimes tasks are not challenging enough. Neither does marking always give pupils enough guidance on how their work could be improved.

65. There is generally a sound balance between worksheet activities and independent work. Some activities are imaginative, such as the use of 'The Jolly Postman' as a means of teaching letter-writing skills. Literacy skills are satisfactorily promoted across the curriculum. Older pupils are encouraged to draft their work, and good expectations of presentation are promoted when pupils copy out their work to be displayed. There is less emphasis, however, on redrafting to further improve the quality of their writing. The potential of ICT has not yet been fully harnessed in the support of literacy skills. Computers tend to be used more to word process completed work rather than to make original drafts and sometimes opportunities are missed in literacy lessons to use and apply ICT skills.

66. The subject is satisfactorily led, managed and monitored and has been satisfactorily developed overall since the last inspection. Lessons have been observed by the subject leader and feedback given to teachers, and pupils' work has been sampled and assessed.

## **MATHEMATICS**

67. In the national tests in 2001 for Year 6 pupils, results were well below the national averages for all and similar schools, and indicated that these pupils had not made enough progress overall since taking the national tests in Year 2. The proportion of pupils achieving the higher level was below the national average. Results in the most recent national tests for Year 2 pupils were above both the national average for all schools, and when compared with similar schools. The proportion achieving the higher level for these tests was broadly similar to national averages.

68. Pupils in the current Years 2 and 6 are attaining standards below national expectations. This is lower than the test results of pupils in the previous Years 2 and 6 because the current year groups have a greater proportion of pupils with special educational needs. However, evidence from pupils' work and the lesson observed in this class, indicates that standards in the current Year 1 are broadly in line with what is expected of pupils at this age. Taken overall, all pupils, including those with special educational needs, make at least sound progress from the time they come into the school. Although the National Numeracy Strategy is now fully implemented, Year 6 pupils, both last year and this, had not had the benefit of the Strategy in earlier year groups. However, throughout Key Stage 2, pupils are currently being well taught and are making good

progress. For example, good teaching during the inspection helped many higher and middle attaining pupils to work at the expected level for their age in lessons. Additionally, these pupils are achieving well in lessons because they concentrate and work hard.

69. By Year 2, pupils write and order numbers to 100. They show a good understanding of this knowledge when they order sets of digits to make the largest and smallest numbers. They confidently add and subtract numbers to twenty, and apply this to money problems. The majority has a good understanding of place value, odd and even numbers and count on and back in twos and fives. More able pupils use the five times table to solve word problems. Pupils learn to name and describe two-dimensional shapes and to identify lines of symmetry. They collect data and record it on simple block graphs. Pupils with SEN make sound progress in lessons because they are given appropriate help. However, scrutiny of Year 2 pupils' work shows little evidence of attainment at the higher level.

70. Pupils currently in Year 6 have built up a good recall of basic number facts and a variety of ways of solving number problems mentally. Brisk oral starts to lessons, and well-planned activities, effectively reinforce their knowledge of multiplication and division facts. Pupils are becoming increasingly confident in explaining their work, although most still find this difficult. The majority of Year 6 pupils have a good understanding of the different methods of calculation. They are familiar with number rules using numbers to thousands, and they understand equivalent fractions. They name and classify two and three-dimensional shapes, and estimate, measure and calculate angles. They plot co-ordinates and recognise axes of reflective symmetry. More able pupils extend this to reflecting shapes in all four quadrants. Lower attaining pupils are helped to apply different methods of calculation to real life problems. When tackling their work, these pupils identify what they need to do and reach an accurate answer, but have difficulty explaining how they arrived at their result because they are hampered in doing this by their limited vocabulary and speaking skills.

71. Overall, teaching and learning is good, particularly at Key Stage 2. No unsatisfactory teaching was seen, and half the lessons seen were well taught. Mental and oral starters to mathematics lessons are well established. In the best lessons, activities are fast and fun and pupils are well motivated. Teachers plan effectively and set work for different groups, although planned activities are sometimes unchallenging or not matched closely enough to the needs of pupils with different abilities. Those pupils with SEN often benefit from the additional adult help they receive both in the classroom and when they are withdrawn. This not only gives them extra support, but also enables the rest of the class to be taught as a smaller group. Where Year 6 pupils with SEN were seen working together during the inspection, they were interested and challenged by their work with mathematical puzzles. They were happy to have a go, but found it difficult to maintain concentration during direct teaching, and answered inaccurately. The same problems occurred when there were no resources available to help reinforce mathematical concepts. Overall, pupils respond very well to the routine of group work and co-operate when working together. Teachers have a good knowledge of the pupils' abilities and ask appropriate questions in whole class sessions so all pupils are involved. Teachers give clear explanations and emphasise mathematical language so that pupils learn to use the correct terms when talking about their work. However, some pupils tend to be too reliant on the teacher, and this limits their ability to apply or explore ideas independently.

72. In the best lessons, pace and challenge were very good, and teachers used different activities and time targets to ensure that the majority of the class stayed focused and worked quickly. Good organisation and class management led to the majority of pupils having good behaviour and making good progress. Learning support staff are well informed and are an invaluable help to teachers with mixed age classes. Teachers have very good relationships with the pupils. They use games to motivate pupils and vary activities in order

to repeat facts and still maintain interest. Pupils take a pride in their work and good use is made of jotters to enable them to set work out and practise new skills. However, some worksheets and exercises from the published scheme do not fully reinforce what is taught in the lessons. In two lessons, this confused the pupils. Although they had understood the lesson, the teacher had to explain again what they had to do. Whilst work is checked, the quality of marking is not consistent. In exercise books and jotters, comments to the pupils are both positive and encouraging, and the most effective marking shows pupils how they can improve and develop their work. However, this is not always the case. For example, there are not enough opportunities given for pupils to correct their work. Homework is satisfactory, and reinforces the work pupils have been doing in class.

73. Curriculum planning has improved since the last inspection. It is detailed and conscientiously takes into account the mixed age classes. Numeracy is promoted well in other subjects, such as geography, science and design and technology. ICT is used to support learning, but this is limited. The subject leader is committed and well informed. She has attended a number of relevant courses, and is very knowledgeable about the development of mathematics. She has led staff training for the Numeracy Strategy, and recommended appropriate courses for colleagues. Monitoring has taken place through lesson observation, monitoring pupils' work and through the subject leader's analysis of test information. This has enabled her to identify areas for development.

## **SCIENCE**

74. National test results in science for Year 6 pupils have risen overall since 1997. This positive trend was maintained in the most recent tests in 2001, and, as a result, standards were in line with both the national average and that of similar schools. The results of national teacher assessments for science in 2001 for Year 2 pupils were very high when compared with all schools, and with schools in similar contexts, and were in the top five per cent nationally. However, the percentage attaining the higher levels was below the national average in both year groups.

75. In the current Year 2, standards are in line with what is nationally expected. No lessons were observed, but previous work and the teacher's planning show pupils cover all the required areas of science. These pupils have learned about electricity in the home and can make up simple circuits with batteries. Through the use of well-prepared worksheets, pupils record what they find out when they test things. For example, they had measured in centimetres the distances cars travel down different ramps and recorded the results in a table. Previous work shows pupils have made close observations of the stages of growth of caterpillars to butterflies, and looked at the habitats of small animals.

76. Pupils in the current Year 6 are also attaining standards that are in line with national expectations. Throughout their time at Key Stage 2, pupils complete a good range of investigations and, as a result, they confidently carry out tests. In their work on separating solids and liquids and dissolving materials in water, pupils in Year 6 made predictions about what would happen. They understood which factors had to be varied, tested the outcomes and drew conclusions. Their work was recorded carefully using a variety of graphs, tables and labelled diagrams. Year 6 pupils recognise conventional symbols for electrical components and construct different circuits from diagrams.

77. In the two lessons seen, the quality of teaching and learning were good. Clear planning included reinforcement of previous work. Carefully targeted questioning encouraged pupils to think for themselves and steered them towards accurate conclusions, and teachers encouraged pupils to learn and use scientific vocabulary. Pupils were managed well, and the carefully planned practical activities ensured that they remained

interested and made good progress. For example, pupils in Years 3 and 4 tested different materials for conductivity. For this they showed how they had previously learned to make up an electric circuit and what was needed to complete the circuit. They used the correct terms, *conductor* and *insulator*, when they described their findings. During these activities, pupils work in small groups, and well-prepared resources ensure that they are all involved. They collaborate well and take turns to record results. Different age groups in the same class cover much the same work, but the level at which they work, and their recording, is appropriate for their abilities. However, the range of activities does not always challenge the oldest or the more able pupils. There are also some inconsistencies across classes in the quality of marking and in the degree to which they are required to record their work: the oldest pupils do not record enough, for example. Additionally, these older pupils are not scientifically challenged enough by sometimes recording their work in the form of a letter.

78. The curriculum is based on national guidelines and taught in a two-year cycle. This ensures that all elements of the science curriculum are in place and the slight imbalance reported at the time of the last inspection has been redressed. Practical activities are well used and, as a result, pupils have good attitudes to the subject. The subject is well managed. The co-ordinator and the headteacher have analysed the results of the assessments and national test results and identified areas for improvement. Ongoing monitoring is satisfactory, and includes observing learning in lessons, looking at books and interviewing Year 6 pupils. This approach has had a positive impact on learning and raising standards.

## **ART AND DESIGN**

79. There was not enough evidence to make an overall judgement about standards in art and design. In some cases work had been taken home. However, where work was seen, its quality met, and sometimes exceeded, national expectations. This broadly reflects the findings of the last inspection. Year 2 pupils had completed observational pastel drawings of teddy bears as part of their historical work on toys. These were carefully drawn and some captured well the charm and character of the individual bears. Earlier in the year they had also made models of different foods to create their favourite meal. During the inspection, pupils in Year 6 studied urban landscapes painted by Lowry, Burra and Cahn in preparation for collage work. During earlier discussion, they had looked at the use of shape and line and had started to make thoughtful preliminary drawings using photographs, taken during their recent visit to Cardiff, as a source of inspiration. In Years 3 and 4, pupils had painted striking winter landscapes to a good standard. Little teaching of the subject was seen during the inspection, and so it was not possible to make overall judgements about the quality of teaching and learning.

80. The subject leader is keen to promote the subject. Since the previous inspection the school has used specialist expertise to draw up a scheme of work to ensure that all aspects of the subject are covered, and skills are taught systematically. Assessment of pupils' work has also been satisfactorily improved through the use of a sketchbook for each pupil, which records their work as they move through the school. National Curriculum Levels are then given to the work of each pupil when they reach Years 2 and 6. The subject is well supported by trips and high profile events such as visiting artists and art days, intended to extend pupils' awareness and appreciation of art and design. The school benefits from particular funding to finance these exciting ventures. During their visit to Cardiff, for example, older pupils had gone to the city's art gallery and this gave a springboard for the work described above. Pupils now choose a picture of the month and are expected to identify what they most like about the painting. During an art day, pupils took part in a range of activities linked to particular artists' styles of painting, and a visiting sculptor has worked with pupils to make sculptures from natural and reclaimed materials.

## **DESIGN AND TECHNOLOGY**

81. Not enough evidence was available to make overall judgements about standards in design and technology, or about teaching and learning. There has been a satisfactory level of improvement overall since the school was last inspected, particularly in terms of planning. This has been updated with the use of national guidance, although the school feels the need to review its current provision in order to ensure teachers have enough time to fully cover all aspects of the subject within each topic. Where work was seen, it indicated that the school has correctly judged this be an area for development. As far as possible, the school tries usefully to link design and technology activities with work in other subjects. For example, the topic on lighthouses for Years 1 and 2 pupils was linked with work in science on electricity. National guidance on how to assess pupils' attainment is to be implemented this term. Although the subject leader has been directing her time mainly to the development of ICT, she has monitored design and technology planning and informally collected staff views in preparation for making changes to current provision.

82. Finished items of work in Year 2 indicate that pupils' making skills are broadly similar to the standards expected of pupils of a similar age, although there is sometimes limited scope within the activities for individual ideas. They have made sturdy wind spinners and also constructed simple moving pictures of boats, all completed to the same design. More recent work has allowed these pupils to make individual designs for a lighthouse. Pupils of all abilities had labelled their pictures and drawn the electrical components of a circuit to make a bulb light. However, there was limited evidence of pupils selecting materials or tools they would use to make their models, or of explanations of why they had been chosen. Neither had these pupils yet completed any evaluation of their designs. The design and evaluation aspects of the subject have been satisfactorily covered in Year 6. These pupils had planned moving models using cams and levers. All had produced labelled sketches and prototype models, and included evaluations of how well their model worked. Pupils had usefully constructed a working example of circular motion, although this activity had not been varied to meet the needs of pupils with different abilities.

## **GEOGRAPHY**

83. Only one lesson was observed during the inspection, but evidence from pupils' recorded work, teachers' planning and discussions indicates that pupils achieve well overall. By Year 6, attainment is close to national expectations for pupils of a similar age. There was too little evidence to make an overall judgement about standards for pupils in the current Year 2. No lessons were observed and there was very little recorded work. However, planning shows that they study the local area and compare it to an imaginary Scottish island. Geography work is linked to history when they study the seaside.

84. Pupils in Years 3 and 4 use simple grid references when they draw maps, and show good knowledge of Ordnance Survey map symbols. They match places in photographs with their position on maps. They have a good knowledge of places further afield, such as a village in India and the Amazon rainforest. Years 5 and 6 pupils have extended their work on investigating rivers into a detailed study of the Severn and the Wye. They have researched information about other European rivers, such as the Rhone.

85. The one lesson seen at Key Stage 2 was well taught. As a result of good questioning, pupils could recall the location of physical features such as deserts, mountains and seas on a world map. They had a good understanding of contrasting climatic zones. Teaching was effectively supported by well organised resources. Group work was well resourced by the

use of appropriate books, atlases and pamphlets, which were available for pupils to find out the answers to well-prepared questions. As a result of these positive features, pupils worked very enthusiastically and were keen to find out and share information.

86. The subject is satisfactorily led and managed and there has been a sound level of improvement to the subject since the last inspection. The geography action plan identifies areas for development and the two-year cycle for each class is linked with other areas of the curriculum. The subject leader works closely with her colleagues and has prepared basic resources for each area. Planning has now been implemented to ensure that knowledge, understanding and skills are progressively developed. The very good programme of visits and local field trips to places, such as Clearwell Caves and Cardiff, stimulate pupils' interest and contribute to the good progress they make. Older pupils visit places further afield such as Shropshire or Devon. These visits not only enrich the geography curriculum but also contribute to pupils' social development.

## **HISTORY**

87. A small sample of lessons was observed during the inspection at Key Stage 2. Evidence taken from these and from pupils' work, teachers' planning and work on display, indicates that all pupils, including those with special educational needs, make satisfactory progress in developing their skills and knowledge in all aspects of the subject. In keeping with findings of the previous report, standards meet those expected of pupils of a similar age for pupils in the current Years 2 and 6. Progress in the development of the subject since the last inspection has been satisfactory. The school helpfully uses national guidance to support planning which has been adapted to meet the school's particular needs. It is effective in making provision for the development of history enquiry skills alongside the development of pupils' knowledge. History days, such as the one about World War II, interest and motivate pupils. The richness and relevance of the subject, and the interest which pupils have in their learning, are increased by visits to places of interest, such as Victorian shops in Newent and the Roman museum in Cirencester.

88. The pupils' work shows that, by the time they leave Year 2, they have made satisfactory progress in developing their enquiry skills and in gaining knowledge of what life was like in the past. For example, they compare favourite toys of the past and today. They are beginning to recognise that artefacts can give information about the past, and are keen to talk about the display of toys in their classroom. These skills and knowledge are effectively built on as pupils move through Years 3 and 4. Pupils gain a greater understanding of life in Britain in former times and have made good progress in finding out what life was like during the Roman occupation. Year 6 pupils have learned what it was like for children during World War II, and demonstrated good understanding of how events in history changed the lives of ordinary people.

89. Where seen, teaching and learning were never less than satisfactory. In one lesson in Years 3 and 4, they were good. Where teaching is effective, teachers explained new facts clearly and helped pupils to use the different resources that had been carefully chosen to increase knowledge and understanding. Well-prepared and astute questioning guided pupils to find out about life in Tudor times and compare it with lifestyles today. Pupils are enthusiastic about finding out about the past. In one lesson, pupils listened carefully to their teacher before asking questions about the pictures they were studying. They used these to find out as many facts as they could about the differences between the lives of the rich and poor in Tudor times. However, pupils are not encouraged frequently enough to research information in books, although some use their initiative to do this in lessons. Good links have been made with literacy to enhance pupils' learning in both history and English. For example, Year 5 and 6 pupils showed good understanding of how

people felt at the time when they wrote a radio play about evacuation and a news report about the Blitz. Useful links have also been made with art and design. For example, pupils in Year 2 had made observational drawings of the teddy bears they were studying as part of their work on old toys.

90. Resources are effectively supplemented by loans from the county resource centre. There has been little assessment of pupils' attainment, although the subject leader is maintaining a good overview of the current provision.

## **INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY (ICT)**

91. Standards in ICT for the current Year 6 are below national expectations for pupils of this age. Only a few samples of work were seen from Year 2 pupils, and not enough to make an overall judgement about their attainment. Although there has been a satisfactory level of improvement to ICT since the last inspection, some developments are too recent to have had a full impact on standards in all areas of the subject. Most importantly, the quality and frequency of pupils' experience are inhibited because some computers are old and have limited capacity for a range of functions.

92. The subject leader is enthusiastically developing the subject and giving staff good support as a result of her own subject training. There is an adequate two-year rolling programme of planned work, although the use of ICT in other subjects has yet to be fully exploited: in English and mathematics, for example. The new Internet link and school website are already giving pupils valuable opportunities to extend their knowledge and understanding. Pupils' access to more up to date equipment will be enhanced when two recently ordered laptop computers arrive. During the inspection, Years 3 and 4 pupils confidently checked the class e-mail for new messages. They described clearly how to log on using correct subject terms to explain the process. Year 6 pupils also take it in turns to check their website. Displayed work in this class included computer generated information about the Second World War, sometimes including pictures. When talking of their ICT work, Year 6 pupils reported that they had typed in stories and accounts and looked for information on the Internet. They also showed some knowledge of *cut* and *paste* activities and of making changes to font size and style. However, knowledge of these processes was sketchy and not all pupils had had all these opportunities. Opportunities for using ICT are not always taken in lessons. For example, during a literacy lesson, a chance was missed for pupils to practise *cut* and *paste* skills on screen during their work on the ordering of explanatory text.

93. A small sample of work completed by Year 2 pupils shows that these pupils have made patterns using an art program. They have also ordered a sequence of pictures to show the growth of a bean seed, and moved labels around the screen to identify features on the imaginary island of Struay as part of their geography work.

94. Some staff training has taken place to increase staff confidence and expertise, and more is planned. A helpful set of published instructions and ideas has also been bought to support teachers' subject knowledge and teaching strategies. Pupils also benefited last term from the opportunity to use, for a limited period, a set of laptops that belong to the local 'cluster' group of schools. Assessment systems are satisfactory and are based on national guidance. The subject leader has supplemented these by developing a valuable checklist of skills.

## **MUSIC**

95. Provision for music is satisfactory. Too little evidence was available to make overall judgements about standards or the quality of teaching and learning. Pupils listen to music, which is well chosen and relates to the theme of the day. Pupils in Years 1 and 2 listened to the loud and soft sounds they heard when they went for a walk in the village. They were able to describe them and represent them using untuned percussion instruments and their voices. During assembly, pupils sang enthusiastically and tunefully.

96. To ensure that pupils learn skills progressively as they move through the school, planning is based on a published scheme of work. It is adapted to fit in with other subjects in the curriculum, and whole school musical events. All pupils are involved in Christmas and end of year productions. This has been particularly beneficial in increasing the confidence of some pupils, including those with behavioural difficulties. In response to pupils' needs, the school has sought to increase pupils' experience of music through a local Creative Arts Project. As part of this initiative, pupils have had the opportunity to take part in an African drumming workshop. Additionally, a visiting specialist teaches a small group of pupils to play brass instruments, such as the cornet or euphonium. Assessment systems are under-developed. Accommodation remains unsatisfactory for all but class music lessons. Resources have been improved as a result of donations made by parents.

## **PHYSICAL EDUCATION**

97. During the inspection only one lesson was seen, so it was not possible to make overall judgements about standards in this subject or the quality of teaching and learning. There has been a satisfactory level of improvement to physical education since the last inspection. Planning has been introduced which covers every aspects of the subject. All but the youngest pupils have swimming lessons. The oldest pupils take part in outdoor adventure activities such as canoeing, abseiling and rock climbing during their residential visit. Other activities take place in the village hall, subject to its availability, or on the local recreation ground. The school continues to make good use of the facilities it has within the village, and there is now provision for Years 5 and 6 to visit a local college for gymnastic activities. As part of their Arts project, pupils have also been involved in a dance workshop. However, provision is still unsatisfactory, and does not meet statutory requirements because of the school's lack of space and poor facilities. There is no opportunity, for example, for pupils to work on large apparatus, and any equipment has to be taken to the lesson when teaching takes place away from the school site. Where teaching was seen, it took place in the village hall. Here it was cold, and necessitated pupils having to wear tracksuits or jumpers throughout the lesson. Before the lesson started pupils had to pick up rubbish from the floor so they could work safely in bare feet.

98. In this lesson, dance work was linked to pupils' work in history. It was well planned and followed on from previous lessons. The pupils responded well to the music, and practised steps and moves they had learned previously. They concentrated well as the teacher demonstrated new steps. When working in groups, they collaborated and built up sequences which they practised and refined. Pupils were given the opportunity to evaluate the work of other groups, commented appropriately on techniques and ideas, and showed appreciation of others' efforts.



## RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

99. Year 2 pupils are meeting the objectives of the locally Agreed Syllabus for religious education. There was not enough evidence to make an overall judgement for pupils in Year 6. Although there is insufficient evidence to make an overall judgement about the quality of teaching and learning, where teaching was seen, it was good. For example, effective questioning and the teacher's secure subject knowledge enabled Year 2 pupils to draw out some similarities and differences between Islamic and Christian customs. They already knew from previous work that Sunday is a special day for Christians, and that Christians pray to God and read from the Bible. By the end of the lesson, they had made good progress in furthering their knowledge of important world religions, as they were able to recall detail from the video they had watched and make some comparisons with Islamic practices. However, they had difficulty understanding that others might celebrate occasions, such as Christmas, in ways that were different to their own experience.

100. Pupils in Year 6 have learned about special and important occasions in a person's life, and started this study by recording key events in their own. The local vicar had enacted a mock baptism to illustrate a Christian 'rite of passage' and this ceremony had been contrasted with similar Jewish customs. Written work also shows that these pupils have learned about the characteristics of the Islamic faith. The quality of the work seen suggests that pupils are making satisfactory progress in their religious knowledge, but that not enough of their work is recorded.

101. Religious education plays an important role in fostering the school's aims about respect for others. Within lessons, for example, pupils are encouraged to be thoughtful about the customs of others. Adults are effective as role models for the school's aims, in the value they place upon the answers given and on spontaneous comments made by pupils during discussion. The school is also committed to enriching and extending pupils' experience of other faiths and traditions through visits and visitors. Pupils have visited Gloucester Cathedral and met Muslim faith children through links with a school in Gloucester. A reciprocal visit is being arranged for the summer term. They have also visited a mosque, and governors have shared their beliefs with pupils. In the lesson described above, Islamic artefacts, such as prayer mats and special books, and the teacher's own experience of Eid, were well used to help pupils understand similarities in worship and celebration. These same successful features were seen in a lesson about special places for pupils in Years 3 and 4, who had visited the local church and were discussing photographs of some of the features they had seen. As well as increasing pupils' knowledge about what could be found in a church, pupils understanding was extended because discussion also explored what these items were for, and what they revealed about the traditions of Christian worship.

102. The subject leader develops and monitors the subject satisfactorily within the limited time available to her. Since the previous inspection, significant improvements to the subject include new planning and assessment procedures, and increased resources. New planning has added greater interest to some of the teaching material, and requires pupils to think about what religion means, as well as learning about different faith traditions and beliefs. Systems for assessing pupils' attainment were introduced last term and used initially for those in Years 5 and 6. Other staff are being encouraged to use the same approach.